

**Executive
2025**

Tuesday, 14 October

Appointments to the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillors Jane Spilsbury and Juma Begum
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
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Wards Affected	(All Wards);
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priorities	Financial sustainability
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:-

- 1) Councillor Craig Warhurst be appointed Chair of the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year; and**
- 2) Councillors Matthew Dormer, David Munro, Rita Rogers, Craig Warhurst and Paul Wren be appointed to serve on the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report details arrangements for the appointment of Members to the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel to serve for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year.
- 2.2 Members are invited to consider approving these appointments.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 At the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 2nd September 2025, Members considered a report on the subject of the Council's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) grants scheme.

- 3.2 Included within the report, was a proposal to introduce a Grants Panel, which will be responsible for considering and scoring applications received from VCS organisations for major grant funding. The terms of reference for the panel were approved as part of that report and are attached as an appendix to this report.
- 3.3 At the Council meeting held on 15th September 2025, Members subsequently agreed to allocate funding of £175,000 per annum over the three year period starting in 2026/27 to the Council's VCS grants scheme. Of this amount, up to £75,000 will be for a Financial Advice Grant. The remaining £100,000 will be for a grants scheme to which the VCS can apply and will be considered by a Grants Panel.
- 3.4 There is now a need for Members to be appointed to serve on the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year.
- 3.5 The Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel will not have any decision-making powers. Instead, it will make recommendations to the Executive Committee for approval.
- 3.6 The panel will therefore be established to operate as an Executive Advisory Panel. As with other Executive Advisory Panels at the Council, Members from different political groups may serve on the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel, with nominations proposed by political party group leaders.
- 3.7 In accordance with the agreed terms of reference for the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel, members appointed to the panel may not be members of the Executive Committee. In addition, the Chair must be a Councillor who is not a member of the controlling group. These arrangements are designed to ensure independence and transparency in the process for consideration of grant applications by the panel.
- 3.8 It should be noted that any member appointed to the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel will be required to undertake training before they can serve at a meeting of the panel.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel will be scoring applications received from VCS organisations for funding from the Council. Members of the Grants Panel will need to be assured that all

recommendations for funding comply with the Council's requirements under the scheme and will achieve best value for the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel is an Executive Advisory Panel it does not form part of the Council's political balance.
- 5.2 The Executive Committee has the authority to determine appointments to Executive Advisory Panels.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report for Local Government Reorganisation or devolution.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel will need to ensure that, through the recommendations they make to the Executive Committee, best value is achieved for the authority and the residents that the Council serves. This will help to support the organisational principle of financial sustainability.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no specific implications for climate change.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There is a significant risk that the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel will not be able to fulfil its duties if Members are not appointed to serve on the panel in a timely manner.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1

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Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel – Terms of Reference
(approved at the Executive Committee meeting held on 2nd September
2025).

Background Papers

Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Scheme 2026/27 to 2028/29,
report to the Executive Committee meeting held on 2nd September
2025: [Executive Committee agenda - 2nd September 2025](#)