

## **1. Introduction**

This Policy outlines the framework for implementing a Community Participatory Budgeting (CPB) ‘Have Your Say’ initiative within Galway City Council. The goal is to empower residents to have a direct say in how a portion of the local authority budget is allocated each year, fostering transparency, civic engagement, and community development.

CPB is an inclusive process that actively engages with marginalised groups, economically disadvantaged residents and minorities, ensuring that all voices are heard in shaping local decisions.

## **2. Objectives**

- To enhance community engagement in local governance.
- To promote transparency in budget allocation.
- To address the specific needs and priorities of the community.
- To strengthen social cohesion and build trust between the local authority and residents.

The ‘Have Your Say’ initiative applies to all residents within Galway City Council’s administrative area and covers a designated portion of the annual budget, as determined by the local authority. The ‘Have Your Say’ initiative is a vital step towards fostering an engaged, informed, and empowered community within Galway City. By giving residents a direct voice in budget allocation, the local authority aims to enhance the quality of life for all citizens and promote sustainable community development.

## **3. Principles**

- **Inclusivity:** Ensure participation from diverse community groups, including marginalized and underrepresented populations.
- **Transparency:** Provide clear information about the budget process, available funds, and decision-making criteria.
- **Accountability:** Establish mechanisms to hold the local authority accountable for implementing community decisions.
- **Empowerment:** Equip residents with the necessary tools and knowledge to actively participate in the budgeting process.

## 4. Process

### 4.1. Budget Allocation

Galway City Council will designate a percentage of its annual budget for Community Participatory Budgeting (CPB), subject to approval in the annual budgetary process. The amount initially determined for 2025 – 2029 is €25,000 per annum. Proposals will be invited from communities and residents in the following sequence:

Year 1	East
Year 2	Centre
Year 3	West

### 4.2. Community Engagement

**Awareness Campaign:** GCC will conduct outreach to inform residents about the 'Have Your Say' CPB process, objectives, and opportunities for participation.

**Workshops and Meetings:** GCC will organize public forums and workshops to gather input on community needs and project ideas, with assistance from Urban and Community Development Officers for each local electoral area.

### 4.3. Proposal Development

- Residents will collaboratively develop project proposals that address community priorities.
- Proposals must be feasible and align with the local authority's strategic goals.
- Proposals will be invited each year by March 1<sup>st</sup> and a decision on the successful project made by April 30<sup>th</sup> with delivery by 30<sup>th</sup> November.
- Proposals should focus on actions / initiatives including for example, climate action; biodiversity; local improvement, environmental enhancement; anti-social behaviour; community safety; accessibility and age friendly infrastructure. (see Appendix 1)

### 4.4. Project Selection and Voting Process

- Proposals will be assessed by the relevant Area Councillors and Council staff based on community benefit and feasibility. The shortlisted projects are then put to a public vote, where residents decide how the €25,000 is allocated.
- A democratic voting process will be established, allowing residents to vote on the proposed projects.
- Voting will take place online on [www.galwaycity.ie](http://www.galwaycity.ie)

### 4.5. Implementation and Monitoring

- Galway City Council will implement the winning projects directly and provide regular updates to the community on progress and expenditure. (The amount allocated each year is not in the form of a grant to a community / residents association, rather the project will be delivered directly by Galway City Council)

- Establish a local monitoring committee, comprising community members, to oversee project implementation and provide feedback.

## 5. Evaluation and Review

The 'Have Your Say' CPB process will be reviewed annually to assess its effectiveness, community satisfaction, and areas for improvement. Feedback from participants will be collected to refine future cycles.

This Policy will be approved by the Tourism Development SPC (incorporating Community Development) and reviewed every three years to ensure it meets the evolving needs of the community.

### Appendix 1 – Project Proposal Template

First Name	
Surname	
Email	
Address	
Community Organisation (if applicable)	
Type of Proposal (choose one)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• climate action</li> <li>• biodiversity</li> <li>• local improvement</li> <li>• environmental enhancement</li> <li>• anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• community safety</li> <li>• accessibility</li> <li>• age friendly infrastructure</li> </ul>
Location of Proposal	
Brief Description of Proposed Project (max 250 words)	
Proposed Benefit to the Area (max 250 words)	