

**Westminster Social Policy Forum conference:
Next steps for the charity sector in England and Wales**

Timing: Morning, Monday, 20th April 2026

Taking Place Online



**WESTMINSTER
SOCIAL POLICY
FORUM**

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Key considerations for the future of the charity sector in England and Wales**
Senior academic
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.25 **Sector priorities for policy, regulation and partnership working**
Senior representative, charities
- 9.35 **Diagnosis Connect and practical lessons for collaboration across health and civil society**
Senior representative, health
- 9.45 **The Civil Society Covenant - early experience of implementation and assessing priorities moving forward**
immediate operational implications for charities and delivery partners | implementing consistent commissioning and funding practices | role of the Joint Civil Society Covenant Council and early priorities for Task and Finish Groups | alignment across the current partnership framework, new fundraising standards, and recent governance reform | funding terms, grant standards and expectations around charities' independence and advocacy activity | ensuring opportunities and platforms for engagement | addressing key sector challenges outlined in Charity Sector Risk Assessment 2025 report | supporting place-based partnerships and routes for SMEs | monitoring, reporting and accountability frameworks | engagement standards between public bodies and civil society | implications of devolution and local government reorganisation arrangements | expectations for culture change within public bodies | navigating cost of living and income pressures, alongside implementation
Senior representative, environmental
Senior representative, justice
Senior representative, private sector
Senior representative, local authority
Senior representative, culture
- 10.15 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.50 Break
- 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.05 **Priorities and next steps for adopting the charitable soft opt-in**
Melissa Mathieson, Director, Regulatory Policy Projects, Information Commissioner's Office
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 **Assessing wider regulatory changes and implications for the charity sector**
Senior representative, charities
- 11.40 **Practicalities for implementing fundraising, governance, data and reporting reforms**
regulator powers and responsibilities, and implementation of the new Code of Fundraising Practice | financial reporting reform and SORP 2026 tiered requirements | developing Trustees' Annual Reports and sustainability reporting expectations | addressing non-compliance and malpractice | fundraising design and prize competitions across organisation sizes | improving public confidence and tackling unlicensed fundraising | third-party oversight, fraud and AML controls | data protection priorities and soft opt-in implementation under the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 | trustee duties under the Charity Act 2022 | sequencing and proportionality of cumulative reforms | board decisions on financial and reputational risk | securing staff and volunteer compliance | moral ex gratia payments rule reform | governance considerations in the use of AI and emerging technologies
Senior representative, fundraising
Senior representative, governance
Senior representative, data
Senior representative, social enterprise
Senior representative, legal
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Policy priorities for embedding the Civil Society Covenant across government and civil society**
Senior representative, policy
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Social Policy Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Harry Nelson, Westminster Social Policy Forum