



## **Connecting Torfaen – Communities Choice** (Participatory Budget)

### **Project Aims**

The aim of the Connecting Torfaen – Communities Choice is to:

- a) Strengthen community engagement in Blaenavon, aligned with the existing Healthy Blaenavon Network.
- b) Act as a catalyst for wider community engagement in Thornhill, Trevethin, St Cadocs & Penygarn, aligned with emerging partner and community networks.
- c) Empower local people to make decisions on funding allocation in their community.
- d) Improve local population health and wellbeing by enabling projects meeting local needs.

### **Funding Allocation**

Community	Provisional Allocation	Population <sup>1</sup>	Allocation per head
Blaenavon	£73,450	6,484	£23 (includes previous allocation of £73,450)
Thornhill (Upper Cwmbran 1 & 3)	£81,850	2,572	£32 (additional funds to reflect deprivation)
Trevethin, St Cadocs & Penygarn	£175,000	5,543	£32 (additional funds to reflect deprivation)

### **Delivery Aim**

To fully engage with local communities to hear their priorities and gain a deeper understanding than small grant-making alone offers.

### **Outcome**

Communities will feel empowered in making decisions that positively impact their communities.

### **Key Stakeholders**

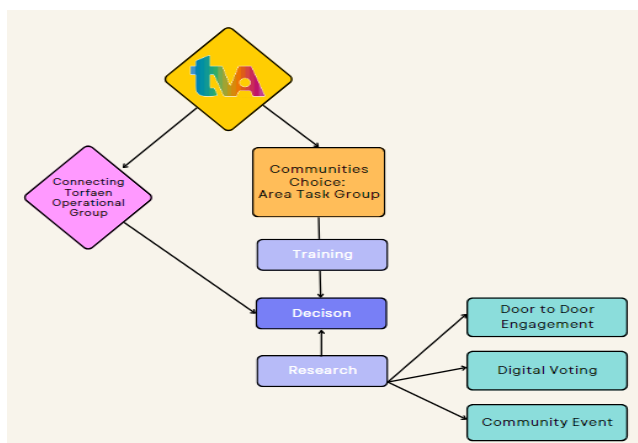
	Role	Responsibilities
Torfaen Voluntary Alliance (TVA)	Project Lead	Oversee the delivery of the project, employ dedicated officers, coordinate community engagement, and ensure successful implementation of the participatory budget.
Torfaen Public Service Board (PSB)	Funder	Provide the initial Participatory Budget funding.
Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC)	Funder & Supporter	Provide project delivery costs through the Multiply initiative, support the implementation of the project, and collaborate with TVA on community engagement efforts.
TCBC - Adult Learning Providers	Training Partners	Develop and support delivery of Level 1 numeracy workshops to enhance community capacity and support informed decision-making.

Integrated Wellbeing Network Lead	Partner & Advisor	Collaborate with TVA and community groups to design the scheme, support community engagement, and ensure projects align with health and wellbeing objectives.
Connecting Torfaen Operational Group	Steering Group	Provide oversight of the scheme, verify the feasibility of project ideas, and identify opportunities to support community-led initiatives.
Community Groups and Wellbeing Friends	Community Representatives	Participate in task and finish groups, identify priority needs, lead community discussions and engagement, and develop project proposals.
Community Resilience Group (CRG)		Ensure alignment with broader public service goals.
Area Task Group	Community Leaders & Decision-Makers	Members of the identified communities will discuss and decide on fund allocation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with very local areas (e.g., a street or neighbourhood) to understand and support their priorities.</li> <li>Collaborate with community groups embedded in their local communities to discover local priorities and support fund allocation at a granular level.</li> </ul>
Local Residents in Blaenavon, Thornhill, Trevethin, St Cadocs & Penygarn	Beneficiaries & Decision-Makers	Engage in the participatory budgeting process, vote on project proposals, and participate in the implementation of funded projects.
Community Development Teams and Partners (e.g., RSLs, Community & Town Council Development Staff)	Engagement Facilitators	Work with local areas to understand and support community priorities, facilitate engagement, and assist in the implementation of community projects.
TVA Members & Local Businesses	Supporters & Collaborators	Provide additional resources, support project implementation, and collaborate on community initiatives to enhance health and wellbeing.
Evaluation and Monitoring Experts	Assessors	Conduct regular monitoring of project progress, evaluate the impact of funded projects, and provide feedback for continuous improvement of the participatory budgeting process.

## Elements of the Delivery

### 1. Communities:

- Identify community groups and wellbeing friends within designated areas.
- Establish a task and finish group to identify priority needs and design and develop process for engagement and decision making.
- Area Task Group: Empower the group to lead community discussions and engagement through various methods:
  - Online (using Connect platform)
  - In-person (in local community settings)
  - Door-to-door (successful method used in MCC)

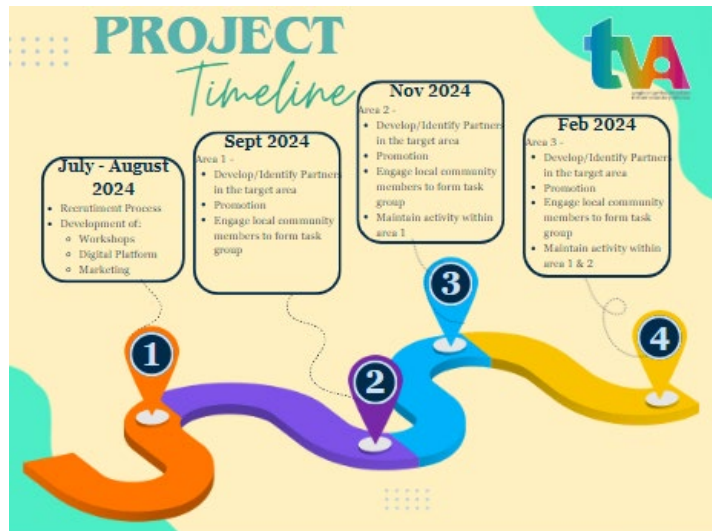


- Steering Group (*Connecting Torfaen Operational Group*) Comprising representatives from TVA, local partners, and community leaders to guide engagement and priority identification.
2. Training (Upskilling)
    - Develop Level 1 numeracy workshops with Adult Learning to be delivered throughout the process to enhance community capacity.
  3. Voting / Decision Making
    - Develop a space within the Connect Torfaen platform for community members to vote on their preferred project proposals.
    - Provide alternative voting methods for those digitally excluded through engagement events.

## Timeline

### 1. Recruitment (Months 1-2)

- Develop Job Descriptions: Create detailed job descriptions for the project staff.
- Advertise Positions: Post job openings on relevant platforms.
- Conduct Interviews: Interview candidates and select the best fits for the roles.
- Recruit and Induct Staff: Hire staff and conduct an induction process to familiarise them with the project goals and their responsibilities.



### 2. Project Launch (Month 2)

- Inform Steering Group of Developments: Update the project steering group on recruitment progress and initial plans.
- Announce Project and Funding Aims: Promote the project objectives and funding details through local media, social media, and community meetings.
- Develop Level 1 Workbooks: Begin discussions with Adult Learning providers to create numeracy training materials.
- Develop Promotional Resources and Digital Platform: Create marketing materials and develop the platform for community engagement and voting.
- Monitoring & Impact Tool Kit / Consultants: Liaise with partners to identify suitable consultants.

### 3. Community Engagement (Months 2-3)

- Area Task Group Formation: Identify and recruit members from community groups and wellbeing friends to form task and finish groups in each area to officially establish the groups to lead local engagement and proposal development.
- Conduct Community Discussions and Engagements: Hold meetings both online and in-person to engage with community members and gather input.
- Begin Level 1 Numeracy Workshops: Start delivering training workshops to community members to enhance their ability to develop and manage project proposals.

### 4. Community Choice Development – Area 1 (Months 4-6)

- Identify and Develop Project Proposals: Task groups work on identifying community needs and developing detailed project proposals.
- Continue Training Workshops: Ongoing numeracy and capacity-building workshops to support community members in the proposal development process.
- Open Voting Platforms: Launch the online voting platform on Connect Torfaen and organize in-person voting events for those without digital access.

- Community Voting: Facilitate the voting process, allowing community members to choose their preferred project proposals.
  - Consult with Steering Group on the project developments within area 1.
  - Fund Approved Projects: Disburse funds to the projects that received the most votes.
5. Evaluation of Area 1 (Months 7)
    - Monitor and Support Implementation: Provide ongoing support to task group, conduct regular check-ins, and ensure projects are progressing as planned.
    - Impact Monitoring: Gather feedback from community members and task groups.
  6. Community Choice Development – Area 2 (including area 1) (Months 7-9)
    - Roll out the delivery, repeating pt's 4 and 5.
  7. Community Choice Development – Area 3 (incl area 1 & 2) (Months 9-12)
    - Roll out the delivery, repeating pt's 4 and 5.
  8. Community Choice Development – Across All Areas (Months 12-15)
    - Roll out the delivery, repeating pt's 4 and 5.
  9. Evaluation (End of Project (Estimated September 2025 Mth 15))
    - Review Project Outcomes: Assess the results of the implemented projects in terms of community impact and achievement of project goals.
    - Gather Feedback: Collect feedback from community members, task groups, and stakeholders to evaluate the participatory budgeting process.
    - Report Findings: Compile an evaluation report highlighting successes, challenges, and recommendations for future participatory budgeting initiatives.

By following this detailed timeline, the participatory budget in Torfaen will effectively engage communities, empower local decision-making, and improve health and wellbeing through targeted, community-led projects.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Regular check-ins with task groups and project implementers.
- Quarterly progress reports to the project steering group.
- Final evaluation report assessing community engagement, project outcomes, and overall impact on health and wellbeing.

By following this delivery plan, the participatory budget in Torfaen aims to effectively engage communities, empower local decision-making, and improve health and wellbeing through targeted, community-led projects.