



Version Control	Changes Made	Author
Version 2 May 2018	Updated in line with the implementation of GDPR 2016.	People Management

Introduction

This charter sets out the County Council’s approach to the recruitment of volunteers and our commitment to both them and the professional staff within the service. This charter also sets out the expectations of the Council in terms of the role of volunteers to supplement and complement the delivery of council services, how they will be supported and the responsibilities of all parties.

Benefits of Volunteering

The County Council has a long established practice of working with volunteers across many of its services, both as individuals and also community groups. It is the council’s experience that this activity provides mutual benefit to volunteers and to the service.

Our volunteers have told us that:

- They learn new skills and gain confidence in their abilities
- Volunteering has helped people gain employment or access to higher education opportunities
- They enjoy being part of a stimulating work and social atmosphere
- They gain a sense of purpose and satisfaction from achieving goals by being able to enhance services for the community or deliver something additional

- Volunteering has helped people regain strength and confidence after a period of ill health

For Community Services, volunteers bring a different perspective as they are able to contribute new ideas and try out new ways to reach service users, supplementing the professionally delivered services.

Volunteering is a commitment for the individual volunteer, the organisation and the staff who lead volunteering projects and so it is important that the responsibilities of all involved are defined clearly.

Our Responsibilities to Volunteers

- We will endeavour to match skills to the service area
- An induction to the work of the service will be provided
- A clearly defined outline of the tasks we would like volunteers to undertake will be provided
- Effective supervisory structures will be put in place to support and develop volunteers and the activities they undertake
- Volunteers will have access to appropriate training and development to be able to carry out their activities
- Volunteers, like professional staff, can expect to carry out their activities in safe, secure and healthy environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence and discrimination
- Volunteers will have access to a complaints/dissatisfaction procedure and will have a clear process for the resolution of any problems
- While volunteers should not normally receive or expect financial rewards for their activities, they should receive reasonable out-of-pocket expenses
- We will comply with the Data Protection Act's rules on the processing of volunteers personal data

Our Responsibilities to Professional Staff in relation to Volunteers

- The involvement of volunteers will complement and supplement the work of professional staff, and will not be used to displace staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service
- Volunteers will not be used to undertake the work of professional staff during industrial disputes
- Volunteers will not be used to cover the work of professional staff during sickness absence

- Professional staff will not be expected to engage in volunteer activities within the service area as a form of unpaid overtime
- Any proposed new volunteer roles will be introduced in consultation with trade union representatives

Responsibilities of Volunteers

We will expect that our volunteers will:

- Complete an application to enable us to match skills to opportunities
- Undergo a DBS check where the service requires
- Attend an induction session and training
- Work within the defined volunteer task profile
- Recognise and contribute to the Council's aims and objectives
- Be reliable and committed to the Council
- Show honesty and integrity
- Raise any issues or problems immediately with the volunteer supervisor
- Notify us of any medical conditions that may affect their ability to perform certain volunteer activities
- Abide by the County Council's Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, Code of Conduct and Confidentiality policies
- Respect the supervisors and other volunteers and strive to develop effective working relationships
- Provide reasonable notice of their intention to stop volunteering with us

Agreeing Terms

When considering the use of volunteers to supplement or complement a council service, the following further points need to be considered and incorporated into the terms of the volunteering opportunity:

- Establish a process to resolve any disputes between professional staff and volunteers
- During any contracting out process, bidders will be required to quantify any intended use of volunteers and the selection process will take account of the bidder's position on whether they intend to utilise volunteers for roles currently delivered by paid staff.
- In relation to the above, an Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted to ensure that the protected groups within society are not disadvantaged through the use of volunteers.

- Volunteers will be subject to DBS checks if they are to work with or alongside children or vulnerable adults
- Termination of a volunteer opportunity and the notice period required

Volunteer Agreement Document

It is important that a Volunteer Agreement is drafted and signed by both parties, as this clarifies the commitments both the volunteer and the Council can expect from each other. It is not intended to be a legally binding document but should be used as guidelines for both parties. Below is an example which can be adapted for each service area:

SAMPLE

Community Services - Volunteer Agreement

Volunteers are an important and valued part of the work of Cumbria County Council's Community Services. We hope that you enjoy volunteering with us and feel a valued part of our team.

This agreement, in conjunction with the Volunteer Charter, tells you what you can expect from us and what we can expect from you.

We, Community Services, will:

- Endeavour to match your skills to an appropriate service area
- Introduce you to how the organisation works and provide an induction to the activity you will be undertaking
- Provide you with a task profile and work with you to determine the days/times when you will be available to volunteer
- Explain the supervisory structures in place to support you and provide a named person you will liaise with
- Provide you with access to appropriate training and development to be able to carry out your activities
- Provide a safe environment, ensuring you are subject to the Council's insurance cover while volunteering
- Have access to a complaints/dissatisfaction procedure and will have a clear process for the resolution of any problems. This is available via the Council's website at the following link <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/council-democracy/accesstoinformation/internalreviewscomplaints.asp>

- Meet any out-of-pocket expenses incurred while volunteering (not including substituting salary payments)
- Comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 on the processing of your personal data

All volunteers working within Cumbria County Council's Community Services, are encouraged to work to high standards and contribute to the delivery of the Council's aims and objectives. Volunteers are required to be aware of and adopt Cumbria County Council's policies in relation to:

- Health and Safety
- Equal Opportunities
- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality

We will provide you with copies of the document listed above.

I,, am familiar with the above policies and agree to adhere to them at all times. I accept the responsibilities outlined in my Volunteer Task Profile and the expectations required of me. I understand that this Volunteer Agreement is not a contract of employment and may be terminated by either party should any of the above not be satisfactorily met.

Signed:.....

Date:.....