

Employment and Appointments Committee

27 June 2017

REPORT TITLE	EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING
REPORT OF	ACTING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1.0 REPORT SUMMARY

1.1 The report sets out proposals for the Council to support employees who wish to volunteer their help, time and support to the local community.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Employment and Appointments Committee:

- approves the proposed approach to support employee volunteering outlined in this report;
- approves the Volunteering Policy at Appendix 1 to this report;
- delegates authority to the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development to develop, approve and implement associated protocols considered necessary to give effect to the Volunteering Policy (including the spirit of the Policy).

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council values the importance of volunteering, both to the community and to staff. The Employee Volunteering Policy will demonstrate the Council's commitment to actively supporting volunteering as an opportunity for employees to contribute to the community, build and develop skills, knowledge, experience and resources and add personal value to fulfilling activities.

The Wirral Plan strategies clearly identify the value of volunteering in our community, and the Volunteering Strategy which will be discussed at Cabinet in June recommends that employers consider supporting employees to volunteer. Wirral Council therefore has an opportunity to lead by example in committing to this approach and encourage partners and other organisations to adopt the same approach.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Council has reviewed best practice.

5.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 Volunteering provides a range of benefits for the Council and its employees. The main benefits include:

- Inspires employees to become more involved in their communities.
- Supports employee development in gaining new skills, knowledge and experiences.
- Provides opportunities to share skills, talents and creativity to support their local area and help build a stronger, more resilient Wirral.
- Improves employee engagement and advocacy of the Council.
- Employees take a lead in developing relationships and partnerships within the community.
- Sets a positive example to other organisations/business partners.
- Supports the health and wellbeing of the workforce.

6.0 Key principles

- 6.1 It is proposed that the following key principles are applied as policy:

- The volunteering activity will:
 - Support the learning and development needs of the employee;
 - Support the sharing of skills, talents and creativity; and/or
 - Support the Council's corporate objectives.
- The volunteering activity will add value/benefit the local community.
- The volunteering activity will be with a registered charity, recognised voluntary organisation, or will be in response to a local crisis or need for local

emergency aid. Employees are encouraged to use the Community Action Wirral Volunteer Centre Website which carries the unique Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation.

- Employees who commit to volunteering in the community may be supported up to a maximum of 2 days per 12 month period (14.4 hours). This may increase to up to a maximum of 5 days (36 hours) in the 12 month period before retirement.

Employee volunteers will receive the right support, resources and opportunities to ensure volunteering is a positive experience. This will include:

- Wirral Council will work in partnership with local communities to communicate and promote the diverse range and flexibility of volunteering placements Wirral has to offer.
- Employee volunteering events will be held to support and encourage the growth and sustainability of volunteering. Targeted events may be held to develop volunteering in certain areas of the workforce e.g. apprentices, graduates, senior officers.
- Access to networking opportunities where the value and benefits of volunteering will be recognised, promoted and celebrated.
- The positive contribution to the development of skills, knowledge and experience gained from volunteering will be recognised and valued within the Council's recruitment and selection policy and procedures.

6.2 A draft Volunteering Leave Policy is attached at appendix one. A detailed protocol will be finalised and published on the Council's intranet.

6.3 The underlying spirit of this approach is to support employees who currently undertake voluntary work in the community to do more and to encourage others to consider volunteering.

6.4 There will need to be clear criteria around which voluntary work will be supported, evidence required and as is the case with other leave, it will be clear that requests for time off can only be accommodated without impact on service delivery or incurring costs.

6.5 The protocols and criteria will be kept under review and may need to be revised once they are in place in response to any issues that arise in its practical application.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Requests for time off will be met within existing resources.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report. The Council has discretion to adopt policies that go beyond the statutory

requirements, where it is considered this adds value or benefit to the workforce and/or the corporate reputation of the organisation.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

9.1 There are no specific staffing, ICT or Assets implications arising out of this report.

10.0 RELEVANT RISKS

10.1 There are no specific risks arising out of this report.

11.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

11.1 The trade unions have been consulted about the approach.

2.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

12.1. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? Yes

Business (Finance, Law & Governance, Construction and Facilities Management, HR / OD, Commissioning & Procurement, Asset Management, Digital)

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017/business>

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APPENDICES

Appendix One	Volunteering Leave Policy
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REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date