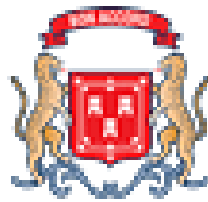


***Making the difference:
Volunteering in Aberdeen***



ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

Volunteering Policy Guidance

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1. Introduction

There is a great tradition of volunteering in Aberdeen. Figures highlight that 'local authority groupings' in the North of Scotland, which includes Aberdeen City, have the highest levels of volunteering in Scotland'. Research by the Economic and Social Research Council highlighted that high levels of volunteering in Aberdeen were contributing to 'quality of life indicators' such as greater '*fulfilment and satisfaction*', helping make Aberdeen a happier place.

Every aspect of life can benefit from the contribution volunteers make across Aberdeen City and volunteering is part of the overall vision for a successful, dynamic City. Community Planning Aberdeen is committed to recognizing this contribution and building further upon it.

Within Community Planning Aberdeen, partners have developed volunteering policies, protocols and guidance, which are specific and appropriate to their organisation and function. This provides an overarching statement of principles in relation to volunteering in Aberdeen and provides a framework to assist organisations that involve volunteers to develop good practice

2. Aims of Policy

Volunteers are an established and vital part of Aberdeen City Council. The activities of our volunteers are vital to the quality and diversity of our work.

- Aberdeen Citizens will be inspired to volunteer
- We will offer a wide range of volunteering opportunities across the City
- We will ensure Aberdeen Citizens have a positive and rewarding volunteering experience
- We will recognise and respect the rights and responsibilities of volunteers
- We will recognise and celebrate the contribution Aberdeen volunteers make

3. Defining Volunteers

Volunteering is:

'The giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken of one's own free will, and is not motivated primarily for financial gain or for a wage or salary.'

(Scottish Government)

4. Commitment to Volunteering

Volunteers are an established and vital part of Aberdeen City Council. The activities of our volunteers are essential to the quality and diversity of our work. Aberdeen City Council recognises the contribution made by volunteers and will build further upon it.

As an organisation the

- Aberdeen Citizens will be inspired to volunteer
- We will offer a wide range of volunteering opportunities across the City
- We will ensure Aberdeen Citizens have a positive and rewarding volunteering experience
- We will recognise and respect the rights and responsibilities of volunteers
- We will recognise and celebrate the contribution Aberdeen Volunteers make

5. Scope of Volunteering

The policy will be applied within Aberdeen City Council to promote and develop opportunities for volunteering. Aberdeen City Council recognises that it has responsibilities to its volunteers and similarly has expectations of them.

Aberdeen City Council acknowledges its responsibility to:

- Provide an appropriate programme of induction training and support
- Ensure that all volunteers have access to a designated member of staff to support their activities
- Treat volunteers with respect

6. Disclosure Scotland Checks / Protection of Vulnerable Groups

Where volunteers are working with children or protected adults it may be the case that they are doing “Regulated Work” If a person is barred from doing “Regulated work” It is an offence for them to do regulated work or for an organisation to employ them (either as paid staff or as a volunteer)

If you are unsure whether or not you can require your volunteers to join a PVG Scheme a good self assessment tool is available on the disclosure Scotland website at:

http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/pvg_training/self-assessment/

Issues relating to PVG/Disclosure requirements are commonly misunderstood and it is important to seek reliable advice from authenticated sources such as those indicated

www.pvgchemescotland.org/

7. Developing the Volunteering Agenda

Aberdeen City Council is looking to involve volunteers in our organization we will promote the volunteer opportunities through the website. Volunteering opportunities will be registered through Aberdeen City's main volunteering portal www.volunteeraberdeen.org.uk which is managed by ACVO.

Aberdeen City Council will:

- 7.1 Ensure recognition of the importance of volunteering and the contribution of volunteers by:
 - formally acknowledging the unique contribution made by volunteers to Aberdeen City Council, the community, staff and to the volunteers themselves.
 - recognising and publicising the important role played by volunteers in the work of the Aberdeen City Council.
- 7.2 Increase the range and number of volunteering opportunities by:
 - promoting ways in which managers can identify appropriate volunteering opportunities that enhance and enrich the lives of users.
 - developing and publicising opportunities for volunteering in all areas of our communities.
 - promoting the benefits of recruiting volunteers from different ethnic and diversity backgrounds.
 - supplying recruitment information on volunteering in the main community languages and different formats on request.
 - recognising the contribution that volunteering can make to maintaining and improving health.

- 7.3 Provide a framework of good practice for recruiting, supporting and working with volunteers by:
- ensuring the volunteers receive full and appropriate induction. It is the responsibility of the manager who recruits the volunteers to ensure this.
 - ensuring recruitment and selection processes for volunteers adopt the principles of good practice to support volunteers and protect patients.
 - assessing and agreeing the development needs of volunteering and undertaking regular reviews.
 - providing training and development necessary to enable volunteers to undertake agreed activities.
 - ensuring that volunteers are made aware of their roles and responsibilities, e.g. confidentiality.
 - ensuring reimbursement of 'out of pocket' expenses is from individual services budgets
 - ensuring that volunteers have access to information on all relevant legislation and policies, e.g. Health & Safety.
 - ensuring that volunteers are treated in the same way as paid staff for liability/insurance purposes.
- 7.4 Seek to further enhance the quality and practice of volunteering by:
- ensuring the volunteers role is complementary to, but not seeking to replace, the work of staff.
 - ensuring that the activities undertaken by volunteers are clearly specified and appropriate to their skills, knowledge, experience and agreed area of interest.
 - promoting the role of volunteers to patients and staff; enabling them to be informed of this role and how it impacts on patient care.
- 7.5 Establish mechanisms to enable effective communication with, and involvement of, volunteers by:

- developing opportunities for volunteers to contribute to the development of volunteer services.
 - encouraging and supporting volunteers who wish to be more widely involved in the planning and review of Aberdeen City Council services
 - engaging and consulting with voluntary organisations whose volunteers provide a service to the Aberdeen City Council.
- 7.6 Ensure volunteers and ACC staff understands their respective and complementary roles by:
- including information regarding respective roles in induction training.
 - ensuring information is available to staff.
- 7.7 Encourage employer-supported volunteering by:
- recognising, valuing and supporting the important part played by staff who already volunteer and support, where possible, employees who may consider volunteering in the future.
- 7.8 Facilitate the effective and efficient use of available resources to support volunteering by:
- ensuring that a manager is identified to take responsibility for developing and supporting volunteers in their area.
 - making available Aberdeen City Council meeting room accommodation for the use of volunteers and volunteering groups, at no cost.
 - making training and development resources available to volunteers and volunteering groups.

8. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

In order to ensure appropriate implementation, monitoring and review within Aberdeen City Council. Corporate Governance will co-ordinate for the implementation of the Volunteering Policy. Operational responsibility for volunteers will rest with the service that engages them.

Corporate Governance, Customer Service and Performance, Community Planning will monitor and record:

- Number of opportunities offered
- Type of volunteer opportunities
- Number of volunteer hours
- Breakdown of services using volunteers

The Policy will be monitored and reviewed every 3 years.

Appendix One – attached document

Operational Documentation

Aberdeen City Council – Volunteering Service Pack