

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	23 rd March 2021
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Richard Mainon / Nicola Kneale, Strategic Planning Team Manager
Report author	Felicity Chandler, Organisation Development Specialist
Title	Volunteering Policy

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The new policy and updated processes and associated documents to enable a consistent yet flexible approach to volunteering across the whole council, including a new approach to promote volunteering opportunities within DCC, and clear guidance on how to manage, recruit and support of volunteers. In addition to clarify the position of management and employees wishing to participate in volunteering activities.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 For formal ratification of the new policies, processes and documents.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That Cabinet discusses the new policy and process for managing volunteering activity within the council, and ratifies this suite of documents.

3.2. In addition, that Cabinet comments on the proposed amendment to the Time Off Work policy for employees wishing to participate in volunteering activities. See Appendix 7.

3.3. That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 1) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

4.1. Strategic responsibility for volunteering currently sits within the Strategic Planning Team, as part of the Community Development Officer's role.

4.2. There are several Services within the council currently utilising volunteers, and each has a different need and approach. A new Policy has therefore been drafted to provide a consistent approach that still supports Service's differing needs, as well as providing best practice approaches for managers and volunteers.

4.3. The goal is to offer a "one stop shop" for all DCC volunteer opportunities online, using the short URL www.denbighshire.gov.uk/volunteering. This will enable easy promotion of volunteering opportunities and support.

4.4. Following discussion at the organisational (DCC) volunteer network, it was agreed that the previously used Kinetic system would cease, and instead an in-house solution would be explored. All DCC volunteering opportunities should be advertised through the central volunteer section of the DCC website. This will be convenient for users (who will have a central point to know where and how to look for opportunities).

4.5. In October 2020, a DCC volunteering page went live to advertise the Covid-19 volunteering opportunities within Community Support Services. This gives a flavour of what the standard page for volunteering will/can look like, and can be built upon to include all volunteering opportunities in the future. Please see Appendix 2. The landing page will also include all relevant documents including the policy, data protection information, the volunteers handbook, and the managers guide.

4.6. To promote opportunities, a simple request form will need to be submitted to the Webteam 10 working days before the opportunity needs to go live. Translation will be the responsibility of the provider service.

- 4.7. HR and the Strategic Planning Team have co-drafted a suite of documents namely: Volunteer Policy, Handbook for Volunteers, Guide for Managers of Volunteers, standard Volunteering Information form (which can be an online form attached to a volunteering opportunity where the Service prefers). See Appendix 3, 4, 5 & 6. These require ratification via the HR policy development process. Once agreed they will be made available through both the internet (via the external Volunteering landing page) and LINC.
- 4.8. The Strategic Planning Team and HR will organise quarterly meetings of a cross-organisational (DCC) volunteering network, for embedding the strategy, sharing of good practise, trouble-shooting, etc.
- 4.9. Promotion of DCC volunteer opportunities will be carried out through DCC Social Media, LINC, service social media (Housing) and through external organisations such as DVSC.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1. This work supports the resilience of our communities due to the well-being benefits that volunteering brings, as well as the opportunities for volunteering activities to be developed in areas that support our Priorities, service delivery and local environment and heritage.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1. The work will be managed through existing resources. For information, volunteering DBS checks are free of charge.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

- 7.1. The full Well-being Impact Assessment can be found in Appendix 1.
- 7.2. Overall, the policy supports local communities and individual's mental and physical wellbeing, as well as building community resilience.

7.3. The policy enables volunteers to develop life and work skills and behaviours, leading to mental and physical wellbeing outcomes, as well as opportunities for work and income.

7.4. Volunteering provides motivation and a sense of fulfilment. Engaging in volunteering can support a sense of control, reduces isolation and enables people to participate in community and economic life, and positively impacts on emotional wellbeing and resilience.

7.5. Those most disadvantaged are likely to gain the most from volunteering. The policy and supporting documents outlines this clearly, and supports managers in ensuring these groups are fully able to participate in volunteering.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. This process has been discussed between Strategic Planning, HR and the organisational (DCC) volunteer network, with particular input from Working Denbighshire, Denbighshire Leisure Limited, Community Support Services, and Countryside Services, and Library Services. Each of these teams uses volunteers frequently but in varied ways, so we hope the policies will be suitable for all.

8.2. The Lead Members (Cllr Tony Thomas and Cllr Richard Mainon) have also been informed, and the report has now also been through Cabinet Briefing. The Joint Consultative Committee Health and Safety and Employee Relations (not a quorate meeting) has considered the policy and has recommended it for approval. The ratification process and timetable for the policy documents is as follows:

Trade Unions feedback	27 th January 2021
JCC	5 th February 2021
Cabinet Briefing	1 st March 2021
Cabinet – final approval	23 rd March 2021

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. As set out in Section 6 there are no direct financial implications of the processes and policies described in this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. The policy and supporting documents provide ample advice and guidance on the best practice approaches for recruiting, engaging and supporting volunteers, and there are therefore no risks identified with following this new approach.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. s111 Local Government Act 1972

s2 Local Government Act 2000