

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy defines the term 'volunteering' and sets out the Council's principles and objectives with regard to the use of volunteers. Together with the accompanying Handbook for Managers on the Use of Volunteers and Handbook for Volunteers, the documents provide a framework of best practice and guidance, which the Council will follow when engaging, managing and supporting volunteers.

2. DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERING

A definition as outlined in The Compact Code of Good Practice on Volunteering, published in 2005 states:

'Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship and fundamental to democracy. It is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, and can take many forms. It is freely undertaken and not for financial gain. The principle of non-payment of volunteers is central to this Code and to the wider sector and society's understanding of volunteering'.

The Council adopts the above definition and is committed to:-

- Recognising the value and importance of volunteering
- Seeking to treat all volunteers in a fair and equitable way

3. SCOPE

This policy is intended to cover those persons who are unpaid and give up their time freely to undertake volunteering activities.

The policy will also apply to employees of the Council wanting to carry out volunteering activities during their normal hours of work. The policy will not apply to employees in schools with delegated powers, unless adopted by the Governing Body.

This policy covers:

- Members of the public who are not employed by the Council who wish to undertake volunteering activities within the Council on a voluntary basis.
- Employees of the Council who wish to undertake work in a voluntary capacity providing a benefit to the community, in addition to their employment within the Council.

This policy does not apply to those persons who wish to obtain work experience placements.

4. THE POLICY

4.1 The Council

The Council is committed to this Volunteering Policy and to actively promoting volunteering and will signpost available opportunities for potential volunteers. In addition, an ethos of volunteering will be encouraged within the Council.

4.2 Employees of the Council

This policy will cover employees of the Council who wish to undertake work in a voluntary capacity, in addition to their paid employment within the Council.

There is provision for employees to receive up to a maximum of 2 days per annual leave year with pay (pro rata for part-time staff) to undertake volunteering activities. This will not be a right and is not guaranteed, but will be on a 'give and take' basis and subject to approval by the employee's line manager. Wherever possible, the time off work taken should be matched by the individual using their own time.

4.3 Members of the Public

We welcome members of the public from all sections of the community who wish to undertake volunteering activities within the Council. The Council will aim to ensure equity and fairness of treatment in relation to those who offer their time, experience, knowledge and skills, without financial gain.

The Council will provide volunteers with the relevant training and support and out of pocket expenses.

The use of volunteers is not intended to replace paid Council employees in their roles.

Volunteers are not employees of the Council and will therefore not be eligible to apply for posts advertised internally.

5. POLICY PROCEDURE & GUIDANCE

This policy should be read in conjunction with the associated Handbooks.

6. TRADE UNION AGREEMENT

This policy has been discussed with the relevant trade unions and has their support.

7. CONSULTATION

This policy and the associated Volunteering Handbooks have been developed in consultation with: the Young People, Skills & Employability Team, Human Resources, the Volunteering Steering Group, and External CVS Partners.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Volunteering Policy and the associated documents will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that they are clear, objective and consistently applied across all Service Areas of the Council.

The Young People, Skills & Employability Team will maintain records of the numbers of individuals undertaking work in a volunteering capacity.

It will be the responsibility of the Young People, Skills & Employability Team, in conjunction with the Human Resources, to review the operation of this Volunteering Policy on a regular basis.

Policy History:

Implementation: June 2009

Updated: November 2013, February 2015