

## **Dacorum Borough Council Volunteer Management Policy and Procedure**

### **1. Defining volunteering**

- 1.1. We consider a volunteer to be a person who gives their time to work with the Council, in a specific role, without experiencing personal financial gain.
- 1.2. Statutory groups and those that form a formal part of agreed governance arrangements where an element of independence is required will operate to their agreed terms of reference'
- 1.3. Volunteering can include short and long term projects and will always have specific duties, which will be outlined in the role description (appendix 1). We encourage all our residents to get involved, but this policy is aimed at people who are fulfilling structured volunteering roles.
- 1.4. All proposed volunteer roles will be approved by a cross departmental Volunteer Management Group.

### **2. Introduction**

- 2.1. Dacorum Borough Council has a number of departments which engage volunteers. This policy will ensure that our treatment of volunteers is fair, consistent, and in line with good practice. We see the work that volunteers carry out as vitally important; therefore we will make sure that their roles are well managed and structured.
- 2.2. Volunteers can help to extend the services we offer, help our citizens to influence decision-making, contribute to service development, and encourage active community spirit. In exchange, we can provide volunteers with training, a chance to develop their skills and employability. Volunteering can be an important part of many people's lives; it can build confidence, provide a social network and can improve general health and wellbeing.
- 2.3. For staff taking on a volunteer, this policy is supported by a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and a Volunteer Management Group (VMG): a multi departmental sub group of the Community and Localism Corporate Working Group to support in applying this policy.

### **3. Procedure**

#### **3.1. Matching a volunteer to a vacancy**

Each volunteering opportunity will have a role description (appendix 1) identifying the purpose of the role and any key skills or training required. If a member of the public would like to volunteer for the Council but there is no appropriate vacancy, we would encourage them to contact the appropriate service to discuss options.

#### **3.2. Volunteering opportunities**

Volunteering opportunities will be advertised and applied for through the Volunteer Centre and informal networks using the volunteer advert (appendix 2).

#### **3.3. Equal Opportunities**

We will ensure that volunteers have the opportunity to work with us irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

#### **3.4. Support, Supervision and Training**

All volunteers will be supported by a Council employee as their volunteer supervisor. If a volunteer is part of a group, the supervisor will be appointed to the group rather than an individual. Volunteers should be inducted into their role (appendix 3: Induction checklist) and will be required to attend training courses if their supervisor believes it is

appropriate for the role. Volunteers will be required to wear a volunteer identification card at all times while they are volunteering.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to meet regularly with their supervisor where they can discuss how things have been progressing (appendix 4: volunteer supervision template) training needs and any issues that have arisen (appendix 5: checklist to help you retain your volunteers).

**3.5. Expenses and travel**

We will pay expenses for volunteers who undertake a role in one of the Council's statutory groups. The Volunteer Management Group (VMG) may also consider equal opportunities and safeguarding when making a decision about expenses and travel.

**3.6. Young people (under 18) volunteering**

All staff working with under 18's should do so in line with the *Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedure*. Under 18's can volunteer with the Council where the project is specifically aimed at that age group. Council officers working with under 18's must attend Safeguarding Children and Young People course – Level 1. There should always be an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked staff member accountable for young people while they are volunteering.

Young people will be entitled to a break every two hours, and any additional breaks which they request. Supervisors should ensure that the well-being of young volunteers is taken into consideration at all times. The Volunteer Management Group (VMG) may suggest specific actions based on the type of volunteering being offered.

**3.7. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and references**

The Council is legally required to carry out a DBS check on any volunteer who will have unsupervised access to children and young people under the age of 18, or vulnerable adults, on a regular basis.

Some volunteer roles will require references before the individual is appointed. The Volunteer Management Group (VMG) will assess if a volunteer role requires references. In this instance a volunteer should not be appointed until satisfactory references have been received.

**3.8. Health and Safety**

Supervisors will work with volunteers to manage health and safety, completing appropriate risk assessments (appendix 6: risk assessment template) as necessary. Any health and safety concerns will be escalated using the *Corporate Health and Safety Policies and Procedures*.

**3.9. Legislation and employment law**

Volunteers will support the Council to achieve its aims. However, volunteers are not salaried members of staff which will exclude them from any protection under Employment law.

**3.10. Insurance**

The Council's insurance policies cover volunteer activities which are carried out on behalf of the Council.

**3.11. Ending volunteering**

The Council or a volunteer will be able to end the agreement at any time. However, we would usually ask for two weeks' notice either way.

**3.12. Evaluation and feedback**

Volunteers will have the opportunity to talk to their supervisor about their experience of working for the Council. Complaints can be made using the Council's complaints procedure.