

YOUR POLICE

You Decide

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1.0 Introduction

Attitudes towards policing in recent years have frequently been in the national headlines. YouGov routinely asks the British public their confidence in the police to deal with crime in their local area, and in April 2022, 66% of people in Scotland thought the police were doing a good job, by December 2022 it had dropped to 44% and by February 2023 it had risen again to 52%.

In Caithness, the police are responsible for the safety and well-being of many communities including the larger populated townships of Wick and Thurso. The challenges of such a dispersed and diverse region mean the police have the opportunity to explore innovative ways to support community initiatives as well as encourage more positive interventions.

Working with Caithness Voluntary Group (CVG), Police Scotland introduced “Your Police, You Decide”, a participatory budgeting project to involve local people in having a say over how £32,000 was spent in the Caithness area. Funded by the Scottish Government, the project aimed to improve local democracy, ensuring that communities are more engaged in decision-making to improve safety and well-being.

Running from the summer of 2022 until early 2023, the project included a Steering Group made up of people from the local community broadly representing people living in Caithness. The ambition of the project was to ensure that the public, communities and partners are engaged, involved and have more confidence in policing, that policing is visible across communities and plays a vital part in Scotland’s recovery and renewal from the pandemic.

1.1 Methodology

The data for this report has been collated using desk research (sources referenced throughout), listening circles and surveys. The full data is available as part of the appendices.

The timeline for this activity was:

- June - Steering Group recruited, Community perception survey launched.
- July - First Listening Circle with the Steering Group.
- August - Second Listening Circle.
- September - Process open to applications.
- October - Steering Group & Leadership group complete a feedback survey on the process.
- November - Short-listed applications open for voting.
- December - Funding awarded.

This report will summarise the activities, contextualise the work and conclude what impact the process has made on public perceptions.

2.0 Background

The region of Caithness sits on the very North East coast of mainland Scotland. With a population of approximately 25615¹, the area boasts two major towns of Wick and Thurso, an airport that connects the region to the rest of the U.K. and growing industries in tourism (North Coast 500), industry (renewable) and the U.K's first spaceport on the A' Mhoine Peninsula.

The region is 87 miles from the Highland Council Headquarters as well as the region's main hospital and enterprise agency. Understandably communities may feel cut off from local services and the institutions that deliver them.

In 2020, the Scottish Index of Mass Deprivation highlights huge differences between Wick and Thurso. Indeed, only Wick contains some of the most deprived data zones (communities) in Caithness.

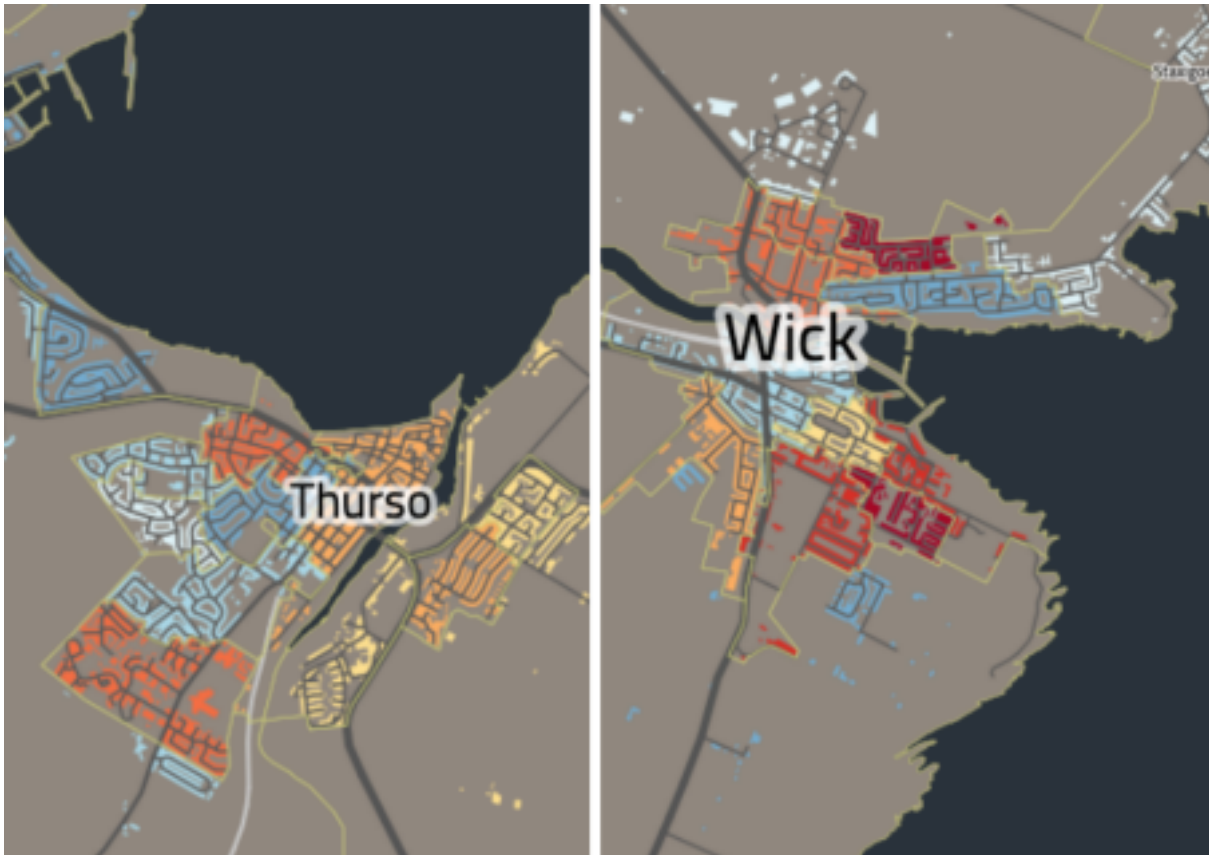
One data zone in Wick is in the most deprived 5% of Scotland, increasing to three data zones in the most deprived 20%.²



¹ Based on SIMD results

² <https://simd.scot/#/simd2020>

When compared to Thurso it is clear there are differences in social and economic drivers. Thurso doesn't have any data zones in the most deprived 20%.



When looking at the data from all the data zones in Wick and Thurso, while the differences might seem small, it is possible to understand small changes that might benefit communities.

Area	Wick	Thurso	Rest of Caithness
Total population	8030	8645	8095
Working age population	62%	61%	58%
Employment deprived	12%	9%	10%
No. of crimes reported	350	257	77
People with depression	21%	17%	18%
Emergency hospital stays	1453	1153	1000
School attendance	78%	82%	86%
17 - 21 year-olds at University	5%	7%	8%
Homes without superfast broadband	19%	13%	48%

2.1 Previous Research

In 2018, Thurso Community Development Trust identified that the community was overwhelmingly an asset to the town with 67% of respondents stating the number one asset in Thurso was people and community. The lowest scoring attribute was the influence and sense of control, with people commenting “they do not have a voice when it comes to decision making.”³

A community consultation conducted by Caithness Voluntary Group in 2019⁴ heard from 332 Thurso residents who highlighted health & well-being, getting around, work & local economy, Facilities, Services and Amenities, Community Identity and Spirit and issues relating to men’s safety and well-being.

Concerning safety and well-being, the following were highlighted as key concerns:



Other concerns highlighted included:

- GP waiting times.
- Addiction Services.
- Not being taken seriously with children’s health.
- Increasing concerns regarding drug use.
- The rising cost of living means heating and food can be a struggle.
- Lots of work opportunities are outside town but if you don’t drive you can’t get there.

³ Thurso Community Development Trust: Community Consultation Report: How good is our Place? THURSO April 2018

⁴ <https://www.aspiringcaithnessandsutherland.com/blank-1>

- Lack of opportunity in the long term, diverse employment reducing greatly in area.
- Care and tourism jobs are unsociable hours and unsuitable for mothers.
- Fears for the future if young people leave the area.
- Play parks are all becoming an issue.
- People in Thurso complain that they want change but when they do get change they are still not happy.
- More celebration of Thurso, our history and culture Information on how to get involved in community groups and what is going on – information is difficult to find.
- Our buildings are showing signs of neglect in the town centre, everywhere feels grey, old and tired.

The research included responses from young men who made up a smaller sector of overall respondents. They admitted to being drug takers, from daily usage to addiction issues as a result of habitual drug use. As highlighted in the research there had been deaths and major crimes connected to drug-taking and this was linked by some as a reason to stop taking other drugs. Respondents under the age of 22 were more flippant regarding drug use while older respondents indicated they had cut out or back on drug use.

Respondents expressed that they had at times struggled with mental health. Also, more than half expressed that there was a history of mental illness in families from parents to siblings:

“There is no one to talk to, we talk to each other more these days about it, when we feel down but pretty much all of us do. If you go to the doctor but say you take drugs then they just want to treat that but most of us know it's mental health. You take drugs to escape feeling hopeless.”

“My options are work, Xbox or going to gym, playing football or something like that. You need to have money for equipment and be in that clique of men or you don't get accepted.”

“If you don't drive it is hard to get around even for jobs but you end up working like 60 hours so no time to fit in driving lessons. Most jobs are in the country but have no access to transport. Job at (removed) but had to turn it down because you couldn't get there.”

“I don't know how to cook a meal, takeaways or micro meals. Sometimes I go days without eating.”

In July 2021 a research paper⁵ was published, accounting for work conducted by Covid-19 Resilience Group, Mental Health and Well-being Action Group, in partnership with the CACC team, on Caithness communities experience of mental health support in the region. With regards to Caithness, the findings highlighted:

- Challenges expressed by adults and children about concerns for young people's disrupted education and their anxiety about not being at school or having any social interaction, and also how to come back into schools and colleges.
- In-depth work around the issue of bereavement was also challenging but rewarding, to understand how isolation in palliative care and experiences of grief has been so hard to cope with in communities.
- Digital poverty was also raised in urban areas because of affordability and in remote rural areas because of poor connectivity.

In March 2022, Pulteney People's Project launched its own consultation, exploring opinions in Wick and the wider Caithness region on local issues and what activities and services they would like to see to make life easier/better moving forward. In light of this, the communities in Caithness may be suffering from "consultation fatigue" and while efforts are being made to engage communities, to hear them, these need to be followed up with action.

2.2 Public Perceptions

A survey conducted on behalf of this evaluation received 33 views on safety and well-being in Caithness:

- The majority of the responses came from Thurso and Wick and some interaction from more rural areas.
- 87.9% strongly agreed or agreed that community spirit is strong in Caithness.
- 72.7% strongly agreed and agreed that Caithness is a safe place to live.
- 69.7% go to local charities or community groups for help or advice. The next most popular was the community council (21.2%) and the Local Authority (21.2%). Only 12% said they would go to the police.
- 81.8% strongly agreed the safety and well-being of the community are important while 6.1% strongly disagreed.

Concerning the Scottish Government's 11 outcomes for the whole of Scotland, people in Caithness agreed with the following:

- We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment (51.5%).
- We are well-educated, skilled and able to contribute to society (48.5%).
- We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally (39.4%).

⁵ https://www.aspiringcaithnessandsutherland.com/_files/ugd/b606bb_43d31b0675d2494f9543fdc5cf838e8b.pdf

When asked what might make Caithness safer, the general views centred on:

- Less drug-related activity/crimes.
- Increased visibility of police.

Based on statistics from Police Scotland the number of drug-related crimes⁶ in Highland has increased since 2017/18 with an increase of 6.6%. Nationally, however, it was much higher, around 14%. What these figures don't tell us is the level of activity in Caithness. While it is true that police presence has decreased nationally by 2.6%, in the Highland Division, it has actually decreased by 5.6%.⁷

3.0 The Participation of the Steering Group and Leadership

The Steering Group was recruited directly through the community, with emphasis on participants reflecting the local area and a diverse mix of backgrounds. The resulting group consisted of nine individuals, from across the region, with a 50/50 gender balance and representation of young people. Across the group was an overwhelming passion for community development and positive action.

The anticipation for the group to meet regularly to design the participatory process, the promotion of applications & voting and selection of the successful projects.

18 proposals were selected for public vote which was launched in November 2022. The Steering Group was very active in promoting voting online as well as offline in community spaces. 821 votes were cast and 12 projects were awarded support totalling £29 915. The Steering Group then agreed to fund two further projects due to savings in the overall delivery budget meaning they support 14 projects in total with £33 815 distributed to the local community at a time of financial concern due to the cost of living crisis.

3.1 Analysis of the Process

The Steering Group felt that the leadership and support were 'Excellent' (75%) and 'Good' (25%). It was unanimously agreed that the experience has increased their understanding of funding allocation. It was felt that the approach was very inclusive and ensured that all demographics of the community were considered, especially with how to engage with them to promote the benefits of the process. The Steering Group agreed they wanted the money to go to deserving groups which would increase community and youth involvement as well as restore trust in the police.

⁶ (production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs; supply of drugs (including possession with intent); bringing drugs into prison; possession of drugs; other drug offences (incl importation))

⁷ Local police officer resources are the core complement of officers under the direction of the local commander and include community policing, response policing and divisional road policing teams. Included in the Local Resource figures are officers within the Divisional Criminal Investigation Department and Public Protection Units.

The Leadership team undertook a more open way of working, allowing the Steering Group to lead the way and be responsive to that.

3.2 Implementing Change

There was some doubt from the Steering Group whether they had secure support for participatory budgeting from higher levels than a community level, with 75% sensing it's "Good/Excellent" while 25% sensing it's been less successful. A further 75% felt there was a future commitment to PB in the future while 25% thought there "Maybe" was. While 50% of the Steering Group would have liked more time to prepare or train, the other 50% thought there was an adequate amount of time.

The Leadership team felt that the key processes of PB had delivered well and that the process had increased participation very well but that representation was average.

3.3 Community Engagement

The sense that participatory budgeting has been well received by the community (62.5%) and 87.5% thought it had been "Excellent/Good" at being clearly communicated to the community. 75% thought it had been "Excellent/Good" at including community groups in the process. While it was agreed that the process was very inclusive the group did report that some barriers to engagement would include accessing information digitally as well as the historic distrust of consultation processing failing to deliver.

The Leadership team worked hard to overcome barriers to engagement. This included using the local knowledge of CVG and the police to reach people, covering expenses and providing digital devices and platforms. They also ensured that underrepresented groups were approached including disadvantaged areas, people with disabilities and a wide range of diversity. This was achieved through engagement with community development groups and youth support agencies.

As a result, it was felt that the process did "Good" in creating a fairer and more reflective way for the community to be involved in spending to address their needs.

3.4 Personal Engagement

The main drive for the Steering Group participants was to see positive changes across their communities: *"to create resilient communities with a sustainable outlook for their future."*

They felt the process had met their expectations in the transparency of the process and buy-in from organisations and that the process had somewhat met their expectations for the time commitment and community buy-in.

50% of the Steering Group felt more connected to their community as a result of the process, 37.5% did not feel more connected and 12.5% felt they were maybe more connected. Many of the Steering Group have made new connections as a result of the process and were pleased to have put faces to names: *“I like the idea of putting a face to the person/organisation, and this has been done multiple times during this process.”*

75% of the Steering Group thought that the process had been “Excellent/Good” at engaging with new people in the community. 87.5% of the Steering Group thought the process had been “Excellent/Good” at giving a voice to the community to shape local priorities and decisions.

The Leadership team intended to empower the community to be involved in decision-making, restore trust in public services and improve safety and well-being by addressing poverty and inequality with improved community engagement.

3.5 Needs and priorities for Community

While 62.5% of the Steering Group felt the process gave them a “Good” opportunity to learn about wider community needs and priorities, 37.5 marked this lower. This may indicate they already had a “Good” awareness of the needs in their communities. Similarly, 62.5% thought the process allowed them opportunities to discuss their needs while 37.5 marked this lower.

The Steering Group acknowledged that the experience of local knowledge as well as experience of a variety of funding processes was useful in the design of the process.

The Leadership team was divided about:

- The impact of the process adding value to the community.
- The ability to get support for PB at a strategic level.
- Commitment to PB in the future.
- PB shaping local priorities and decisions.

While some of the team thought it had done well, some thought it had been average. Possibly this is due to the experimental approach to PB in the area. There has been a bit of response from the community to ensure funding is shared where it is needed but commitment at a strategic level may be impacted by external factors around budgets.

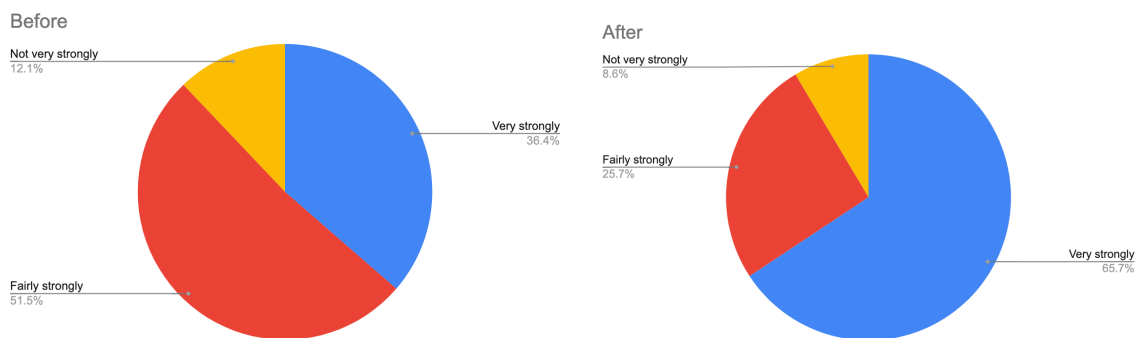
And finally...

The Steering Group had nothing but praise for the facilitated process, feeling supported, and valued and that their needs were accommodated. It appears to have been a very positive experience for them.

4.0 How has this process changed opinions?

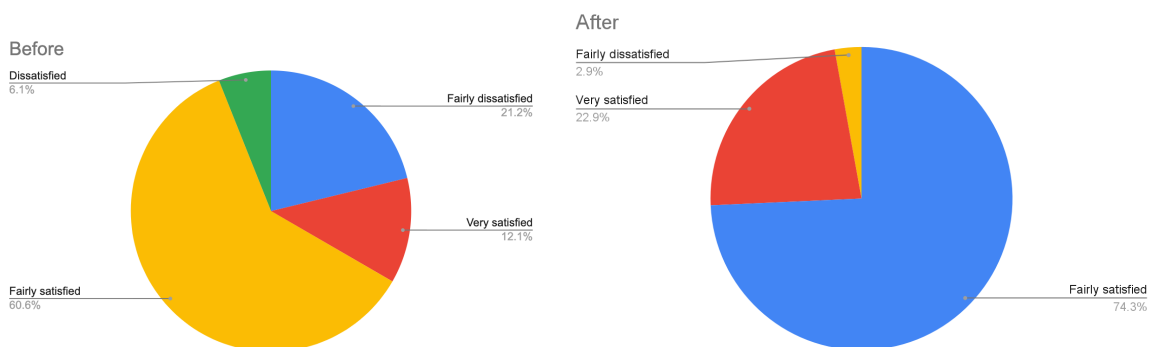
At the start of the process, the public was consulted about their perceptions of safety and well-being in Caithness. After the voting process, the participants have been consulted again about their perceptions as a result of engaging in PB. The following results indicate a positive swing towards greater participation in local democracy and increased positive attitudes toward the region.

4.1 Opinion about Community Spirit and neighbourhood



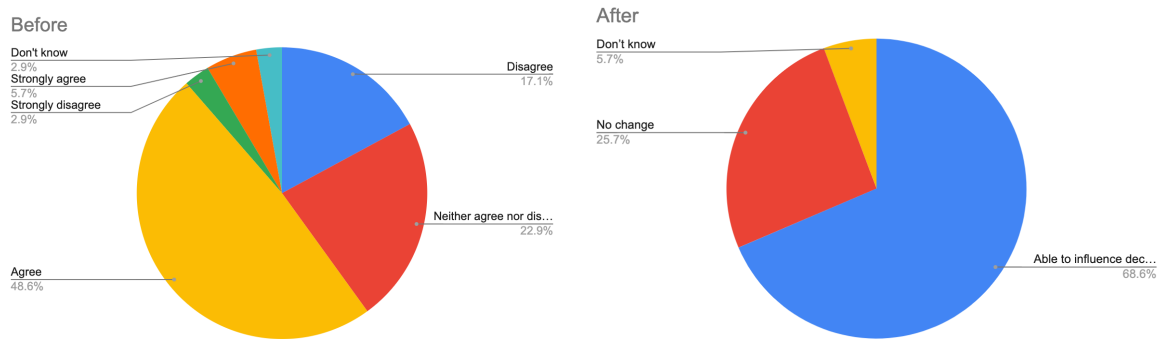
Positive attitudes to community and neighbourhoods in Caithness have increased by 57%

4.2 Opinion about safety and satisfaction of place to live



Positive attitudes around safety and satisfaction in Caithness have increased by 62% (Very Satisfied) and 20% (Fairly Satisfied)

4.3 Opinion about participating in decision-making



Positive attitudes around decision-making have increased by 34%.

5.0 Conclusions

There is no doubt that for the individuals in the Steering Group as well as community members who participated in the project the process has been empowering, encouraged participation in local democracy and made a positive change to attitudes around safety and well-being.

Not only has the process had an immediate impact but there is now a willingness to keep this level of positive participatory budgeting going. The Steering Group are now talking about investing other budget lines in initiatives such as a local [Soup event](#) or looking at a [Youth and Philanthropy Initiative](#).

While it could be argued that such initiatives are a way of distributing funding, the emphasis for these models is on community engagement, supporting local beneficiaries as well as encouraging participation in the democratic distribution of funding. It is a quiet revolution, allowing communities to prioritise needs as well as raise awareness about what is happening on a local level.

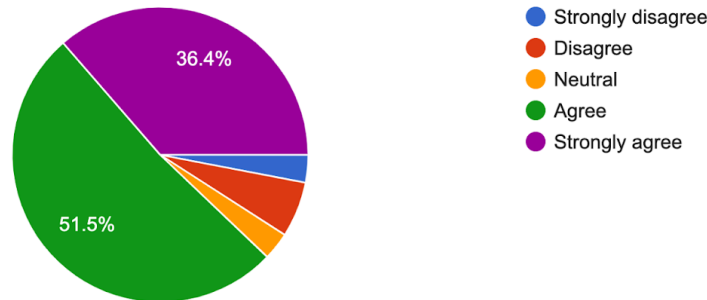
Police Scotland launched an initiative in Caithness that has not only distributed financial support to communities at a time of greatest need but “Your Police, You Decide” has empowered the communities of Caithness to address the needs of their neighbours and set the direction for long-term democratic engagement for positive social change.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1 - Community Perceptions in Caithness 2022

2. Would you agree that community spirit is strong in Caithness?

33 responses



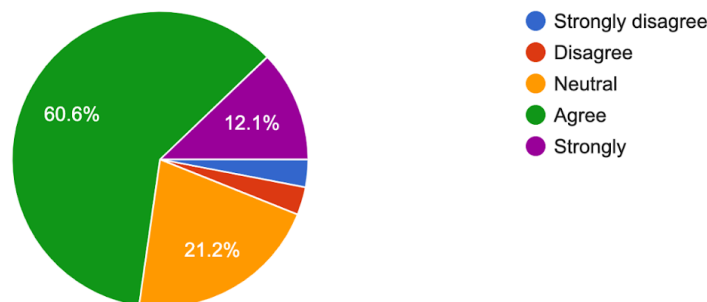
3. What might bring the community together more?

- Support for those struggling the most with rising costs.
- Opportunities to volunteer to improve the town centre.
- Community events within the town.
- Family events. Strong stance against vandalism and graffiti.
- More events for all ages.
- Fewer drugs and violence and paedophiles.
- Something that may bring the community together is if we possibly have a gathering lunch, my neighbours do this so that we can meet people locally and make new friends.
- Having their voices valued.
- Events, dedicated community space.
- Community events.
- Getting the opportunity to meet face to face at meetings to link up.
- More community-based events.
- A better understanding of the goals of different community organisations.
- More funding for local charities.
- More networking with other agencies.
- Better amenities for teenagers and families.
- More things to do for young & old.
- Tidying up the town.
- Somewhere for teenagers to go to a cafe music pool.
- More shops, everything is closing down.
- Community spirit.
- Not sure.
- Continued collaborative working and more signposting.
- More social events to bring people together.
- Include those most affected in decision-making.

- Events that include the whole family.
- More days that are similar to harbour, gala etc.
- A place where different groups/individuals could meet, we do not have a proper community hall/hub.
- Consultation about traffic calming measures which were introduced - e.g widening pavements at corners etc.
- Better communication on what's happening within the community. Established groups coming together to deliver, rather than individual groups doing their own thing. Social area for our young people to "hang out" be entertained and reduce boredom whilst hanging around the street.
- Better communication between community groups and organisations, rather than trying to work in isolation.
- Regaining more local control of the council and health board functions.
- Joined up thinking.
- A community event, a town centre where people would be happy to gather.

4. Would you agree Caithness is a safe place to live?

33 responses



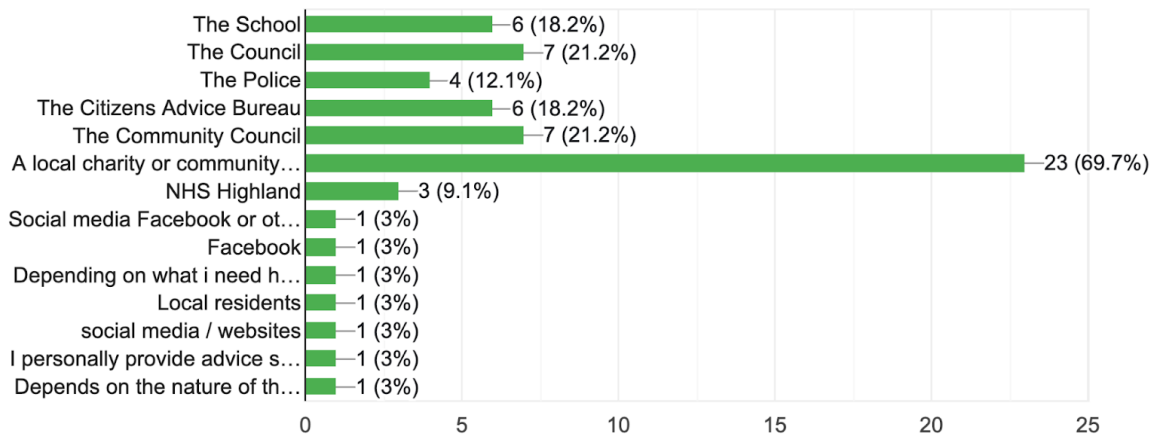
5. What might make it safer?

- Fewer drugs available.
- Proactive policing re drug use.
- Police being more visible on the streets and mix more with the community.
- More activities for teenagers. Police visibility in a friendly manner (community engagement). Clamp down on speeding and reckless driving. Tackling drug misuse
- Increased funding for classroom support for pupils who need extra help.
- Seeing more Police on foot patrol.
- Same as above.
- With fewer drugs or attacks.
- Greater mental health, addiction services and greater meaningful youth work.
- Access to wider healthcare.
- Active & Appropriate Neighbour Watches.

- Update the existing CCTV which was installed after a lot of hard work by the community.
- More activities and opportunities for young people.
- Less availability of controlled drugs.
- Fewer drugs in the community.
- More police presence.
- More police patrolling and interacting with the public.
- A continued police presence.
- Neighbourhood watch.
- Major drug problems in Caithness, this could be sorted out.
- More CCTV, more police presence.
- More police on the street.
- Police presence.
- More taxis on weekends.
- More drug prevention programmes and mental health support.
- Better support for drug and alcohol addiction and mental health needs.
- Not really sure.
- If we could go back to pre-Police Scotland days when police stations were open 24/7 and there were sufficient Police officers on duty.
- Tackling drug problems....and also introducing speed limits on main roads approaching main towns.
- More police presence.
- More community indoor social areas to encourage YP into activities.
- Improved/Enhanced safety measures on our roads, especially given NC500.
- Return to the level of policing which we enjoyed in years past.
- Reduction in substance misuse and improved mental health services.
- More visible police presence, tackling issues with poverty, self-harm and drugs.

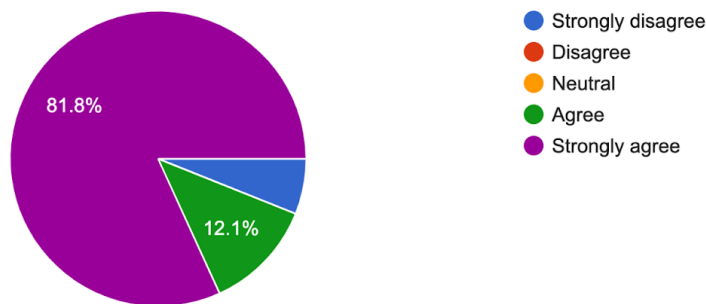
6. When you need help for or advice about the community, where do you go for help?

33 responses



7. Would you agree that the safety and wellbeing of the community is important?

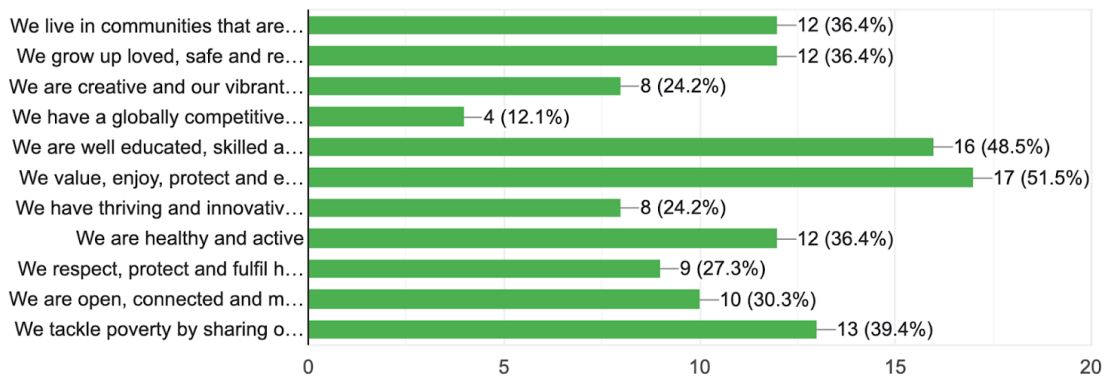
33 responses



The Scottish Government has 11 outcomes for the whole of Scotland

(<https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/national-out...ion>, please select the statements you agree with:

33 responses



9. If you have any thoughts about the above statements please include them here.

- Very difficult to answer the above - statements are far too general.
- Too much centralisation to Inverness and Edinburgh. Government funding needs to be distributed more evenly to rural areas. Large employers (Dounreay, Rolls-Royce etc) are welcomed but the downside of the high wages is that local trade businesses can't attract employees for a fair wage because they can get better pay for unskilled work at Dounreay. Our rural location means we don't have a very diverse community - culturally.
- I don't actually agree that Caithness is reaching any of the performance outcomes currently but it will not allow me to select none.
- I think we lack in many areas due to our geographical status.
- The above statements do not reflect our everyday lives!!
- I feel Wick, where I live, has a lot of deprived areas and a lot of drugs. I also feel Caithness on the whole is a neglected area.
- I think many of the sentences are aspirational and most would like to enjoy these as reality. We are improving but we have a way to go.
- None of the above statements is wholly true to Caithness so I can't agree with the majority of them.
- I think Caithness is supportive of its community but is also insular. There needs to be a lot more education about mental health, poverty, ethnicity and equality. There are some amazing representatives in Caithness but it often falls on the third sector. The statutory sector needs to play a bigger part too.
- These are all worthy goals but unfortunately, I don't think any of them have been achieved in Scotland at the moment. I have ticked one box as it won't allow me to leave them all blank.
- Caithness being a large area, transport is hugely required and local services are very poor or non-existent for the community to utilise.
- More encouragement and guidance on being healthy and active is required as many people do not know how to achieve this. We need to grow and build on our ability to contribute internationally as Caithness people can feel isolated and constrained in this respect.
- This is a very nice wish list - time for action.
- I don't think any of these are achieved on Caithness, there are some groups and individuals who fall into this category but not general and the ones who don't are hard to reach.
- Not completely agree we've got there but as a country, we are aiming towards these things.

6.2 Appendix 2 - Listening Circle Findings

Listening Circle #1 - July 2022

What's on your mind in relation to this project?

- How to include young people and their opinions.
- How to involve the right people to get them on the right pathway.
- Creating a safe space for all groups and all ages.
- How to get local support.
- There are physical and mental health needs.
- Time is short and so is money.
- Might this be seen as money that could be spent on police on the streets?
- This is not just a Police Scotland problem.
- The demise of the local Police identity.
- How will people trust the project and the genuineness of the process?

Where is your thinking now (in relation to what you first shared or something else) and in the light of Round One?

- There is a good group of people involved who share concerns about the timescales.
- How to create continuity after this intervention - monthly meetings? More funding?
- What reassurances are there for sustainability and/or legacy?
- There needs to be sustainable outcomes from this.
- Can this enable the voices of the people of Caithness to speak up
- There is apathy - people want to see things happen but take a step back
- Trying to build trust to deal with apathy.
- Police Scotland can't do everything, the community has to get behind the police.
- Comfort is not a good thing for progress.
- Difficulty in recruiting Police Scotland talent to Caithness "no one wants to come to Caithness".
- Honesty - for the steering group, for the community and how Police Scotland is playing the role of the enabler.
- What will success look like? It's not just money, it's about what works and makes a difference.

What will you take from this experience? What has resonated? What have you appreciated?

- Making this process as representative as possible.
- How can we push this forward?
- This process might take pressure off the other statutory services.

- We are not into problems, we are into discussing solutions. Simple solutions.
- We are coming together as a team - can we make it Team Caithness?
- The answer is yes - what's the problem?
- If we are changing the world, let's start in Caithness.
- We are building trust in each other, keep it simple.
- There is a great community spirit with a desire to improve and learn.
- Police Scotland is opening up to a different way of doing things so we need to do it, we need "to lift ourselves out of the morose".
- People need someone to speak to, some people in small communities don't have anyone to speak to.
- Going with/against the grain.
- Appreciation of honesty and respect for others.

Listening Circle #2 - September 2022

What's on your mind in relation to this project?

- I think we have covered a bit of work on this project and it seems we all are looking at the same sort of issues and want to find ways to help the community. This is a huge task and we are only helping in a small area of the problems in Caithness but we got to make a start somewhere. Right? Also, I feel honoured to be part of this process but worry about the work we have ahead of us with the timescale. Positive thinking and teamwork and we can do this! 🤔
- While I appreciate the value of Listening circles for some, I struggle to see the real benefit. Don't want to appear negative, just being honest. We have become obsessed with Teams meetings but they cannot replace face-to-face meetings of which are so much more personable and of more value. Are the local Police aware of this project? I feel the project is a very worthy one which can help the community and I'm looking forward to helping it progress in whatever way I can.
- This project has come at a time when I'm really busy and recovering from Covid, so haven't been able to devote the time I would have liked to the process. However, I hope that the online evaluations will allow me to participate in the evaluation.
- 1) Extremely aware/concerned of the ever-looming deadline to progress the project to the next stage
- Re-emphasise the looming deadline, can't help thinking we've done a lot of stuff but are we any closer to a resolution?
- But I have a nagging doubt, which has been with me since the start... will this fund be viewed by the public, disappointed in the local police, as an attempt to curry favour in the absence of 'proper' policing?
- And I really think we should focus the grants we make on police/ crime-related issues i.e. the criteria should be aimed at crime prevention/ victims of crime/ making good results of crime.

Where is your thinking now (in relation to what you first shared or something else) and in the light of Round One?

- VERY positive about the superb 'Synergy' that the project has gained from all of the team members within it, especially in such a short space of time, BUT also concerned that we maintain the momentum and ensure resilience in our endeavours.
- I am now thinking the funding pot might not cover what we initially need in Caithness. And it probably won't but we need to ensure the money is spent on police resources/community input. With the funding application in the finishing process, I'm nervous we might not hit the brief! (I think I'm panicking when I don't need to?) 😊
- Ensuring that as much positivity is promoted within/outside the project and advertising the good work and plans that the local community and Police Scotland are doing to build bridges and relationships in a bid to create better harmony within local society and ALL of the people within it.

What will you take from this experience? What has resonated? What have you appreciated?

- I'm heartened by the support and enthusiasm of all the Group members.
- I feel the project is well-intentioned, however before we can honestly achieve any real sustainable progress we have to look at local issues /challenges on our own doorstep and try to understand them.
- On 16th August the Wick Community Council expressed frustration about a lack of engagement from local officers complaining about a "complete lack of communication of any sort from the Police. We have asked many times for them to get in touch with us to address issues and concerns. It is extremely disappointing after previous assurances that they want to engage with the local Community".
- Of course what the Police cannot say is that they are overwhelmed to carry out the traditional historic duty to "Guard, Watch and Patrol and there needs to be a change in people's perceptions of what we can honestly expect from them with their current resources.
- I proudly served as a Police Officer for 30 years in the Highlands and Islands where community involvement was at the core of our service.
- We policed with the consent of the public, I sincerely want things to return to that and our Group has a wonderful opportunity to be part of the journey to restore that relationship.
- Locally the Police have responded to these concerns by promising regular contact with Community Councils and Groups like ours will hopefully help local communication.

Listening Circle #3 - February 2023

What's on your mind in relation to this project?

- There was a difficulty for some in filling out the paper version. It was too long and people wanted to add their own ideas. People had opinions on where the money should be going.
- Good response from the school. I thought it would take a long time because a poor phone signal meant it was frustrating to fill it out online.
- Great to have a young person involved in the Steering Group, a teacher said it would look good on my C.V. and offered support. Nice for young people to be involved in decision-making. It feels like adults made all the decisions so it was empowering for younger participants to support others (like the Gymnastics group) and shared with Young Carers so they got involved.
- Some people avoided the groups because of the Police sign.

Where is your thinking now (in relation to what you first shared or something else) and in the light of Round One?

- Could there be an audio version? We could go through it face to face with older groups, advocate for helping fill out online with them and show them how to do it.
- Reverse mentoring - older helping young and vice versa
- If there was more demand next time create a shortlist so the voting wasn't so long
- We could get a representative from the Charity to speak at an event rather than a piece of paper. People will want to speak with them, not the police.
- This would be a challenge for the capacity of individuals on the Steering Group.
- COPE runs a similar model.
- Streaming an event, short videos in advance, voting online - a hybrid approach?

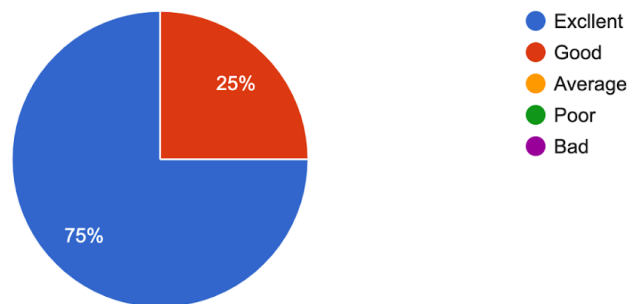
What will you take from this experience? What has resonated? What have you appreciated?

- More organisations applied in Thurso, maybe next time there could be more targeted marketing in Wick and surrounding areas.
- A great way to introduce self-funding for future community democracy events such as Soup events or YDI models

6.3 Appendix 3 - Your Police, You Design - Steering Group Process

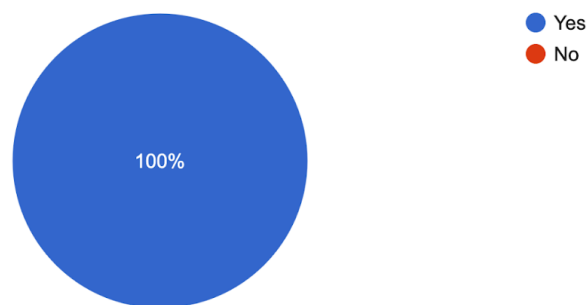
How was the leadership and support been to develop the PB project?

8 responses



Have you developed your knowledge and understanding of allocating funding?

8 responses



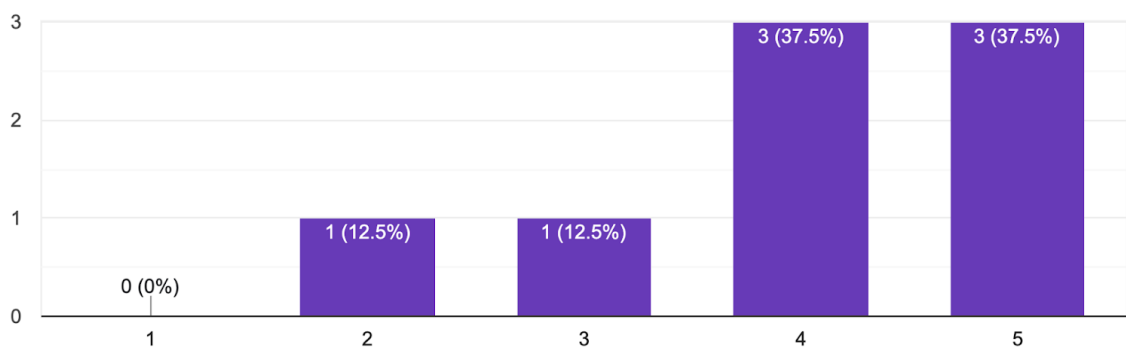
What measures have been taken to involve groups with protected characteristics and people who are excluded from participating due to disadvantages relating to social or economic factors?

- Promotional material circulated as widely as possible on social media and other channels. The application is straightforward, the wording is simple.
- There is a mix of professionals and people involved.
- This project has been open to all groups and individuals and has not discriminated in any way, shape or form.
- Involvement of as many different community groups as possible.
- It was open to all with multiple ways for people to be involved.
- I believe that the group has explored the wide spectrum of groups that operate in Caithness, being always mindful of the particular attributes of that group or section of society. I feel that special consideration has been made to try to afford those that would benefit the most from the funding are included and within its criteria.

- All-inclusive approach.
- Not sure but can't see any barriers to anyone joining.
- What are the key outcomes for the community you would like to have achieved? Deserving community groups or causes getting a bit of money towards making the place better for everyone, and those in need in particular.
- To use the money to support the youth and to encourage positivity towards local police.
- Hopefully that the community can see the Police's openness and ideally help to restore some trust. Police in Caithness have had negative publicity for years so hopefully, this project can help alleviate some of that.
- As well as getting some funding the community feels involved with the project - part of the design as well as part of the decision-making process.
- Increased awareness of Police Scotland's key duties.
- Greater harmony, empathy and understanding within the community of each other, our differences as well as our common beliefs and attitudes. This includes a better relationship between establishments or authorities and members of the public, whether that be Police, Health, Social etc.
- Safe, Healthy Community.

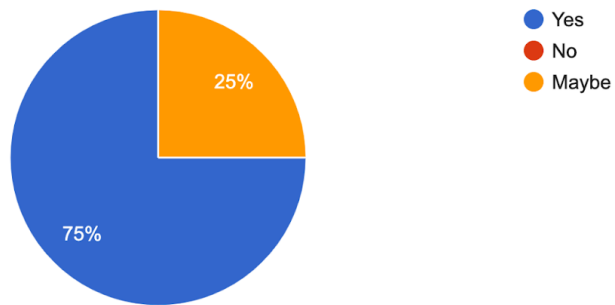
To what extent have you secured support for PB at a high level? I.E people with the capacity to make the change.

8 responses



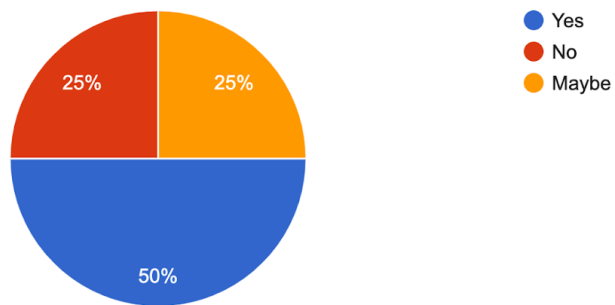
Do you feel there is a commitment to the future provision of PB funding being demonstrated by decision makers?

8 responses



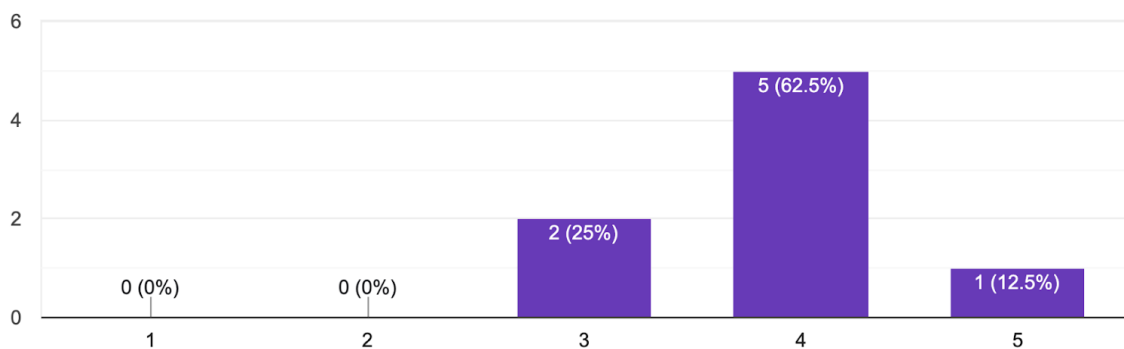
Do you feel sufficient planning and development time was in place to ensure training and capacity building?

8 responses



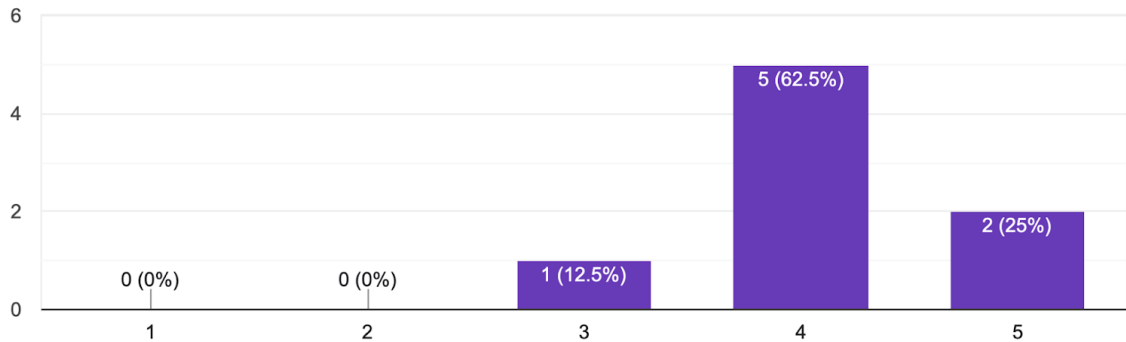
How well has PB engaged with community groups and organisations?

8 responses



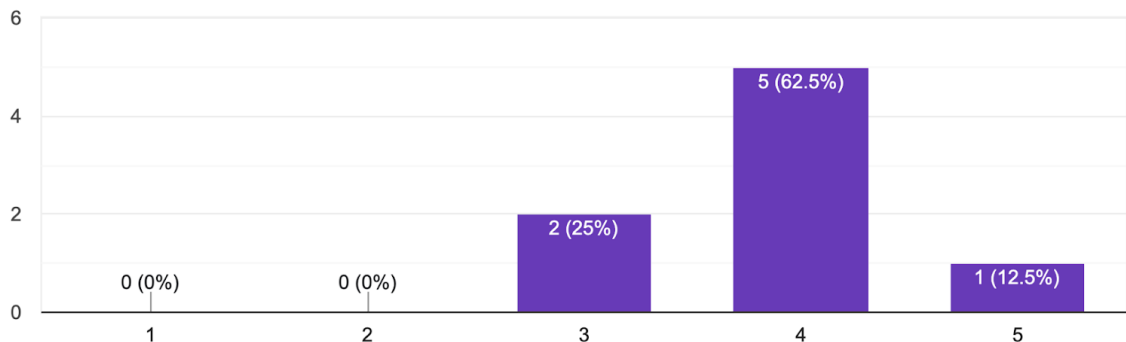
How clear is the communication strategy and delivery process to inform the community about the PB project?

8 responses



How well are community groups and organisations included, encouraged and supported throughout PB process?

8 responses



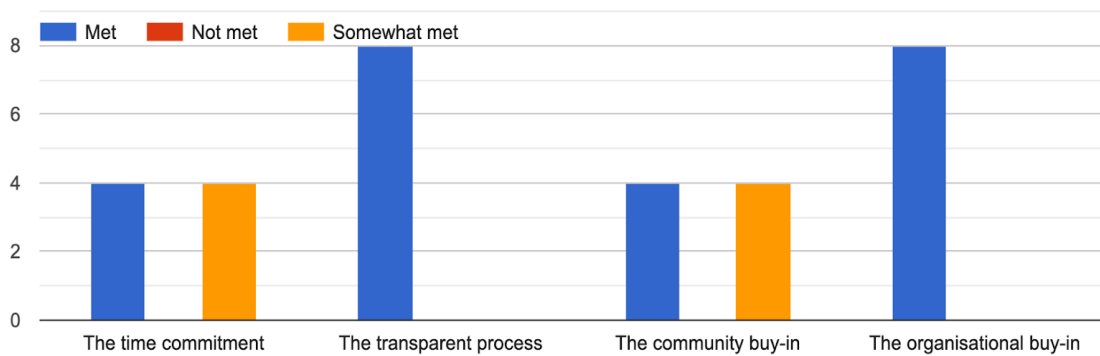
What barriers to community participation did you identify or were made aware of during this process?

- None really. If the system works as intended it will be accessible to all appropriate groups and individuals.
- Not sure.
- None.
- people unable to engage through a lack of digital knowledge or access.
- Scepticism of historic previous projects, promises and claims that have failed or never really got going despite the best intentions of those trying to do so
- The need outgrows the budget.
- None that I'm aware of.

What was your main motivation to be part of the Steering Group?

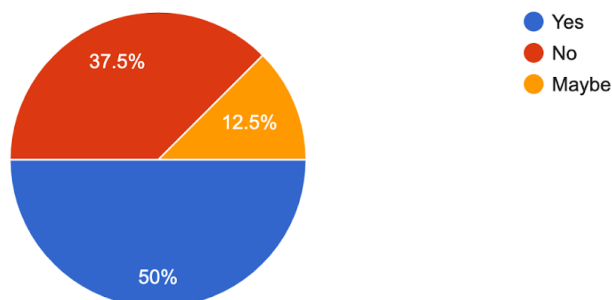
- I want to put something back into my community.
- To encourage positivity in vulnerable children in the community and police.
- To be part of the decision-making process in a project that involves the Police and has a positive community impact.
- It would be of benefit to my community.
- To ensure that all community groups have equal opportunity to apply.
- To play an active role in helping build a better community and feeling of togetherness within Caithness society.
- I choose to be involved so that I could apply my passion for trying to create resilient communities with a sustainable outlook for their future. Taking pressure away from statutory services and acting as an anchor so that a more positive impact can be achieved.
- I want to put something back into the community.

To what extent did the following meet your expectations?



Do you feel more connected to your community as a result of taking part in PB?

8 responses

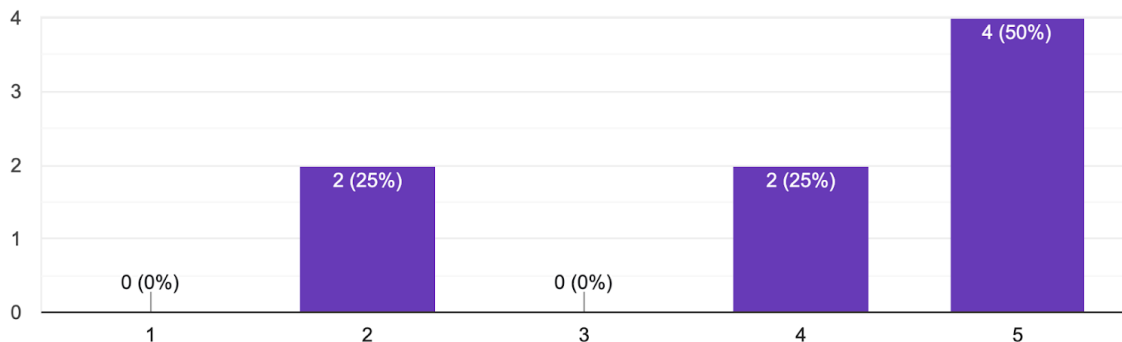


How many new relationships and connections have you made as a result of participating in PB and can you share what they were?

- A significant number of useful contacts in my employment.
- A few.
- Made good solid contact with people I have never met and will maintain contact in other community situations I am in.
- Have met a few new people through the Teams meetings.
- Many of the same faces within the Steering Group. It will be interesting to see what groups apply, are they the usual groups or will others take the opportunity?
- None that can be quantified - I have shared/spread as far & as wide as I can but no feedback is available.
- Many new relationships have been formed. I like the idea of putting a face to the person/organisation, and this has been done multiple times during this process.
- I got to know at least four people who have become useful in my job.

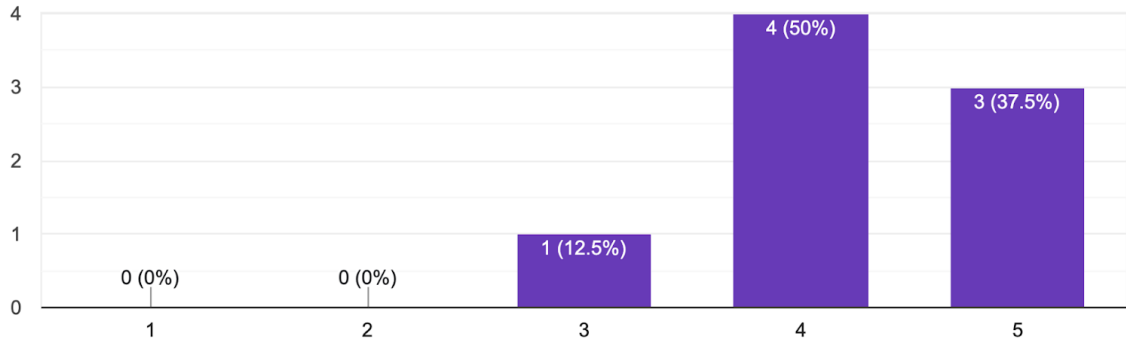
To what extent do you think PB has involved people who haven't previously taken part in community engagement?

8 responses



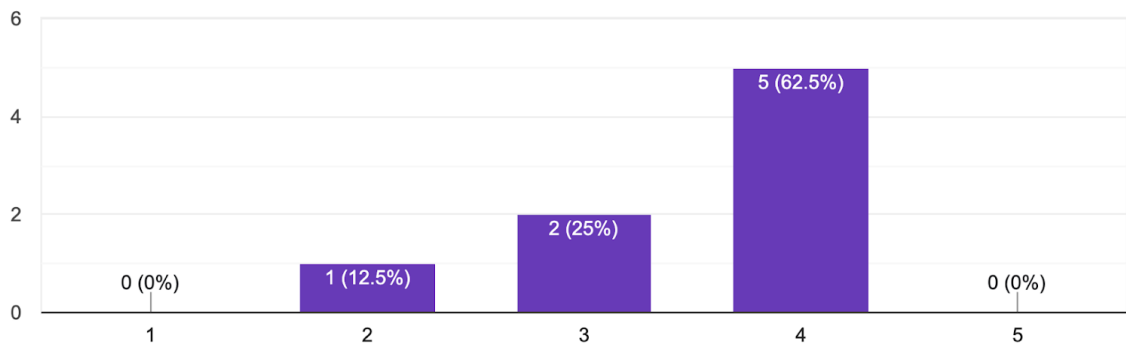
To what extent do you feel PB gives communities a voice in shaping local priorities and decisions?

8 responses



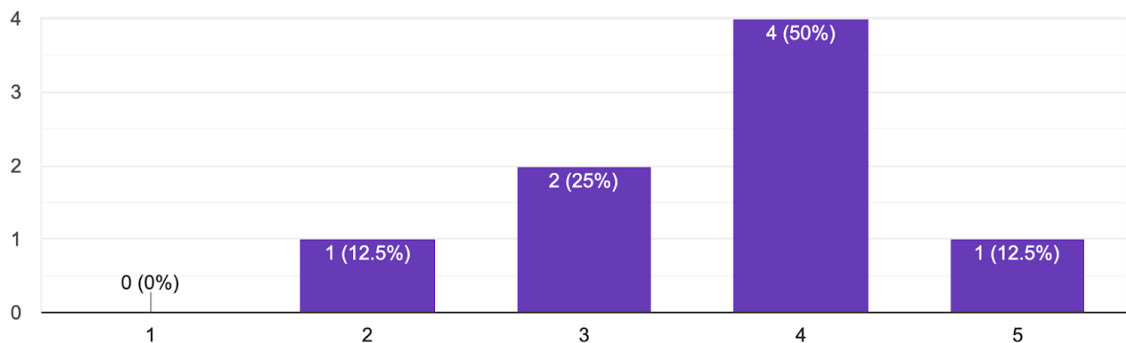
To what extent did the PB process provide opportunities to learn about wider community needs and priorities?

8 responses



To what extent did the PB process provide opportunities to discuss local issues and priorities with other participants (before voting)?

8 responses



What information was useful in influencing the decision-making to create the application process?

- Other application processes and forms.
- Not sure.
- The thoughts and ideas of other participants mixed with previous experience of doing this. There was a great deal of common sense involved.
- Local knowledge.
- People have been involved in funding projects before having access to a variety of styles of applications.
- As wide a cross-section as possible - trying to adopt - 'The Answer is Yes, now what's your question?'
- The needs of our communities.
- The knowledge of the community is required.

Please use this space to add any further comments you weren't able to share in the questions above.

- I think there should have been more commitment with the Steering Group members, Kevin always has enough notice for meetings.
- This has been a valuable experience and one of which I was honoured to be a part. Kevin was excellent at pointing everyone in the right direction and was very supportive. Thank you, Kevin.
- I feel that Kevin & the team have been amazing, not only towards myself but also to others that I know from what they have shared with me (I run a men's support group) that Kevin made them feel very valued and he accommodated their needs and addressed their concerns about various aspects of being part of the Steering Group. Basically, Kevin and others have promoted a very good 'Team' spirit throughout - GREAT SYNERGY.