

Title of Report:	Draft Volunteering Policy
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	20 th April 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy & Engaged Communities
Outcome	Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture Community Development Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£0
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	n/a

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date: 09.09.20
	EQIA Required and Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date: 06.01.21
	RNA Required and Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present a draft Volunteering Policy to Committee for consideration and approval.

2.0 Policy Statement

The purpose of the Volunteering Policy is to enable Council to involve and value volunteers and to achieve clear, workable principles and guidelines to which volunteers all can follow. It sets out guidelines in relation to equality of opportunity, recruitment, training, support and development of volunteers within a service. The policy also recognises the commitment given to and the value achieved from a dedicated team of volunteers and it recognises the importance of building on the relationship between volunteers and those who engage with them. The policy demonstrates how council employees have the opportunity to volunteer and the beneficial experience gained for employees through Employer Supported Volunteering.

3.0 Strategic Context

Join in Get Involved, Build a Better Future (2012) is the Volunteering Strategy for Northern Ireland and aims to coordinate activities across government, the voluntary and community sector and other stakeholders to promote the positive experience and increase levels of volunteering across Northern Ireland.

The strategy describes volunteering as:

'the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside (or in addition to) one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern or financial gain.'

Volunteer Now has designed a **Council Volunteer Policy Procedures Framework** to cover standard volunteer policy information for volunteers involved in supporting Council services, as well as employer supported volunteering. Council sought input from Volunteer Now into best practice in relation to Council Volunteering Policies as well as gathering learning from other Councils which are currently implementing such policies.

The Volunteering Policy for Causeway Coast and Glens has also been developed in association with the two local Volunteer Centres, Causeway Volunteer Centre and Limavady Volunteer Centre who will work closely with Councils Community Development Team to promote and recruit for volunteering opportunities within Council as well as providing support with good practice and recognition for volunteers.

4.0 CCG Volunteering Policy

The draft Volunteering Policy is attached at **Annex A**. The Policy covers all aspects of recruitment, selection and management of volunteers, training, supervision, insurance and payment of expenses as well as arrangements for Employer Supported Volunteering.

Volunteers placed in Council will enhance and complement work within each department but never replace core services or staff. Some of the possible roles volunteers could be involved in are 'Meet and Greet' with arts centres and museums; museum's collection volunteer; volunteer ranger. All roles will be endorsed by the Trade Unions and HR. Volunteer opportunities will be identified, where appropriate, by the specific service area in which the role will be located. The overall responsibility for volunteer/s would rest with the Head of Service where the volunteer/s may be based, with the day-to-day management of the volunteer being the responsibility of the specific manager/member of staff supervising the volunteer/s, with guidance from Human Resources as required. Additionally, the local Volunteer Centres can also assist with promotion of volunteer opportunities.

Council will also seek to promote Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) and recognises that employees may seek the opportunity to volunteer and the beneficial experience it offers. Through the Policy, Council will support its employees to participate in volunteering and ESV

days organised by Council. Staff will be allowed up to 2 days paid leave to participate in voluntary activity during working hours, within any 12-month period.

Trade Unions have been consulted and inputted to the final draft and the Volunteering Policy was ratified at JCNC on 17th December 2020.

5.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that Leisure & Development Committee recommends the Policy for approval.