

FINANCE



Winsford Town Council

Winsford Decides

The Winsford Decides participatory budgeting programme marked a significant step forward in community-led decision-making for the town. The initiative was driven by a desire to give residents a direct voice in how local funding is allocated. The concept of participatory budgeting, where communities decide how to spend part of a public budget, had proven successful elsewhere, but bringing it to Winsford required careful planning, expertise, and collaboration.

To turn this ambition into reality, Winsford Town Council partnered with PB Partners, specialists in designing and delivering participatory budgeting processes. Their role was crucial in translating what can often feel like a complex democratic model into something practical, accessible, and engaging for local people. Working closely with council staff and elected members, PB Partners provided tailored guidance, ensuring the process was transparent, inclusive, and well-structured from the outset.

The programme was designed to empower community groups and organisations to pitch their ideas for funding directly to residents. This created not only an opportunity for local initiatives to secure financial support but also a platform for residents to engage more deeply with their community. From application development to event delivery, PB Partners supported each stage, helping to build confidence and ensure the process ran smoothly.



Winsford Winners

The first Winsford Decides event was held in 2021. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it took place online via Microsoft Teams. Despite the challenges, this did not hinder its success, in fact, it demonstrated the resilience and adaptability of both organisers and participants. The virtual format enabled the programme to launch successfully and laid the foundations for future in-person events.

Since then, five Winsford Decides events have taken place, collectively awarding over £125,000 to local community projects. By 2026, the programme had grown significantly, with its highest attendance yet, over 200 residents taking part and voting on 27 local project proposals. This growth highlights the increasing appetite within the community to be directly involved in shaping local priorities.

Winsford Decides has now become a vital part of Winsford's community infrastructure. It continues to empower residents, support grassroots initiatives, and strengthen connections across the town. As it evolves, the programme remains a strong example of how participatory budgeting can successfully bring decision-making closer to the people it impacts most.

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