



VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Staff Guidance

(2020/21)

Agreed 03/2020 by HSCM Strategic Leadership Group & Adult Care Practice Governance Board

Review date March 2022

Implementation date 16/03/2020

MORAY COUNCIL VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to update the existing policy to be in line with the current Scottish Government guidelines for involving volunteers in the work of the Moray Council and to update any procedures and guidance required in achieving best practice. It is designed to make volunteering a simple and transparent process for those wishing to enter into any volunteering agreement in the application of the policy and its guidelines.

The Council supports the four strands of the Scottish Government's Volunteering Strategy, which are, *"focusing on Project Scotland and young people"*; *"dismantling the barriers to volunteering and closing the opportunity gap"*; *"improving the volunteering experience"*; and *Monitoring, Evaluation and ongoing policy development"*.

The statutory partners within the *Moray Community Planning Partnership and tsiMoray* (third sector interface) in Moray have prepared a compact, a voluntary agreement setting out how they will work together and have committed themselves to the promotion of volunteering by:

- considering the possible impact of their decisions on volunteers
- supporting the public and in partnership with tsiMoray to adhere to the necessary legislation and regulations which may impact on volunteering

- eliminating barriers (including funding barriers) to volunteering
- recognising the value of volunteering in all areas of work
- improved performance data on volunteering to enable continuous monitoring, scrutiny and measurement of impact

The Council wants to demonstrate its commitment, to ensure that its volunteers are valued and have a rewarding experience. The wider community gains from high standards of practice by those volunteers operating under the auspices of the Moray Council.

This policy sets out a corporate framework for Council services when engaging with, and managing volunteers. It takes account of current policies and planning including Moray 2023 – 'a Plan for the Future' and *the Scottish Executive's Volunteering Strategy*

The Scottish Executive define volunteering in their strategy as: *"the giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, the 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"*

This policy has been updated in line with current best practice and takes into account the monitoring and evaluation processes in order to form clear principles and guidelines for those who manage volunteers.

POLICY STATEMENT

"The Council supports and promotes volunteering in appropriate departments and roles. Volunteers are valued as a key community

asset in helping to strengthen citizenship involvement and in turn improve the quality of life for people in Moray”

AIMS

The overall aim of this updated volunteering policy is to continue to develop and promote best practice in the involvement and support of volunteers in the work of the Moray Council by:

- encouraging the development of volunteering in all appropriate areas of Council services
- recognising and promoting the importance of volunteering to the work of the Council
- ensuring adequate support, training and supervision for Council volunteers
- identifying the standards to which Council staff and volunteers are expected to adhere and recognising the training path to enable this to happen
- providing guidance and best practice to Council staff in working with volunteers, ensuring the application of the *Council's equal opportunities policy and Fairer Scotland Duty* applies to volunteering so as to reduce barriers.
- ensuring that volunteering with the Council is an enjoyable and rewarding experience where achievement is recognised

OBJECTIVES

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The Moray Council achieves its aims by ensuring that :

- there is a clear statement of the Council's commitment to volunteering and expectations of its staff including effective processes
- there is a consistency of approach to engaging and supporting volunteers across Council services
- volunteers are covered by all relevant Council policies, child protection, adult protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, etc.
- there is annual acknowledgement and celebration of volunteers achievement and contribution
- employees are encouraged and supported to become volunteers through a learning culture

PRINCIPLES

The Moray Council:

- will not introduce volunteers to replace Council employees
- recognises that volunteers make a unique and valuable contribution to policy objectives and service provision
- recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users, employees and communities
- will ensure that volunteers are appropriately integrated into the organisational structure and opportunities

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- recognises that employees will play a part in identifying ways in which the work of the Council can be extended by the involvement of volunteers
- acknowledges the need to identify and make appropriate resources available to support volunteers working in the Council
- recognises that volunteers may require personal development for their role. Services will identify accessible and appropriate training for volunteers to carry out their role(s) effectively
- authorised expenses will be reimbursed in line with the Council's expenses claims process
- recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities for adequate support and supervision and this should be catered for within departments
- will recognise and reward volunteer achievement annually
- is committed to offering the opportunity within existing resources to enhance existing life skills and to develop new ones through volunteering

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This updated policy applies to all Moray Council staff; volunteers and elected members.

Policy monitoring and review

The Moray Council is committed to ongoing monitoring and review of this policy and will carry out a formal review every 3 years, with the next review to take place in 2021. This policy and any updates should influence best practice within Council services

Community Engagement

Working through local community planning structures, the Moray Council will actively engage with the wider community, in order to raise awareness of this policy and seek their views, opinions and support, making any necessary amendments for improvement as required.

Equalities

The Moray Council will actively encourage volunteering amongst those people and groups, who are more likely to be excluded from volunteering because of low income, race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or philosophical belief. We will work to remove any barriers to volunteering.

The rights of volunteers:

- to know what is expected of them
- to have clearly specified lines of support and supervision
- to have safe working conditions and be insured
- to know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong

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- to have access to appropriate training
- to experience personal development through participation
- to confidentiality
- not to be bullied or experience any discrimination
- to be valued and appreciated

Volunteers are expected to:

- carry out their tasks in a way that corresponds to the aims, values and policies of the Council
- operate within agreed guidelines and remits relating to their task
- follow health and safety regulations and instructions
- adhere to the Council's statements *or policies such as Equal Opportunities, Child Protection, GDPR/Data protection/Information Sharing and other relevant Policies and Procedures*
- respect confidentiality and adhere to any policies and procedures associated with information sharing protocols that the Council may have entered into
- attend training and support sessions where required
- adhere to the employee code of conduct

THE MORAY COUNCIL BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERING

These guidelines are for staff to ensure good practice when working with volunteers who carry out roles within Moray Council services.

The guidelines deal with the practical aspects of involvement and should support Council departments in their work with volunteers. More detailed information, including references to documents and policies are provided in the *Essential Information for Volunteering booklet*. There will be times when volunteers are sought for ad-hoc events and full application of the policy and guidelines may not be appropriate.

Promotion, placement and selection

- opportunities should be identified where volunteers could add value to service delivery or contribute to Moray Skills Pathway
- volunteering with the Council should be promoted widely to make it accessible to all sections of the community
- volunteering opportunities may be advertised through appropriate avenues such as the Council's *websites and social media pages, tsiMoray (third sector interface), Community Planning Partners*, and other local notice boards and will clearly state level of disclosure required
- the Council's *Equal Opportunities Policy* will be applied when selecting volunteers
- the Council will respond as quickly as possible to enquiries from potential volunteers

- volunteering roles will match the volunteer's availability, skills and interests with the Council's needs
- where appropriate prospective volunteers should go through a selection process which may include an application (not necessarily written), a selection interview, references taken where appropriate and a written notification of the outcome
- where appropriate, the volunteer may require to complete a Protection for Vulnerable Groups application (PVG) and adhere to other safeguards put in place by the Council for the protection of vulnerable adults and children
- volunteers will not be permitted to take up a volunteering role until all the necessary checks are completed

Volunteer agreement procedures:

- an agreement will be prepared outlining tasks to be undertaken and identifying line management arrangements, although not a legal document or employment contract, it will form the basis of regular support
- the agreement will be drawn up and signed by both the volunteer and designated staff with a copy given to the volunteer, this can be re-negotiated as needs arise
- the volunteer will perform the tasks outlined in the agreement in a manner appropriate of a representative of the Moray Council
- any expenses likely to be incurred by the volunteer whilst carrying out their agreed duties will be discussed and

procedures for claims agreed at the start of the volunteering role

- volunteers will be matched to appropriate roles in accordance with the principles of fairness, consistency and openness in accordance with the Council's *Equal Opportunities Policy* and should aim to reflect the diversity in society
- either party has the right to discontinue a volunteering arrangement, however, an exchange of views as to why a volunteering arrangement is terminated is considered desirable and a record should be included in the exiting procedure

Induction and training

- the Council will offer all volunteers suitable and adequate training
- the Council will provide an induction period and regular review sessions to assess the progress of the volunteering role(s) and to resolve any issues at the earliest opportunity
- line manager responsibility for the support of volunteers will be designated by each department with access to training in the management of volunteers if required
- where appropriate, a volunteer handbook or on-line resource (relevant to the particular service) will be provided
- employees and staff are encouraged to access training opportunities through the service they are connected with plus the CLD Standards Council i-Develop and tsiMORAY.

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Support and Supervision

- each volunteer will have a designated line manager who can provide information, encouragement and support on a regular basis
- any issues or problems should be discussed between the line manager and volunteer
- departments will keep adequate volunteer records and report annually to the CLD Support officer on the number of volunteers
- the Council will provide, within the available resources, financial, personnel and other resources for the adequate management of volunteers

The Volunteer's Voice

- opportunities should be put in place to enable the views of volunteers to be represented
- the impact of the placement should be gathered through case-studies or similar means to influence future service delivery

Insurance

- all volunteers will be covered by the Council's public liability insurance when working on agreed tasks and in approved premises
- volunteers will be given information on other legislation or policies as is relevant to their placement

- access to pool cars will be available for specific authorised activity subject to the appropriate paperwork being completed

Expenses

- volunteer expenses should be covered by whichever departmental budget the volunteer work is related to

Health and safety

- Council employees should be aware that their legal responsibilities and obligations under health and safety legislation extend to volunteers
- volunteers will receive a basic health and safety briefing as part of their induction, which should include emergency procedures
- tasks undertaken by volunteers should be subject to risk assessment and appropriate safe systems of work put into operation i.e. lone working policy/procedure.
- volunteers have personal responsibility for following health and safety regulations and instructions and to comply with *working time* regulations

Equal opportunities

- the Council's volunteering policy will adhere to Moray Council's *Equal Opportunities Policies*

Council Staff responsibilities to Volunteers:

- volunteers will not normally be asked to take on tasks undertaken by Council employees, or to operate in ways which facilitate a decrease in paid employment
- volunteers will not be utilised in times of industrial action to do the work of paid employees although they may continue with their regular tasks without being asked to undertake additional duties
- the Council will ensure that employees at all levels are clear about the role of volunteers, and that good relationships are fostered between employees and volunteers

Issues

- the Moray Council has a complaints policy to help deal with grievances that volunteers may have. A volunteer has the right to discuss any concerns with their designated staff member at an appropriate time for both parties
- in accordance with the disciplinary policy, matters that cannot be dealt with by the named contact person should be referred to the line manager concerned or another line manager

Confidentiality

- volunteers should regard all information they have access to or are given as a result of their volunteering as being confidential unless advised otherwise
- no information should be released to a third party without first seeking the agreement of their supervisor where an

information sharing protocol has been entered into by the Council

- volunteers should not disclose personal details (home address, telephone number etc) to clients
- the Council will fulfil its duty to safeguard the information contained within application forms and records
- volunteers have the right to access their own records, including personal training records and application forms which can be arranged by giving reasonable notice

Absence

- volunteers are asked to inform their line manager if they will not be available due to illness, holidays or for any other reason. It is helpful if volunteers can give the Council as much notice as possible so that cover may be arranged
- the Council respects that there may be occasions when volunteers may wish to take a break for a period of time and are asked to give the Council as much notice as possible

Endings

- all volunteer roles are subject to regular review
- volunteers with the Moray Council will have the right to request a reference
- volunteers may be supported to move onto other options or be signposted to other appropriate voluntary organisations

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Other Strategies and Plans connected to this Policy

- **The National Health & Wellbeing Outcomes** (high-level statements of what health and social care partners are attempting to achieve through integration and ultimately through the pursuit of quality improvement across health and social care).
- <https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Policy/Health-Social-Care-Integration/National-Health-WellbeingOutcomes> - particularly Outcomes 2 and 4.
- **Health & Social Care Moray Strategic Plan 2016 – 2019**
<http://hscmoray.co.uk/strategic-plan.html> – in particular; recognising the enormous and valuable contribution that communities and volunteers can make in the areas of promoting health and wellbeing and, supporting volunteers as a crucial part of workforce development.
- **Living Longer Living Better in Moray 2013 – 2023** (A Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People)
http://hscmoray.co.uk/uploads/1/0/8/1/108104703/living_longer_living_better_2013-2023.pdf – recognising the importance of well-trained, supported, flexible and motivated volunteers as part of a highly-valued workforce – which is a crucial element of delivering the strategy.
- **Health & Social Care Integration Scheme for Moray** (March 2018)
http://hscmoray.co.uk/uploads/1/0/8/1/108104703/moray_revised_integration_scheme_as_approved_by_scot_govt.pdf – the aim of which is to achieve the National Health & Wellbeing

Outcomes with volunteers playing a crucial part in achieving Outcomes 2 and 4 in particular.

- **Moray Partners in Care (3-Tier Policy)/Moray Community Care Model**
Working in partnership with the wider community and other agencies to deliver improved choice and control for people over how they live their lives. Prolonging and maximising independence and less reliance on formal services. This has a focus on early intervention and prevention where appropriate and practicable. A personalised approach to achieving the positive outcomes each person is seeking to achieve.