

VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees present below their report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)." (As amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016)

Objectives and Activities

Objectives and aims

The charity works within the core activities of representation, liaison, enabling, developing and working in partnership with and on behalf of the local voluntary and community sector. Projects managed by the charity fit within these core activities and add to the strategy of building capacity within the voluntary and community sector primarily in North East Lincolnshire.

The charity has continued to deliver a number of successful grant funded projects and services as detailed in the notes.

Voluntary Action North East Lincolnshire (VANEL) provides: volunteer centre services, organisational health checks and diagnostic work, administrative support for its members and supporters including a payroll service, a small equipment hire service, IT technical support, web development, training, advocacy, access to fundraising and income generation opportunities, electronic information briefings and promotion of members' and volunteers activities plus strategic representation on some local partnerships.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Achievements and Performance

Charitable activities

The charity was successful in securing ongoing funding via the National Lottery Community Fund, The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, Local Trust, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Start For Life, Help For Health, Orsted and other sources to grow its volunteer brokerage and volunteering development services. A small management fee was earned from this work. Other monies dispersed to projects have had a measurable impact on the organisation's success in securing additional financial support and attracting matched funding from further sources of finance.

Voluntary Action North East Lincolnshire continues to play an active role as a representative of voluntary and community sector perspectives on some strategic partnerships in the local area, where relevant, including the Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership, Youth Engagement Alliance, Humber Watch, Involving Lincs, High Street Accelerator and Humber Resilience Forums.

Activities for the year which contribute to the objectives are as follows:

1. Increase the capacity of local VCS groups to perform effectively:

1.1 Via our information technology support service due to continued demand from VCS groups for affordable, understandable IT related support that groups can manage independently once our service has assisted with technical problems to enable groups to operate more effectively;

VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1.2 By offering organisational developmental support thanks to National Lottery, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and other funded projects for the benefit of VCS groups and to enable them to 'lever-in' additional funding via joint work between groups;

1.3 Through training and support: encouraged and celebrated volunteering with groups via the volunteer centre and the volunteer managers' network; promoted financial accountability within VCS organisations; provided training in preparing funding bids and grant applications; delivered fraud awareness/personal security sessions; improved safeguarding knowledge; raised awareness of PREVENT, cyber-crime and SCAMS; promoted achievement of quality assurance accreditations amongst VCS groups ; assisted VCS groups in obtaining and maintaining capital assets.

1.4 Via our specialist groups Neighbourhood Networking, Keeping Older People Safe and Grimsby Retailers in Partnership we have supported victims of anti-social behaviour and hate crime; neighbourhood watch forum members; Big Local North Cleethorpes committee; and via Safer Street monies we have supported groups to apply for and deliver themed projects for their beneficiaries.

2. Provide free/affordable services relevant to local VCS groups' needs:

2.1 Provided e-bulletins including stay safe, SCAMS information as part of membership service.

2.2 Provided direct tailor-made help to groups to find funds and supported with bid development.

2.3 Provided monthly payroll and pensions' service at an affordable rate for small groups.

2.4 Provided small equipment hire service for members for a small fee plus 'written off' items free.

2.5 Provided free signposting service for the benefit of member organisations to public/private and other voluntary sector services.

2.6 Identified and promoted new/diverse types of funding sources for benefit of local VCS groups.

2.7 Provided volunteer referral service and managers' network for members via Volunteer Service.

2.8 Provided support with small website development and ongoing maintenance for a small fee.

2.9 Provided IT trouble-shooting service for a small fee arising from member group demand.

2.10 Offered marketing opportunities/sponsorship at local events for members for a small fee.

3. Provide VCS representation within and for the wider community:

3.1 Promoted and represented VCS interests locally via various North East Lincolnshire Strategic Partnerships, including Safer and Stronger Communities Board, Safer Street Town Centre Strategic & Operational Groups, Humber Local Resilience Forum, Tactical Police Tasking Groups, Grimsby Town Centre Forum, Youth Engagement Alliance; Neighbourhood Forums; Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators Group and Humber Watch; Keep Britain Tidy campaign; Heritage Forum.

VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3.2 Promoted and represented VCS interests regionally via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside, Humberside Police; Humberside Fire & Rescue Service; Involving Lincs; Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Group; Humber Nature Partnership; Humber Infrastructure Partnership.

3.3 Promoted and represented VCS interests nationally via the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA); the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO); UK Youth, Green Influencers (Ernest Cook partnership) and Groundwork UK.

3.4 Helped develop the Big Local North Cleethorpes (BLNC) programme and continued to be commissioned as the Local Trusted Organisation (LTO) and worked with the Local Trust network.

3.5 Helped sustain and develop the Grimsby Retailers in Partnership (GRIP) CIC and commissioned to provide member support services for this Grimsby Town Centre partnership and its area of coverage along Grimsby Road into Cleethorpes Town Centre, continuing to secure additional funding to support the partnership.

4. Ensure the sustainability for VANEL as an organisation with appropriate staffing and adequately resourced operating structure:

4.1 Maintained charity membership fees at £25 per annum to contribute to staff admin time costs and provide minimum level of membership services and membership package offers to add value for members seeking volunteering support and to increase sustainability options;

4.2 Successfully sustained the Green Influencers programme with new funds to support Young People to volunteer and lead nature and social action projects within their communities.

4.3 Successfully supported the delivery of the North East Lincolnshire Neighbourhood Networking programme and extended this work into rural areas funded by the National Lottery Community Fund for 4 more years.

4.4 Actively taken practical steps to manage and reduce where possible any organisational indirect costs in order to retain the staff skills needed to deliver our outcomes as flexibly and cost effectively

4.5 As a result of the successful delivery of the initial Keeping Older People Safe (KOPS) programme supported by Big Local North Cleethorpes, its subsequent rollout delivered in the East Marsh and expansion into West Marsh as a result of Safer Street investment, we delivered a refreshed version of the KOPS programme in Cleethorpes & East Marsh maintaining sustainability.

4.6 Proactively identified and recruited staff on a freelance basis for ad hoc support as needed by new projects to meet the emerging needs of our members to ensure we were adequately and appropriately resourced to deliver our services.

5. Achieve wider recognition of VANEL as a provider of high quality, professional services for the local VCS:

5.1 Ongoing bespoke support, training/briefing and information provided throughout the year on demand and/or subject to funding available to deliver services on a tailor-made basis to local VCS groups and volunteers;

5.2 Maintained development staff to provide a range of organisational development support work including a series of briefing and training events promoting our wide range of development services across the area;

5.3 Participated in member organisations' and partners' promotional events and workshops to raise VANEL profile across the North East Lincolnshire area to support our groups with their work and share our skills and knowledge;

5.4 Maintained our Volunteering Development Service linked to our Volunteer Managers' Network to enable those managers to share best practice, learn from each other and benefit from professional support as and when needed and organised joint celebration of the annual national volunteers' week and neighbourhood watch week events with our members;

VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Financial Review

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds, which have not been designated for a specific use, will be maintained at a minimum level equivalent to three and a maximum level equivalent to six month's expenditure. The trustees consider that reserves at these levels will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. The minimum level of reserves has been maintained throughout the financial year, in addition to holding the required redundancy contingency.

Unrestricted reserves (excluding tangible fixed assets), amount to £167,809, restricted reserves being £44,378 and those funds held in trust Council Ward Projects of £10,220, giving total funds of £ 222,407 on 31st March 2025. This level of unrestricted general funds and total funds is considered vital in view of charity's main sources of income are received in arrears. The company's reserves policy is to attempt to ensure that there are sufficient funds available, after the company's redundancy commitment, to meet the anticipated expenditure requirements for a minimum of the following three months. This policy and the level at which it should be set is reviewed monthly by the Chair and Chief Officer and any suggested changes endorsed by the Executive Committee.

The deficit for the financial year ending 31st March 2025 amounts to £43,974; a decrease in VANEL unrestricted funds of £10,268, a decrease of £31,887 in funds held in trust (Big Local, Council Ward Projects and Hangout Youth Group) and a decrease in other restricted funds of £1,819 dealt with as shown in the statement of financial activities. There are no related party transactions and all principal funding sources are shown in the notes of the financial activities.

Risk management

The meeting of legal and financial obligations are required by our funders who carry our due diligence checks on our record keeping with the Charity Commission and Companies House which are all up to date with accounts and confirmation statements submitted on time. Our funders provide a continuous scrutiny of the way the organisation operates to ensure it is consistent with its policies and procedures and agreed project performance, which mitigate the risks to which the charity may be exposed.

The Trustees monitor the business risks, as set out in the organisation's annual strategy and business plan, plus any emerging risks that arise during the year linked to services and projects to which the charity is potentially exposed, at their quarterly committee meetings, to ensure that all risks are identified and mitigated appropriately.

Responsibilities for Preparing the Financial Statements

Company and charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees have:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- stated whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures;
- disclosed and explained any issues in the financial statements; and
- prepared the financial statements on the basis of a going concern.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

VANEL's key objectives, in support of its mission and key aims, are to:

1. Increase the capacity of local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups and organisations to perform effectively.

Key activities:

- I. Development work with new and growing/changing voluntary and community groups including social enterprises and other newly emerging VCS structures via management team.
- II. Encouraging and celebrating volunteering, linking volunteers with groups (via the Volunteering Development Service) and supporting the training and development of volunteers.
- III. Promoting financial accountability within VCS organisations through training for staff and trustees in managing their finances (via external support).
- IV. Providing coaching in preparing funding bids and contract applications (via Chief Officer, Contracts Manager and Development Manager).
- V. Championing group and individual engagement with information technology (via Development Manager).
- VI. Assisting local VCS groups in obtaining, maintaining, and sustaining capital assets (via Chief Officer, Contracts Manager and Development Manager).

2. Provide free/affordable services relevant to local VCS groups' needs.

Key activities:

- I. Developing and providing website blogs (Development Manager).
- II. Offering financial services such as payroll and pension service (Finance Manager)
- III. Providing access to funding sources (Chief Officer and Contracts Manager).
- IV. Administering local grant schemes (Contracts Manager).
- V. Providing internet based information service with links to relevant local and national VCS organisations (Development Manager and Chief Officer).
- VI. Providing training facilities (via member organisations/82 Grimsby Road, Cleethorpes).
- VII. Identifying and developing volunteering placements (Volunteer Support Worker).

VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3. Provide VCS representation within and for the wider community.

Key activities:

- I. Promoting and representing local VCS interests locally, regionally & nationally (Chief Officer).
- II. Removing barriers to VCS involvement in local, regional, national work (Chief Officer).
- III. Keeping the local VCS informed about relevant local, regional, and national changes and developments (Chief Officer).
- IV. Responding to VCS needs and facilitating skills and information exchange between groups as needed.
- V. Promoting partnership working within the VCS and between VCS and others as needed. (Team)
- VI. Participating in the NEL Community Safety Partnership and related working groups (Chief Officer)
- VII. Being a proactive member of local community forums as appropriate (Team as needed).
- VIII. Supporting North Cleethorpes Residents Group as Big Local legacy (Development Manager)
- IX. Supporting South Ward Resident Group as part of Clear Hold Build (Development Manager)
- X. Supporting Rural area resident groups as part of neighbourhood networking (Development Manager)

4. Ensure sustainability of VANEL as an organisation with relevant staffing and other resources needed.

Key activities:

- I. Implementing full cost recovery within VANEL funding bids (as far as practical). (Chief Officer)
- II. Negotiating tailor-made charging structures with each of our members for extra support. (C/Officer)
- III. Generating reserves adequate to enable us to develop and deliver new and existing services in response to local VCS needs and to maintain our reserves policy (Chief Officer).
- IV. Encouraging VCS groups to make full use of VANEL's services, including supporting their income generation to enable them to take up VANEL's charged services. (Team)
- V. Managing VANEL's indirect costs consistent with retaining the skills needed to deliver the business plan outcomes as flexibly and cost-effectively as possible. (Finance and Contracts Manager)
- VI. Exploring new and various different uses of resources to support service delivery.

VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

5. Maintain recognition of VANEL as a provider of high quality, professional services for local VCS organisations

Key activities:

- I. Maintaining and reviewing VANEL's policies and procedures annually with staff/trustees.
- II. Implementing pro-active staff member, volunteer and trustee development through a staff/trustee development plan that supports the needs of the Strategy and Business Plan. (Chief Officer)
- III. Maintaining and achieving any appropriate quality standard as needed. (whole team)
- IV. Working in partnership with other VCS organisations in Humber sub region and Lincolnshire County (Chief Officer)
- V. Representing North East Lincolnshire Voluntary and Community interests on the Humber Local Resilience Forum and Humber Watch (Development Manager).
- VI. Offering SCAMS/personal fraud briefings for vulnerable/elderly/victims of related crimes.
- VII. Offering Volunteer briefing sessions for individual people who choose to volunteer.
- VIII. Offering trustee briefing sessions for groups with existing and new trustees.

Governing document

Voluntary Action North East Lincolnshire (VANEL) is a registered charity number 1002624 and a company limited by guarantee, number 2593527.

The object of the charity, as stated in the Memorandum of Association, is to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community in the local government district of North East Lincolnshire and, in particular, the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness, and to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same and, to that end, to bring together in council representatives of the voluntary and community organisations within the area of benefit.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr Steve Beasant; Mr Alan Jones; Miss Victoria Russell; Mr Wayne Smith; Mrs Fumiko Czarnecki; Miss Jennifer Hodson; Mrs Nicola Aisthorpe (resigned 1st November 2024); Mr Peter Hewson (appointed 31st October 2024).

Organisation

Members of the Executive Committee of Trustees are elected annually in accordance with the regulations laid down in the Articles of Association. The Executive Committee meets six times per year and has overall responsibility for strategy, policy, and employment of staff. Operational and staff management issues are delegated to the Chief Officer. There are currently a total of 6 staff members (all part-time).

The minimum number of Trustees who may be appointed is 5 and the maximum is 15. The number is between 6 and 12, depending on the balance between retirees and new appointments. New trustees are recruited, based on the skills required, from within the senior managers and leaders of our member organisations. The Executive Committee meets every three months and calls additional meetings when special circumstances arise, for example during National Volunteers' Week and National Trustees' Week and for business planning.

Day to day operational matters, which include finance, HR/employment and delivery of services are delegated to the Chief Officer, Paula Grant.

VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Trustee induction and training

New Trustees undergo informal orientation sessions which include invitation to an Executive Committee meeting prior to becoming a Trustee, visiting the registered office of the company to familiarise themselves in the way the organisation conducts its day to day duties and implements decisions. Business planning, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and financial performance are also covered, and an induction pack is provided together with a one-to-one briefing session with the Chief Officer.

Trustees are encouraged to attend external training events and internal briefings with staff which assist them in undertaking their role where and when relevant and as appropriate.

The Board of Trustees approved the annual trustees' report.

Mr Stephen Beasant

Trustee (Chair)

Dated: