

**Executive Committee
2026**

17 March

Grants to Voluntary Bodies Awarding of Grants 2026/27

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Juma Begum
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Willis, Assistant Director Community & Housing Services
Report Author	Job Title: Judith Willis Contact email: judith.willis@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 64525
Wards Affected	All wards, although specific grants are proposed for organisations that are based in Astwood Bank and Feckenham, Matchborough and Woodrow and North Ward
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity Green, Clean & Safe Community & Housing
Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee RESOLVE that:-

- 1) grants be awarded to voluntary sector organisations as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of this report and as set out below:**

Organisation	Funding Recommended	Project
Acorns	£10,000	Specialist palliative care for children from Redditch
Astwood Bank Community CIC	£10,000	Astwood Bank Carnival

Carers Careline	£10,000	Carers Careline support for unpaid carers
P&E Sports CIC	£10,000	Matchborough Positive Activities for Young People
Primrose hospice	£9,225	Volunteer and Befrienders Wellbeing
Redditch Nightstop	£10,000	Safe Accommodation & Support Project
Where Next	£10,000	Where Next Redditch Core Costs
YMCA	£9,184	Church Hill Youth Wellbeing & Mentoring Support
New Starts	£5000	Local People Helping Local People
Oasis	£5000	Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre
Total	£88,409	

- 2) **the additional wording in bold set out below, be added to paragraph 9.5 of the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Policy in order to allow scoring to support smaller and local charitable organisations:**

“There will be no pre-determined demographic allocation of funds **but priority will be given to local Redditch organisations whose projects are based in Redditch and funding will be used only for the benefit of Redditch residents, this is compared to larger national charities**”

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 2 September 2025, the Executive Committee approved the Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29. Approval included that a Grants Panel, comprising elected Members, to

be established to consider and make recommendations to the Executive Committee in relation to higher grants (valued at £2k up to £10k).

- 2.2 There is a total grants pot of £100k available to the voluntary sector available to apply for, of which £90k is for higher grants. There is a lower grants pot of £10k with an Officer panel for the lower grant application decisions.
- 2.3 A Grants to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Grants Policy was also approved by the Executive Committee, and a copy is attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.4 The Grants Panel was nominated and approved by Executive Committee on 6 November 2025. The Panel Comprises of: Councillor Warhurst (Chair) and Councillors Dormer, Munrow, Rogers and Wren.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Higher Voluntary Sector Grants were advertised in November 2025. A total of 29 grants applications were received. The value of all applications was £274,692 compared to the available budget of £90k.
- 3.2 The Grants Panel considered all the applications at meetings held on 2nd and 16th December 2025. The applications were scored in line with the VCS Grants Policy and using a scoring matrix. A list of all successful organisations that applied are contained in Appendix 1 and a list of unsuccessful organisations are contained in Appendix 3 (Exempt item).
- 3.3 Following the scoring of the applications the Grants Panel recommend the following grants to be awarded:

Organisation	Funding Recommended	Project
Acorns	£10,000	Specialist palliative care for children from Redditch
Astwood Bank Community CIC	£10,000	Astwood Bank Carnival

Carers Careline	£10,000	Carers Careline support for unpaid carers
P&E Sports CIC	£10,000	Matchborough Positive Activities for Young People
Primrose hospice	£9,225	Volunteer and Befrienders Wellbeing
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Where Next	£10,000	Where Next Redditch Core Costs
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- 3.4 During consideration of the applications, the Grants Panel recommended that the Grants Policy be amended to enable future scoring to proactively support smaller and local charitable organisations.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the Grants Policy and the associated Scoring Matrix is amended to include: There will be no pre-determined demographic allocation of funds **but priority will be given to local Redditch organisations whose projects are based in Redditch and funding will be used only for the benefit of Redditch residents, this is compared to larger national charities.** This recommended amendment is shown in bold text in section 9.5 of the Policy attached as Appendix 2. An additional criteria will also be added to the Scoring Matrix to reflect this priority.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The allocation of the £90k grant funding is contained within the Council's approved budget, as recommended by Executive Committee and approved by the subsequent Council meeting in September 2025.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council needs to continue to ensure that it has a transparent and fair grants scheme and ensure that we comply with the 2015 Local Government Transparency Code.
- 5.2 Whilst grant funding and concessions to the VCS are not a statutory function, under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to incur expenditure which in its opinion is in the interest of and will bring direct benefit to its area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants. The direct benefit accruing must also be commensurate with the expenditure incurred.
- 5.3 There is further power to make grants to voluntary organisations providing recreational facilities under section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Depending on the option within this report that is approved, a new VCS grants policy will be required.
- 5.4 Local Authorities must comply with the 2015 Local Government Transparency Code and Best Value Duties.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The Scheme will operate until 28/29 at which point Local Government Reorganisation may have taken place in Worcestershire and the Scheme would operate under new authority. Any new authority would then determine future funding for a Grants Scheme within the Borough. No other District Council in the County operates a Grants Scheme to this level. Bromsgrove District Council operates a smaller Equalities Grants Scheme worth £10k per annum. The other Districts have Grant Schemes that are available such as rural communities funding, but this is external.
- 6.2 Worcestershire County Council Public Health fund a variety of Voluntary Sector and Community Schemes.

- 6.3 There is a Strengthening Worcestershire fund that is match funded by Worcestershire County Council which is delivered by the Community Foundation on their behalf, as they must generate match funding to give out alongside the County Council's contribution to grow their investment pot.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.4 The Grants to Voluntary Bodies Scheme supports work across the third sector that support the Councils vision "A Council which listens to and delivers quality services for our communities, residents and businesses" and the Council priorities:

- Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity
- Green, Clean & Safe
- Community & Housing

Climate Change Implications

- 6.5 The green thread runs through the Council Plan. It is proposed that, should the scheme continue for 2026/27 and 2028/29, there will continue to be a question on the application form, although not included in the scoring, which would ensure applicants were giving consideration to the impact of climate change.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.6 The VCS support many members of the community and add social value. Alongside this, the sector support community relations and cohesion. In submitting funding applications organisations are asked 'who is your target audience and how do you ensure that your proposed project/service will reach them and will be open and accessible to all?' The panel scored this element of the application. Organisations are also asked, where appropriate, to confirm they have an Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy in place.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Given the number of organisations applying for this funding, the Council are unable to fund the breadth and diversity of projects versus the number of organisations who applied. However, organisations such as

Bromsgrove and Redditch Network offer support to more inexperienced groups in finding and applying for other sources of funding. The UKSPF for 25/26 also provided funding to support the Voluntary Sector and Community Groups with bid writing training.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – List of Successful Grant Applications

Appendix 2 – Voluntary & Community Sector Grants Policy

Appendix 3 – List of Unsuccessful Grant Application (Exempt item)

Background Papers - Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29 Executive Committee report dated 2nd September 2025 - [REPORT TITLE](#)

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Begum	14/1/26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans, Executive Director	14/1/25
Financial Services	Deb Goodall Assistant Director Finance and Customer Service	14/1/26
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings Principal Solicitor - Governance	14/01/26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green Policy Manager	14/1/26
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Not applicable	N/A