



Rochford District  
Council

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Voluntary Sector Grants Allocation Decision 2024/25</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Executive Lead Member, Leisure, Tourism &amp; Wellbeing, Cllr Julie Gooding</b>

## REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an update of the options for Members to agree a direction for the 25k allocation for 2024-25 to support our local CVS and the work undertaken by officers to run the voluntary grants process and to support the local CVS function for the district.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1** - To continue to run the 10k Grants process for local organisations and projects. Agreement of this by the executive would allow the grants process to be released and run for for 4 weeks during February. A cross party members panel to be formed for March by the lead member and the panel dates a set with the salient information from the applications to score against the RDC business plan and the H&WB Strategy Priorities.
- R2** - To change the current process and allow for a decision paper to come back to the Executive Group in April 2024 to include the results of the grants process for 24-25, provide an update on the new Essex model, agree RDC approach and funding allocation, and also provide full results and outcomes from the Voluntary Sector Grants given out in 23-24, including a full year report of activity from RRAVS.
- R3** - To support RRAVS resilience in the interim with a transition payment of £10k which has been identified within the business case for Ukraine grant monies.

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**SUPPORTING INFORMATION****1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Each year Rochford District Council sets an indicative budget, and a paper is presented to the Executive Group to propose the spend for the £25,000. The process for this in recent years has not changed and it is usually agreed that the fund is top sliced £15k for to fund our local CVS, RRAVS, and 10K is set aside for a voluntary sector grants process to be run by officers for local groups and organisations. This year's process needs to change as per the reasons for recommendations set out below.

- 1.1 Essex County Council is currently procuring a new model for the delivery of CVS services across the county. They have committed to streamlining the ask of the VCS infrastructure where possible and encouraging a keen focus on capacity building and maximising the conditions for communities to thrive. The new model is likely to be delivered by CVS partnerships that have been formed by current district CVS organisations in response to the new model with the contract starting in April 2024. This means that RRAVS in its current organisational format will not be operating as the commissioned service for the district by Essex County Council in April 2024. This does not mean that RRAVS ceases as an organisation but depending on the procurement outcome will be transitioning into a wider organisation.
- 1.2 At this time, we do not understand what the new model will look like and deliver but we do have an opportunity to provide the funding we usually allocate to RRAVS as our CVS deliverer to uplift the future provision for the district. This decision can not be made before the new service is announced and the key deliverables and KPI information is shared. To provide resilience whilst we make the decision on future support for CVS functions in the district we have allocated £10k in the Ukraine Grant business plan.
- 1.3 The members panel decision for 23-24 was delayed this year in coming to executive and so this affect the timescales in which the services can be delivered and reported on. This report to the Executive Group recommends allowing additional time to deliver the projects and for outcomes to be collected in march 2024 and the additional information be included in the proposed paper in April.

For note on what will be included in the report the 23-24 decision made by the panel was for funding awarded to the following:

Organisation/Project	Amount Awarded
Supporting Carers And Families Together (SCAFT)	Full £1000 applied for awarded
Bar N Bus	Full £1000 applied for awarded
The Megacentre Rayleigh Cost of Living Hub@megacentre	Full £1000 applied for awarded
Blind and Sight Impaired Society (Basis)	Full £1000 applied for awarded
Trust Links	Full £1000 applied for awarded
East Essex Hackspace CIC	Full £1000 applied for awarded
SPACE	Full £1000 applied for awarded
Life Community Church (EPIC)	Half of what was applied for, £500 awarded
Cake Club CIO	Half of what was applied for, £500 awarded
The Megacentre Rayleigh – Youth support project	Half of what was applied for, £500 awarded
The Megacentre Rayleigh - Aging Well/ older peoples support Hub@megacentre	Half of what was applied for, £500 awarded
STRM - SEND the Right Message Charity	Half of what was applied for, £500 awarded
Rochford Town Sports & Social Club	Half of what was applied for, £500 awarded

## 2.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 All other costs are within existing budgets set aside for voluntary sector grants for this financial year.

## 3.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Any work undertaken by the Council, either by itself or in partnership will be in line with statutory legal guidance.

## 4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 4.1 See under financial implications.

## 5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Failed applications where possible are guided to other available funding available locally and countywide that may support the outcomes of the projects and support resilience in organisations within the district.

## 6.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Ongoing consultation with members and wider partners through existing networks, communications through media and social media and updated information to be added to RDC webpages for grants.

## 7.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful.
  - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that ‘marriage and civil partnership’ is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic.

## 9.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct economic or environmental implications beyond those noted within the content of the report.

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## APPENDICES

None

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

VSG Decision Paper to the Executive October 2023

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Executive Group</b>	<b>TBC</b>
<b>Executive Group</b>	<b>TBC</b>