

Executive response: Scrutiny Review of the City of Wolverhampton Volunteering Offer

Volunteer Policy

Recommendation 1		
That the Heads of Service (HoS) Group develop the draft volunteering policy and the offer taking into account the comments and recommendations arising from the review of the City of Wolverhampton Volunteering offer.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept The HoS group is made up of officers from across the range of Council Services. They will be supported by the Voluntary Sector Coordinator, and the focus group which is made up of officers who manage volunteers. All will work towards delivering a Corporate Volunteering approach that is open, clear, fair and accessible. All will be briefed on the outcome of the Scrutiny Review to ensure that the development of the volunteering policy and offer reflects the recommendations arising from the review of the City of Wolverhampton Volunteering offer.	The HoS group met on 26 November 2015 to receive initial findings of the scrutiny review and feed comments into the draft policy for consideration. The HoS group meet again to consider the recommendations of the review on 22 March 2016. Work is already underway with the HoS group feeding back as part of the Scrutiny Review Group Work. This will continue through to implementation in June 2016, followed by periodic review thereafter.	Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator
Recommendation 2		
That HoS group to ascertain, through consultation, the current volunteer's perception of the draft volunteering offer.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept HoS group will be briefed on the outcome of the Scrutiny Review and asked to ensure that the current volunteers in their service areas are consulted with in order that their views can be taken into account as part of the development process.	This is already underway to be completed by March 2016.	Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator

Recommendation 3 That definition of volunteering and work experience is included in the council volunteering policy and guidelines.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept HoS group will be briefed on the outcome of the Scrutiny Review to ensure that the development of the volunteering policy further clarifies what is meant by volunteering, work experience and other areas that may arise from the work and deemed to need further explanation/clarification.	Initial definitions have already been included which may need refining prior to the documents being finalised in June 2016.	Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator
Recommendation 4 That where applicable any person volunteering within the Council will have the required DBS checks as specified by the receiving service area.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept As part of the process of identifying a volunteer role within a service area, the appropriate HoS will determine whether a DBS check is required and ensure suitable applicants have a satisfactory check in place prior to commencing the volunteer role.	On-going determined by the volunteer role.	Head of Service for appropriate service area
Recommendation 5 That the HoS group develop a process for volunteers entering the workplace and volunteer role descriptions.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer responsible
Accept The HoS group is made up of officers from across the range of Council Services. They will be supported by the Voluntary Sector Coordinator, and the focus group which is made up of officers who manage volunteers. All will work towards delivering a Corporate Volunteering approach that is open, clear, fair and accessible.	The scrutiny report outlined a draft process for volunteers entering the workplace. This will be further developed by the HoS group for completion by June 2016.	Head of Economic Inclusion / Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator

[Not Protectively Marked]

Recommendation 6 That 'Investing in Volunteers' (IiV) standards be included in the policy appendices, and HoS to explore accreditation for the Council.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept	Investing in Volunteers (IiV) standards have already been incorporated into the policy and HoS will explore accreditation during the development phase by June 2016.	Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator
Recommendation 7 That there is a 12 month review of the final policy.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept	June 2017.	Head of Economic Inclusion/ Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator

Skills and Pathways

Recommendation 8 That all volunteers are referred to the Volunteer Service at Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council (WVSC) in the first instance to determine the best pathway for the individual.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept	This has already been built into the pathway. Current volunteers will go through the process first as part of developing and implementing the Corporate approach. March 2016 – June 2016.	Head of Economic Inclusion/ Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator

Recommendation 9

That the volunteer pathway should include the following:

- a) A volunteer role description for each service area detailing how the role will support existing service delivery.
- b) The agreement with a volunteer will detail mandatory and job specific training and support for the role.
- c) Initiating a DBS check where applicable for all volunteers in Council services.
- d) Ensuring robust equality monitoring processes are in place identifying and following up gaps in current practice and other relevant polices. In exploring this officers have identified and raised the need to review the Equality and Diversity Policy Statement with H.R.
- e) All volunteers are registered on the Agresso system and records of DBS, training and equality are monitored.
- f) All service groups should monitor volunteers to check progress and development needs in line with the volunteer offer.

Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept	Some of this work is already underway through the HoS group and will continue through to completion of the Corporate approach in June 2016 and beyond as part of ensuring the processes are robust.	Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator

Recommendation 10

That a sensible review period is built into each volunteering role for the protection of the service, the benefit of the volunteer and to ensure the role has not changed substantially over a set period of time.

Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
The Volunteer Policy and Pathway identifies processes to be followed in order to protect the service and enable goals to be set for the volunteer determined by the role they are doing, what the role requires and what the volunteer would like to gain from the experience.	This will be determined by the service area from the outset and agreed with the volunteer on take up of the role.	Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator

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Recommendation 11		
That volunteers are provided access to the Council Learning Hub to develop skills for mandatory and role specific training.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
The Volunteer Policy and Pathway identifies processes to be followed in order to protect the service and enable goals to be set for the volunteer determined by the role they are doing, what the role requires and what the volunteer would like to gain from the experience.	Discussions to commence with adult education, I.T, H.R in the first instance by March 2016.	Head of Economic Inclusion / Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator
Recommendation 12		
That the HoS group and Volunteer Service develop a package of training for managers, volunteers and volunteer supervisors to be delivered via the Council learning hub.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
The Volunteer Policy and Pathway identifies processes to be followed in order to protect the service and enable goals to be set for the volunteer determined by the role they are doing, what the role requires and what the volunteer would like to gain from the experience. Managers/supervisors will receive training in order to best support and develop volunteers assisting them to reach their goals.	HoS group to commence discussions with adult education, I.T, H.R in the first instance by March 2016.	Head of Economic Inclusion Voluntary Service Co-ordinator

Additionality

<p>Recommendation 13 That the volunteer role description should be service specific and include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The volunteering hours required (determined by the task). b) The days and duration of the volunteering opportunity (determined by the task). c) The training available – what skills they need, the support role and skill development. d) How the role will support existing service delivery. e) An agreed and appropriate review period for the protection of the service and the volunteer. f) DBS checks to be arranged if applicable. g) Volunteering code of conduct. h) Advertising opportunities to access volunteering with WVSC and partner organisations. j) That specific text should be included in the policy taken from the TUC guidance to ensure that volunteering provides additionality to rather than replacement of existing staffing resources. 		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
<p>Accept The HoS group will develop a template for use in Service areas. The template will be discussed with Unison.</p>	<p>Feb – June 2016</p>	<p>Head of Economic Inclusion / Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator</p>
<p>Recommendation 14 That specific text should be included in the policy taken from the TUC guidance to ensure that volunteering provides additionality to rather than replacement of existing staffing resources.</p>		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
<p>Accept</p>	<p>HoS group to take this forward as part of the further development of documents going forward, consulting with Unison where applicable.</p>	<p>Head of Economic Inclusion / Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator</p>
<p>Recommendation 15</p>		

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That as part of the development of the wider partnership Volunteering Strategy, a discussion with the Inclusion Board and Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council (WVSC) to explore arrangements for DBS checks should take place. Where feasible a process for ensuring that DBS checks are in place should be incorporated as part of the contractual arrangements for the agency providing volunteering services.

Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
The Inclusion Board is a sub-group of the City Board and will be the key partnership forum for the development and implementation of the wider partnership Volunteering Strategy. As part of exploring city-wide volunteering, current arrangements including DBS checks will be explored and where feasible incorporated into the contractual arrangements for volunteer service provider.	By June 2016	Head of Economic Inclusion/ Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator

Recommendation 16
That there is a review of the volunteering policy once the Combined Authority is functioning to ensure synergy with the wider region.

Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
Accept	Review when CA in place.	Head of Economic Inclusion/ Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator

Resource

Recommendation 17		
a) That an investigation or assessment of the types of costs associated with volunteering is undertaken by HoS as part of the policy refinement and incorporated within the guidance to service areas. b) That the HoS group identifies resource implications of training, DBS checks and supervising volunteers for each service area. c) That the HoS group explore and identify funding opportunities with funders, partners and businesses, internally and externally.		
Comment	Timescale/progress so far	Officer Responsible
The resource implications will vary between service areas along with the added value that volunteers bring. As the organisation already has a number of volunteers, some of the types of costs are already known and will be shared with the HoS group and incorporated into the guidance documents for volunteer managers/supervisors. Areas of work that may need additional support will be flagged as part of the scoping exercise in identifying and developing a volunteer role, and monitored whilst the volunteer is in the role. As part of this process, opportunities to draw on expertise in the organisation and from partners will be highlighted whilst also exploring internal/external resources.	On-going during development and implementation. By June 2016	Head of Economic Inclusion / Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator