



WHITCHURCH TOWN COUNCIL

VOLUNTEERS POLICY (April 2013)

Whitchurch Town Council is a local council, the tier of government closest to our community.

Our purpose is to be the champion for improving the quality of life for all of our community so that Whitchurch becomes a great place to live, work and relax.

Our vision is to grow Whitchurch to be a hub for the geographical area, a centre of excellence for its services to the local and wider community, whilst cherishing its sense of place.

Our main priorities are to help:

- Enable more quality and sustainable jobs
- Engage the community and give young people a reason to stay.
- Provide more homes to match needs & aspirations
- Protect and enhance the local environment and celebrate our unique heritage
- Enable improved transport links and community facilities
- Develop the potential of the Council to deliver local services and effective leadership.

OUR CORE VALUES: The principles by which we will operate the Council are:

Democracy and openness

Equality & respect

Working with others

Value for money

Many of our activities involve working in partnership with community and voluntary groups, also volunteers work directly with us for a number of reasons:

- To increase our contact with the local community we serve
- To help ensure our services reflect the needs of our community
- To increase skills, experience, perspectives and diversity in the workplace and
- To temporarily increase our skills and capacity.

We will ensure that volunteers feel part of the Town Council structure by enabling them to contribute to our ongoing development. We will have systems in place to involve volunteers in staff information sessions, and regular supervision.

Whitchurch Town Council does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff. We expect that staff at all levels will work positively with any volunteers and where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.

We acknowledge that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing training for them to do their role effectively.

Volunteers may come through community groups, direct from the community or be students from a local educational institute.

Guidelines:

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of volunteering with the Town Council. More information can be found on our Website and in copies of policies mentioned here.

Recruitment:

All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.

Volunteer Agreement and Task Descriptions

Each volunteer will have an agreement establishing what Whitchurch Town Council undertakes to provide for them. Also volunteers will be asked to agree to a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking. Neither of these documents is intended to form a contract. Whitchurch Town Council has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers. Each volunteer will also be given an information pack about the Council.

Expenses

Volunteers working a minimum of five hours per day will be able to claim expenses for lunch this would be paid against a receipt and no more than £3.50. Travel expenses carried out on behalf of the Town Council would also be met.

Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction into Whitchurch Town Council and their own area of work. Training will be provided as appropriate. Where possible, volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff.

Support

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will be provided with regular supervision to feed back on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Whitchurch Town Council and its work to staff and councillors to their main point of contact.

Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Whitchurch Town Council's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on our behalf.

Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by Whitchurch Town Council's Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which will be provided to each volunteer. Volunteers will be made aware of the Council's Child and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures and where necessary CRB (DBS) checks and training will be undertaken.

Equal Opportunities

Whitchurch Town Council operates an Equality Policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. A copy will be provided. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy.

Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

If the volunteer is to work in a regulated activity within the Council, the Council will carry out enhanced CRB (DBS) checks and ensure the volunteer is not on the Barred list with the Disclosure and Barring Service. The Council has a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy which will be made available to you. The Council will ensure there is a proportionate balance between civil liberties and safeguarding vulnerable groups, including children.

Problem Solving

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers. A copy of the procedure is included in the Volunteers Handbook.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.