

	<p align="center"><b>Resources &amp; Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 4 November 2025</p>
	<p align="center"><b>Report from the Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy</b></p>
	<p align="center"><b>Lead Member - Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power (Councillor Jake Rubin)</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in Brent</b></p>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	<p>Tessa Awe Project Lead Officer, Service Reform &amp; Strategy <a href="mailto:Tessa.Awe@brent.gov.uk">Tessa.Awe@brent.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Rhodri Rowlands Director Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building &amp; Engagement, Service Reform &amp; Strategy <a href="mailto:Rhodri.Rowlands@brent.gov.uk">Rhodri.Rowlands@brent.gov.uk</a></p>

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates on work to develop and support the VCSE sector in Brent. The report provides information on the sector, current VCSE and community grant funding and capacity building support.
- 1.2 The Committee is also provided with the initial findings from the recent VCSE Shaping the Future Summit and subsequent steps and initiatives that are planned to further develop and support the sector in line with our shared vision – “a thriving, resilient VCSE sector that has the resources, skills and confidence to deliver better outcomes for local communities – supporting individuals, grassroots groups and organisations to build skills, realise goals, and drive aspirations in their neighbourhoods”.

- 1.3 It also summarises how the Council is responding to the Local Government Association's (LGA) Corporate Peer Review recommendations in respect of reviewing and strengthening relationships and support for the VCSE sector.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

That Committee:

- 2.1 Note and comment on the contents of this paper.

## **3.0 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context**

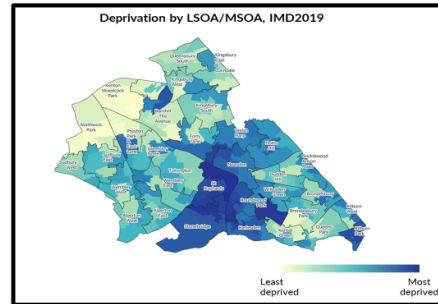
- 3.1 Partnership with the VCSE sector is embedded within Brent's 2023–2027 Borough Plan *Moving Brent Forward Together*. The Plan emphasises collaboration with residents, partner organisations and voluntary groups to deliver better outcomes and ensure no one is left behind.
- 3.2 The VCSE contributes directly to key borough priorities such as tackling poverty, improving health and wellbeing, and fostering safer and stronger communities. Community organisations provide essential services — from welfare advice to health outreach and youth development — that complement statutory provision and strengthen neighbourhood resilience.
- 3.3 The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge recommended that Brent refresh its relationships (such as the development of a Compact) with the VCSE and strengthen engagement with grassroots organisations. This report outlines the steps already underway to positively address those recommendations through the adoption of new shared partnership vision and emerging action plan, co-developed and supported by a cross-sector Steering Group.

## **4.0 The VCSE Sector in Brent**

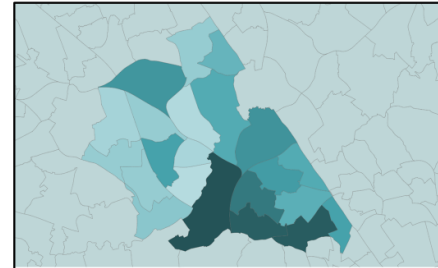
### Overview

- 4.1 Brent's VCSE sector is large, diverse and vital to the borough's social and economic fabric. There are currently estimated to be over 1,100 active VCSE organisations, supported by around 12,500 volunteers and 2,700 employees.
- 4.2 The picture below summarises key data on the VCSE sector. The data is derived from various sources including the Charity Commission and 360Giving.

- 1,120 recorded VCSEs in Brent.
- An estimated 2,700 employees, 12,500+ volunteers, and 4,000 trustees.
- In 2023–24, Brent-based VCSE organisations had a combined income of nearly £412 million and spent £370 million,
- £167 million received in grant funding from a diverse mix of major funders
- Strong correlation between Brent’s areas of higher deprivation and presence of VCSEs



Number of VCSEs by ward - darker areas reflect higher numbers of VCSEs

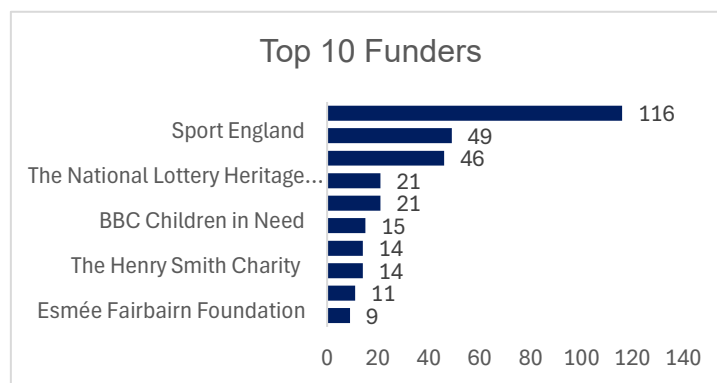


Category	Income range	VCSEs (n)
Very low / no income	£0-£10k	284
Small	£10k-£100k	229
Medium	£100-£1m	186
Large	£1m-£10m	52
Major	£10m-£100m	3
Super Major	£100m+	1
<b>Total*</b>	<b>£0-£10k</b>	<b>755</b>

Number of Brent VCSE organisations by £ income  
\*Total discounts VCSE organisations with unknown income

4.3 The sector’s combined income in 2023–24 was estimated to be approximately £412 million, with £167 million received from grant funding. Between 2020-2024 estimated funding to the VCSE sector in Brent shows that:

- A total of £538.3M funding has been received by Brent organisations, with 21% (£115.4M) from Grantmaking organisations and Lottery Distributors
- The highest number of grants were received from The National Lottery Community Fund, Sport England, and John Lyon’s Charity.
- Funding from government and non-government funders has seen opposite trends from 2020 to 2024 - grants from non-government sources seeing an upward trends



## 5.0 Overview of Council Grant Funding

5.1 The Council recognises the VCSE as a key delivery partner and crucial to the delivery of priorities and improved outcomes for residents. The Council provides a wide range of grant funding initiatives that support the VCSE in various ways

including to deliver services, capacity building and structured collaboration with and alongside the Council.

### Community Grant Funding

5.2 The following section summarises key 2024/25 (unless otherwise stated) VCSE and community grant funding initiatives:

- **Neighbourhood CIL Grants** – £1.5 million across five Brent Connects areas. £8m for projects across the borough being delivered by the Council – Investing in Brent Programme approved for delivery in 2025/26.
- **Love Where You Live** – £66,000 awarded to 130 local projects. New partnership with Wembley Stadium Foundation (WSF) in 2025 brings new £420k investment in community grants for benefit of Brent - £100k awarded to 35 local projects in September 2025
- **Brent Health Matters** – £433,000 awarded to 46 projects tackling health inequalities.
- **Together Towards Net Zero** – £254,000 across four rounds supporting environmental action.
- **Community Chest Fund** – £45,000 awarded to seven grassroots groups in 2025.
- **Edward Harvist**- From 2023 awarded £367,756.07 to 76 organisations.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Grant** - £30,000 available and is being launched in 2025

5.3 Other grant funding examples include:

- **Holiday Activities & Food Programme** - £1m allocated to Brent in 2023-2024. Allocations based on the number of children eligible for benefits-related free school meals in each local authority area.
- **Brent Resident Support Fund:** £5,562,444.56 with 4,075 grant applications approved. This funding aims to assist Brent residents facing financial hardship by providing support for essentials such as food, energy, water, and other household necessities.
- **Homes for Ukraine** - £350,000 awarded to 5 organisations providing support in areas such as mental health, housing, e-visa and employment
- **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** - £140,000 awarded to 2 organisations for employment support and disabilities employment support focusing on SEND
- **London Crime Prevention Fund** - £500,00 (3 yrs) for Exploitation & Vulnerability Panels, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, Brent Triage, Perpetrator Domestic Abuse Programme, Knife Crime Awareness Programme
- **Youth Justice** - £2m awarded to 5 VCSE capital projects

## Grant Monitoring

- 5.4 Monitoring of grants demonstrates measurable local benefits, including improved wellbeing, increased volunteering, support for communities most in need and stronger local partnerships. Each of these grant programmes includes monitoring of outputs. For example, NCIL projects must report on local engagement (e.g. number of residents benefiting) and often require community volunteers, ensuring a multiplier effect. Monitoring is set out from the inception of the grant.
- 5.5 However, grants are often monitored differently, with some departments having their own approach. For example, to support effective monitoring and evaluation, the Together Towards Net Zero team requests relevant documentation prior to issuing the grant. All recipients are bound by the terms of the grant funding agreement, which specifies permissible use of funds and includes applicable clawback provisions. As the grant is disbursed in full as a one-off upfront payment, monitoring can be particularly challenging with newly formed groups or organisations. Consequently, they often receive limited or poor-quality monitoring information.
- 5.6 Monitoring can often be an arduous task for small organisations and requires significant officer time. Once the programmes are launched and grant assessments completed, there isn't sufficient capacity for effective monitoring for the number of successful projects and grant rounds. Organisations also require capacity building support to ensure that they are capturing relevant data.
- 5.7 It is essential given these challenges that the Council adopts a proportionate approach to grant funding monitoring in future. As such, consideration of monitoring processes is included in the current community grants review.

## Community Grants Review

- 5.8 A community grants review is underway. This review entails a deep dive into the processes of council grant-making with the aim of understanding all processes and making it more efficient where required. The overall aim is to develop options for future funding that streamlines processes, easier accessibility for local VCSE organisations and residents, a unified approach across departments and simpler monitoring for both organisations and officers.
- 5.9 We also aim to ensure that grant rounds do not overlap, application processes are simplified, especially for residents, and grassroots VCSE payments are made on time, use a single platform to be able to monitor grants effectively, collect project and demographics data and ensure there are no duplication of funding and efforts across departments. More efficiency with grant-making may also contribute to financial savings.
- 5.10 The outputs from this review will also contribute to the Council's long-term strategic response to VCSE funding and capacity building challenges. This is

anticipated to be an evolving, proactive and positive response to better ensure grant funding continues to support the long-term health and sustainability of VCSE organisations in Brent and in doing so, they can continue to meet the needs of Brent residents and communities. The review has been welcomed by VCSE's.

- 5.11 The grants review will be completed by the end of November 2025, with initial recommendations and future direction for consideration by the Council's Corporate Management Team in December 2025.

## **6.0 VCSE Capacity Building Support**

- 6.1 CVS Brent currently delivers capacity building services in the borough. While some capacity building support is provided elsewhere, the main support and Council funded provision is via CVS. Since 2023 they have supported - 253 organisations in 2023/24, 313 in 2024/25 and in the current year to date (2025/26) they have supported 166 organisations.

- 6.2 The current capacity building contract ends in April 2026. One of the key priorities in over the next 6 months is to establish a robust and forward-looking capacity building offer that better responds to the challenges and issues facing the sector.

- 6.3 The Shaping the Future of Brent's VCSE Summit provided a wide range of input from close to 100 VCSE representatives. We will also conduct further engagement and review recommendations from CVS Brent's ongoing internal review to help shape an offer that is fit for purpose to ensure we are meeting the needs of the sector. We anticipate a more bespoke offer will be in place in 2026/27.

## **7.0 A Vision for the VCSE in Brent – What We Are Working Towards**

### Shared vision

- 7.1 The Council, working with VCSE partners via a cross-sector Steering Group has developed a shared vision to underpin our commitments to supporting the sector in Brent:

*“A thriving VCSE sector that has the resources, skills and confidence to deliver better outcomes for local communities – supporting individuals, grassroots groups and organisations to build skills, realise goals, and drive aspirations in their neighbourhoods is a key priority for Brent”*

- 7.2 This vision recognizes both existing strengths and challenges. Brent's VCSE already has successful initiatives (e.g. joint health outreach projects, volunteered libraries, multicultural festivals, shared community gardens) demonstrating the sector's innovation. At the same time, feedback has identified gaps in communication, uneven capacity among neighbourhood groups, and the need for more inclusive decision-making.

- 7.3 Our vision therefore includes concrete steps to build trust and capacity: for example, by co-creating a new Partnership Compact with VCSE input and by enhancing infrastructure support. It also prioritizes engagement with Brent's diverse communities – ensuring that new and under-served groups (e.g. recent migrant communities, small faith-based charities) are connected into the sector and supported. In summary, the vision is a thriving VCSE sector fully integrated into Brent's community leadership, driving improvement in areas like public health, skills development and social cohesion.

#### Responding to the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

- 7.4 The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge made the following recommendation: In response to this and underpinned by our shared vision, the Council has set four broad objectives or milestones that is guiding our work. They are set out below alongside a brief overview of progress against each:

**7.5 Milestone 1: *Co-create a refreshed Compact / Partnership Strategy (Participation & Partnerships) with the VCSE and partners to align shared priorities, values, and foster collaborative working and capacity building.***

- 7.5.1 *Progress:* The Shaping the Future of Brent's VCSE event marked wider engagement with the sector to endorse our shared vision ("Compact"). The next steps will include the action plan and a programme of communications to support delivery. In addition, engagement has been ongoing with the sector over the past two years via events, workshops, focus groups, grants, commissioned services, boards and steering groups. We are also reviewing how to strengthen our offer to the sector to ensure they have the necessary support and tools to deliver effectively and sustainably.

**7.6 Milestone 2: *Review and recommission, in partnership with the VCSE, a social infrastructure capacity-building offer.***

- 7.6.1 *Progress:* CVS Brent currently delivers capacity building services in the borough. They held the VCIS (Voluntary Community Infrastructure Support) contract for 2 years from April 2023 and the current contract ends in April 2026. CVS Brent have commissioned an external review to inform their future development as an organisation and we anticipate this feeding into the future commissioned offer. As a council will analyse information gathered from the sector at the recent Shaping the Future of Brent's VCSE event, conduct further engagement and review recommendations from CVS Brent's internal review to help shape an offer that is fit for purpose to ensure we are meeting the needs of the sector. We anticipate a more bespoke offer will be in place in 2026/27. We are also looking widely to external best practice and examples of provision elsewhere to inform our offer; this will continue into the next year.

**7.7 Milestone 3: *Use the Commissioning Community of Practice (CoP) and other programmes (e.g. Radical Place Leadership, Adult Social Care transformation) to develop new approaches to shared challenges.***

- 7.7.1 *Progress:* Brent Council has established a cross-cutting Commissioning CoP which meets monthly with participation from policy leads (e.g. Housing, Public

Health, ASC), finance, and VCSE representatives. This forum is piloting co-commissioning models on issues like youth mental health and community safety. We anticipate the CoP also working to support the future capacity building offer and future review of VCSE provided commissioned services. The CoP is also working closely alongside other initiatives such as Radical Place Leadership.

**7.8 Milestone 4:** *Explore opportunities to develop, grow, and attract new social infrastructure & investment in the borough.*

**7.8.1 Progress:** The Council is actively seeking ways to bring additional resources and capacity to Brent. We have recently secured £750,000 from Arts Council England (ACE) for the “Creative People and Places (CPP) National Portfolio Programme 2026-29”. A new partnership was secured with Wembley Stadium Foundation (WSF) in May 2025 which has generated additional £450k community grant funding. Brent Giving – a new social infrastructure has been established, launching this year and brings new capacity and grant making expertise to the borough. In parallel to this work, the Council is also developing a new approach to social value and this aims to optimise the contributions, investment and resources businesses and other investors can commit to Brent.

*Shaping the Future of the VCSE*

**7.9** A cross-sector **VCSE Steering Group** (formed in 2025, co-chaired by council and sector representatives) is guiding this work and ensuring the co-development and delivery in all we do.

**7.10** The Cross-Sector (includes VCSE, NHS, Housing Association, Business, Council) Steering Group is brought together and supported by Brent Council, but it is important to be clear that this is not a council-led initiative. The Council’s role is to help make things happen by providing support, creating space for collaboration, and enabling the sector to lead the way.

**7.11** The Group is working together to:

- Develop a shared vision for how the council and VCSE sector work together and identify collective commitments and actions that will help to deliver it
- Co-design a new support offer based on what the sector actually needs
- Explore and create new approaches to Social Value, that work better for Brent including for example, a Social Value Charter that organisations across Brent can sign up to.

**7.12** In September 2025, Brent hosted an event with almost 100 delegates in attendance, including community group leaders (from all wards and backgrounds), faith leaders, young people’s groups, and officers from key partner agencies (NHS, Housing Associations, local Businesses etc.). The event was co-designed and coordinated through the Steering Group

**7.13** The objectives of the event were to:



- understand the needs and aspirations of the VCSE sector,
- recognise the sector's unique strengths and impact,
- shape a shared vision for more effective collaboration and partnership and
- identify opportunities and priorities to support the sector.



7.14 The World café format consisted of plenary discussions and breakout workshops on key thematic areas (e.g. leadership & advocacy, partnership & collaboration, volunteering, community development, funding and resources). These were all identified and agreed as being relevant and of importance to Brent via the steering group. They also reflect sector best practice set out by NAVCA – National Association for Voluntary and Community Action.

#### Key findings and emerging areas of recommendation

7.15 The table below summarises the initial findings and identifies emerging recommendations. The cross-sector steering group will review and further develop an initial action plan in response in November 2025. This will then be tested and further developed with wider VCSE representatives to ensure ownership and additional actions are captured.

**Partnership & Collaboration:**

- Explore potential for joint bids for external resources bringing the Council and sector together
- Information on the sector is known needs to be more widely and practically shared to encourage and support collaboration
- Brent's business community need to be engaged as civil society partners, if not through the local tax system (s106; CIL) or by extracting greater/more meaningful social value in public procurement
- Learning from other Local Authorities (Camden; Hackney; Southwark)

**Community Development:**

- More neighbourhood-focused Council working
- Devolution of decision making and resources to local communities
- Skills development among (young) community leaders/workers; future Cllrs; build on Young Mayor
- Garnering more intelligence and information from communities/grant applications etc to inform LBB's strategic commissioning/service design
- Larger organisations to lead/resource thematic working/groups and help build capacity of smaller community organisations

**Funding & Resources:**

- Genuine partnership funding between funders and among delivery consortia (large helping small and creating economies of scale/shared back offices)
- Matching funders with projects – Match My Project including targeting developer/business funding
- Designing grant funds which are realistic and proportionate in expectations
- Willingness of the Council to divest assets/ resources to the sector which it can use to leverage additional investment/grants
- Support for new starters and smaller grass-roots organisations, which lack capacity to secure funding

**Volunteering:**

- Provide/commission baseline training for volunteers where this is not cost-effective for individual VCSEs
- Develop a Volunteering Strategy and a Council hub model with policy updates and resources to support Brent volunteers
- Make more use of employee time for volunteering
- Knit volunteering better into skills and employment pathways locally - support volunteers into paid work

**Leadership & Advocacy**

- Leadership development of young people in Brent – securing future capacity and potential
- More Thematic Networks/Forums – bring people together around common interests / services / skills
- Better evidence base and intelligence on the sector (mapping)
- Coaching, mentoring, job-sharing which exchange skills and knowledge and build mutual understanding and trust
- Shared long-term vision and purpose for the VCSE sector
- Long-term investment fund potential – with capacity building built in alongside community grants

## The way forward and next steps

7.16 Post summit, the key next steps are summarised below:

- Co-develop a 'developing the VCSE action plan' in response to the VCSE summit with endorsement by the sector and partners: by January 2026
- Develop supporting communications plan to support delivery
- Complete Community Grants Review: by December 2026
- Establish future Community Grant Making Model and manage transition to new arrangements: January 2026-January 2027
- Implement Community Grant Review recommendations to streamline and optimise administration processes and secure best value use of resources: by April 2026
- Co-develop and produce new VCSE capacity building requirements, service specifications: by April 2026
- Tender for new VCSE capacity building offer: by December 2026
- Review future VCSE contracts / commissioning opportunities

## **8.0 Developing and Working with the VCSE in Brent (Examples of Support and Initiatives)**

8.1 This section summarises some of the other initiatives and examples of support that the Council is collaborating with the VCSE on. This is not intended to be an exhaustive review, rather to summarise examples in addition to the work already set out in this report.

### Radical Place Leadership

- 8.2 The Radical Place Leadership programme is all about rethinking how we work and deliver services for residents in a way that starts to break down siloes across the Council, partners and further beyond into local communities, working more collaboratively alongside residents to shape our services.
- 8.3 As part of this, we have established a new, neighbourhood-focussed team for the Harlesden Connects footprint. This team is made up of colleagues from across the Council (e.g. ASC, Housing, Employment), as well as colleagues from the NHS and VCSE partners (e.g. Crisis, Sufra). The team spends 1 day per week together and has so far been through a training and onboarding process, while visiting local community settings, Brent Council services and VCSE partners to understand what is currently on offer, as well as the wants and needs of the local community.
- 8.4 As part of this team, we have dedicated preventative resource that is full-time in the neighbourhood footprint (2x Social Prescribers, 1x Preventative caseworker), who will be our dedicated relational resource, working alongside residents who may be at risk of homelessness, financial hardship or whose children may not be ready to start education. The wider team will 'huddle' around these lead workers 1x per week to discuss how they can best support the residents we are working with.

### Community Power

- 8.5 *Community Convening:* We have partnered with Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum (Lead), Jason Roberts Foundation and Sport at the Heart, who will become our 'Community Convenors'. Within this role, they will be tasked with coordinating the voluntary sector in Harlesden, identifying opportunities for closer collaboration between groups and gaps in service provision.
- 8.6 *Participatory Grant Making:* We have partnered with an organisation called Brent Giving, who will be running a participatory grant making pilot in Harlesden, Stonebridge and South Kilburn. They have recruited a panel of 15 residents who will be welcoming bids from local community groups and VCSEs to deliver services related to poverty reduction. As well as building local capacity and upskilling residents to support grant making, the programme will directly support local projects.

### Social Value

- 8.7 The Council is updating its Social Value Policy and approach. This draws on feedback from VCSE to adopt an approach that better prioritises locally led needs and projects and secures long-term legacy impact for Brent residents and communities.
- 8.8 As part of this, the Council is partnering with Match My Project. This digital platform connects suppliers with local community initiatives so that social value commitments deliver tangible benefits for Brent's people and places.

### Market Rent Reduction Pilots and Social Value

- 8.9 Three selected new lettings (Harmony Kitchen, Brent Civic Centre, Roy Smith House and Picture Palace), through which Brent Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations seeking to rent Brent Council premises may be eligible for reduced rent rates reflecting the value their use of the premises will bring to the local community.
- 8.10 The framework outlines an approach for reduced market rent for new lettings only, through which Brent Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations wishing to rent Brent Council premises may be eligible for reduced rent rates reflecting the value their use of the premises will bring to the local community.
- 8.11 One of the aims of the framework is to aid capacity building of local VCS organisations that may not currently be able to afford full market rent. Organisation's applying for a market rent reduction will be required to complete a Community Value Statement response. The questions in the statement have been developed in line with the Principles of the Property Strategy and are designed to ascertain the community value of the proposed use of the premises.

### New partnerships

- 8.12 *Brent Giving*: a newly constituted group of committed organisations, charities, businesses and individuals who have a vision of a connected Brent that is working towards ending poverty and inequality across the Borough. Their aim is to build and nurture an ecosystem between community groups, institutions and businesses who care about Brent and its people. Through combining resources (money, time, people and ideas) to support our communities, they aim to build a better borough for everyone – linking in with our borough plan priorities. Grants of £5,000 and £10,000 are available for residents, groups and organisations to deliver services to reduce poverty in Harlesden, Stonebridge and South Kilburn
- 8.13 *Wembley Stadium Foundation (WSF)*: new partnership enacted in May 2025 that means benefit to Brent residents and communities of an additional £450k investment in grant funding – delivered via Love Where You Live.

### Enhanced Engagement

- 8.14 The Council has stepped up engagement efforts. A dedicated *VCSE Engagement Officer* now sits in the Partnerships Team, liaising daily with community leaders. A monthly e-newsletter ("Brent VCSE Connect") was launched in 2024 and has over 800 subscribers, sharing funding opportunities and council updates. We also created the **Brent VCSE Network** on an online forum platform, where organisations can pose questions and collaborate between meetings. Additionally, council officers now regularly attend VCSE

cluster meetings across the borough (e.g. faith leader forums, youth coalitions) to gather frontline feedback.

## **9.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

9.1 Extensive stakeholder engagement has been undertaken through the *Shaping the Future of Brent's VCSE* event (September 2025), ongoing Steering Group meetings, thematic workshops, and local cluster forums. Further engagement will be done with the Lead Cabinet member, ward members and VCSE groups until an implementation plan is finalised and a full offer for the VCSE is completed. Regular feedback and input is provided through the Lead Member Climate Change and Community Power. Feedback gathered directly informed the priorities, actions, and next steps outlined in this report.

## **10.0 Financial Considerations**

10.1 To detail any relevant financial and budgetary implications/comments relating to the proposals within the report.

## **11.0 Legal Considerations**

11.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. Any subsequent commissioning, grant agreements, or property-related arrangements will be subject to compliance with the Council's Constitution, Contract Standing Orders, and relevant legislation.

## **12.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

12.1 The proposals align with the Public Sector Equality Duty by promoting fair access, inclusivity, and capacity-building among Brent's diverse VCSE organisations. Many initiatives specifically target under-represented groups, including smaller grassroots and faith-based organisations, ensuring equitable participation across all communities.

## **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

13.1 The developing Brent's VCSE and supporting action plan will support Brent's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy through initiatives such as the *Together Towards Net Zero* grant fund and community greening projects. VCSE organisations are key partners in promoting sustainable behaviours and local environmental action.

## **14.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

14.1 The Market Rent Reduction Pilot supports VCSE organisations to access affordable premises, strengthening their ability to deliver services locally. There are no additional HR implications arising directly from this report.

## **15.0 Communication Considerations**

15.1 A communication plan will accompany the next phase of the VCSE Implementation Plan. Updates will be shared through CVS Brent's *VCSE Connect* newsletter, Council website, and regular partner briefings to ensure transparency and engagement across the sector.

**Report sign off:**

***Rachel Crossley***

Corporate Director, Service Reform and Strategy