



SUPPORT IN KIND POLICY

**BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY
COMMITTEE**

PAPER C

12 NOVEMBER 2025

The purpose of this Report is to ask Members to discuss and evaluate the diverse ways in which Ventnor Town Council has supported community organisations and events in the past and how they would like to continue this support in future years.

No. DETAILS

1) BACKGROUND

- a) Ventnor Town Council provides support in kind for a number of events and projects in the form of printing, promotion and advertising for marshals and volunteering at events.
- b) Ventnor Town Council has received requests for financial support over the last year from organisations but has not agreed to these requests due to VTC's financial constraints and the lack of a grants policy.
- c) The matter of support in kind was discussed at the Business and Community Committee on 27 May. At the Policy and Resources Committee meeting of 1 July 2025, it was resolved to instruct the Business and Community Committee to draft the Policy and include an appendix on small grants.

2) CONSIDERATIONS

- a) Ventnor Town Council Officers have been researching other councils' policies for support-in-kind and small grants funding to inform policy development. Officers would like to bring the advantages and disadvantages of both types of support to the committee for discussion before further work is undertaken on policy development.
- b) Several town and parish councils on the island offer financial support by way of small grants.
- c) The burden of support-in-kind assistance on officer and staff time is increasing. Many staff members are involved in support-in-kind activities and there are implications to be considered such as unsociable work hours including evenings and weekends, time away from the office and Time-Off-In-Lieu.
- d) There are occasions where monetary support would be of great benefit to the community and an offer of a Support-in-Kind would not be appropriate alternative.

3) RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that members consider the different types of support that Ventnor Town Council may be able to offer to community groups. The committee can take the results of their discussion as a recommendation to the Full Council, to inform the budget for 2026/27.

APPENDIX:

EXPLORING SUPPORT-IN-KIND VS. SMALL GRANT FUNDING FOR LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND EVENTS

1. Introduction

This document aims to inform discussion within the Business and Community Committee about the relative merits of support-in-kind and small grant funding. It considers the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

2. Definitions

- **Support-in-Kind:** Non-monetary assistance such as free use of venues, equipment, staff time, promotional support, printing, or logistical help.
- **Small Grant Funding:** Direct financial contributions to organisations or events, typically with application and reporting requirements.

3. Advantages of Support-in-Kind

- Cost-effective for the council.
- Encourages collaboration and resource-sharing.
- Builds stronger relationships with community groups.
- Can be more flexible and responsive.

4. Disadvantages of Support-in-Kind

- May not meet all needs (e.g. insurance, licenses, materials).
- May be harder to quantify and track impact.
- Risk of perceived inequality or inconsistency.
- Limited by staff capacity and council resources.

5. Advantages of Small Grant Funding

- Empowers organisations with autonomy.
- Easier to measure financial impact and outcomes.
- Can attract match funding or unlock other resources.
- Transparent and structured process.

6. Disadvantages of Small Grant Funding

- Requires budget allocation and oversight.
- It can be competitive and exclusionary.
- May favour more established groups.
- May have an administrative burden for both applicants and council.

7. Local Examples from Ventnor Town Council

- **Support-in-Kind:** Ventnor Town Council has provided printing, promotional support, and marshals for events. These contributions have helped maintain community engagement during budget constraints.

- **Small Grant Funding Challenges:** Requests for financial support were not approved due to financial limitations and the absence of a formal grants policy. This led to a proposal to develop a Support-in-Kind Policy.

8. Next steps

- **Develop a Support-in-Kind Policy:** Create a clear framework outlining what types of in-kind support can be offered, eligibility criteria, and how decisions are made.
- **Develop a Small Grants Policy:** Create a policy with clear eligibility criteria, fair decision making, types of activities that will be supported and how much can be applied for.
- **Pilot a Hybrid Model:** Consider offering a mix of small grants and in-kind support, depending on the nature of the request and council resources.
- **Consult with Stakeholders:** Engage local organisations to gather feedback on their needs and preferences regarding support types.
- **Ensure Transparency and Equity:** Establish a simple process for requesting and approving support-in-kind, with attention to fairness across different groups and events.
- **Use Metrics to Evaluate Impact:**
 - *Resource Utilisation:* Staff hours, venue usage, materials provided.
 - *Community Reach:* Attendance figures, number of groups supported, promotional engagement.
 - *Financial Value:* Estimated cost savings for both council and recipients.
 - *Impact and Outcomes:* Feedback from recipients, follow-up activities, sustainability.
 - *Equity and Distribution:* Diversity and geographic spread of supported groups.
 - *Administrative Efficiency:* Time and effort required to deliver support compared to grant processes.

9. Conclusion

Both support-in-kind and small grant funding have distinct advantages. A balanced approach, guided by a clear policy and informed by community feedback, can help Ventnor Town Council continue to support local organisations effectively and equitably.