



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL GRANTS COMMITTEE
AT THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL, MARKET HARBOROUGH
10th July 2025 – 4:30 pm**

1 Participants

Jenny Balme	Chair of General Grants and Trustee
Chris Davies	Trustee
Wendy Hempson	Charity Secretary
Sarah Hill	Trustee
Tony Walters	Trustee

Apologies

Kerry Merryweather	Trustee
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2 Conflicts of Interest

Sarah declared an interest in the application from Arts Fresco and Chris declared that she had worked with VASL. The remaining Trustees present declared they had no conflicts of interest or loyalty but would declare it if one came up during the meeting.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting on 14th May 2025 – Appendix I

The draft minutes of the meeting of the General Grants Committee on 14th May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

4 Actions from previous meetings – Appendix II

The actions from previous meetings were noted as completed, as the meeting of the Contact Group for the VASL Community Champions project had been arranged for 24th July 2025.

5 Matters arising not on main agenda

There were none.

6 Budget for 2025 - £160,000

Trustees noted that £64,330 had been granted so far in 2025.

7 Charity Secretary's Report – Appendix III

The updates and reports in the Charity Secretary's report were noted.

8 Project Applications

8.1 Ridgeway Primary Academy – 2025-P2

The May 2025 Board approved the committee's proposed grant of £20,000 to pay for a new playground at Ridgeway Primary Academy, and the grant was paid to the school in June 2025.

8.2 VASL Community Champions – 2025-P3 – Appendix IV and V

An application for £27,500 annually for three years for VASL's Community Champions Project, which supported residents of Market Harborough who were over 60 years of age and who were lonely. Approximately 95 volunteers worked on the project which aimed to help people to feel involved and comfortable in their communities, to help them make new friends and to learn new IT skills.

The Charity's five-year grant (2019-2024) to support VASL's running costs at Torch House came to an end in December 2024. The grant was for £173,320 and was paid out over the five years with annual payments of £34,664. The Contact Group would meet with VASL on 24th July 2025.

9 Grants

9.1 Freedom Support Solutions – 2025-G15 – Appendix VI

An application for £350 for a compostable toilet on the allotment plot rented from the Charity by Freedom Support Solutions, a group of adults with learning disabilities. Freedom Support supported inclusive, hands-on activities that promoted wellbeing, independence, and life skills through gardening. Approximately 60 individuals would benefit from the toilet, 95% of whom were resident in the Charity's Area of Benefit. Trustees understood the benefits that the toilet would bring to the group and granted the request in full.

Action: Grant £350 to Freedom Support Solutions for a compostable toilet – Charity Secretary

9.2 Arts Fresco – 2025-G16 – Appendices VII and VIII

Sarah absented herself from the room for the duration of the discussion regarding the Arts Fresco application.

An application for £2,500 towards the cost of Arts Fresco, a free local event which had run successfully for 20 years and was popular and well attended. The festival was run entirely by volunteers and had no management costs. It strengthened local pride, mental wellbeing, community cohesion and promoted creativity, as well as offering development opportunities for young performers.

Point 3 of the actions from the Away Day in January 2025 was:

“3 Facilitation of free events:

To identify local events free to attend by local residents and to provide support to maximise feelings of public enjoyment and happiness.”

Trustees were in favour of supporting the application and granted the request in full. The committee would consider how further support could be offered for this free local event.

Action: Grant £2,500 to Arts Fresco – Charity Secretary

9.3 Welland Park Academy Financial Assemblies – 2025-G12 – Appendix XI

[This application was considered and approved by email on 11th July 2025, the day after the meeting, but was added to the minutes to facilitate record keeping.]

An application for £825 to pay for four hour long financial assemblies for Years 10 and 11, provided by Wize Up Financial Education. The sessions cover student finance, budget management, taxation, interview technique and more. The aim is to help prepare students for life beyond school. Trustees at the Away Day in January 2025 expressed support for these financial assemblies. The grant was awarded in full.

Action: Grant £825 to Welland Park Academy Financial Assemblies 2025-G12 – Charity Secretary

10 Meeting with Harborough District Council regarding engagement with young people – Appendix X

The meeting, on 12th June 2025, between the Charity and representatives from Harborough District Council (HDC) to discuss engagement with local young people, was noted. Topics covered included the Youth Council, how the Charity and Council could work together and the questionnaire HDC was going to send to young people in the district.

11 Meeting with the Cricket & Squash Club

A meeting was held on 9th July 2025 between the Charity's Project Working Committee and the Cricket & Squash Club to discuss the results of club's pre-planning application. The club's plans were ambitious and well thought through and there was potential for public benefit from new facilities for community use. A Board level decision would be needed in the near future regarding the level of the Charity's involvement, due to the elevated cost of the project.

12 Any Other Business

There was none.

13 Dates of meetings in 2025

- Thursday 7th August
- Thursday 18th September
- Thursday 6th November