



COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE FORUM

BUSINESS & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

PAPER A

10 SEPTEMBER 2025

1) PURPOSE

To agree on the creation and scheduling of a Community Collaborative Forum originally proposed by Deputy Mayor in May 2025 to engage and support community businesses, groups, and voluntary organisations in a fair and equitable manner. The Town Council will act as facilitator, offering coordination and support to foster greater collaboration across sectors.

2) PROPOSAL

This initiative proposes the establishment of a regular Community Collaborative Forum, hosted by the Town Council, to bring together representatives from local businesses, voluntary organisations, and community groups. The forum will serve as a platform for dialogue, resource-sharing, and strategic collaboration, with the Council acting as a neutral facilitator.

3) KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- a. To promote inclusive and transparent engagement across community sectors.
- b. To support the launch and implementation of the Council's **Support in Kind Policy**, offering non-financial assistance such as use of facilities, staff expertise, and promotional support
- c. To strengthen community networks and encourage joint initiatives that benefit the town.
- d. To ensure that Council support is distributed equitably and in alignment with public interest

4) CONSULTATION PLAN

A targeted consultation will be conducted with a sample of stakeholders including Ventnor Traders, Voluntary and Sports Organisations. The final sample spread will be agreed upon by Council. The aim is to assess interest, gather feedback, and refine the forum's structure and frequency.

5) LAUNCH TIMELINE

Subject to positive consultation outcomes, the first forum is proposed for **end of October 2025**.

6) GOVERNANCE & FACILITATION

The Town Council will facilitate the forum, ensuring fair representation and adherence to principles of openness, inclusivity, and collaboration.

7) RATIONALE FOR SUPPORT IN KIND PRINCIPLE:

The principle of *Support in Kind* reflects a commitment to enabling community-led action through practical, non-financial means. It recognises that access to space, expertise, and visibility can be as valuable as funding, and that councils have a unique role in unlocking these resources. This approach aligns with best practice guidance from NALC and SLCC, which advocate for councils to act as enablers of community resilience and innovation.

8) RECOMMENDATIONS

If committee approval to proceed with:

- a) Consultation.
- b) Agreement on sample spread and consultation approach.
- c) Drafting of forum terms of reference and scheduling framework.
- d) Preparation for October launch, including communication and logistics.
- e) Take to Full Council Meeting for approval.