



Report of the Head of Adult Services and Tackling Poverty

Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty Corporate Delivery Committee –
26 September 2022

Swansea Council Volunteering Strategy Development

Purpose:	The report is for information purposes. It outlines the progress in developing a Swansea Council Volunteering Strategy.
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For Information	

1. Background

- 1.1 The development of plans to develop and connect volunteering opportunities within the Council is an action in the Community Response work stream of the Council's 'Achieving Better Together' transformation plan.

This will be achieved through:

1. Mapping existing and potential volunteering roles within services
 2. Coproducing a corporate Volunteering Strategy / Policy
 3. Developing and refreshing existing volunteering policies / procedures to support the implementation of the strategy /policy
- 1.2 Through a regional West Glamorgan project working in collaboration with Swansea Council for Voluntary Services, Neath Port-Talbot Council for Voluntary Services, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Neath Port-Talbot Council and West Glamorgan Regional Partnership, we secured some short-term funding via Welsh Government's Volunteering Recovery Fund to support the first action - mapping of existing and potential volunteering roles.

2. Mapping existing and potential volunteering opportunities hosted by Swansea Council

- 2.1 Initially focusing on two areas; Social Services and Cultural Services, a mapping exercise has been completed to identify both existing and potential volunteering roles within their service areas.
- 2.2 From the mapping exercise, 46 existing volunteering opportunities were identified, 15 within Social Services and 31 within Cultural Services.
- 2.3 Of the 15 roles within Social Services, 11 of these are within day services. These opportunities include volunteering supporting specific community groups such as asylum seekers, adults with learning disabilities, long-term unemployed and carers; together with opportunities for all members of the community including volunteering at the Men's Shed project, community transport and a food bank. The other opportunities within Social Services were for Volunteer Support Worker roles within Adult Services.
- 2.4 The existing opportunities within Cultural Services are from a number of sections including the Archive Service, Libraries and Leisure. They include opportunities such as Sport and Health Deliverer, Digitisation volunteer, Film Crew Members and Education volunteers within Swansea Museum.
- 2.5 There are various approaches being taken to host volunteers and some areas are using a combination of the Council's Voluntary Workers Policy, service area specific policies and some are using agencies to provide volunteers and as such utilise the agency's policy.
- 2.6 There were 42 potential volunteering roles identified, of which 33 were within Social Services. 16 of these were for more volunteer support worker opportunities within Adult Services. Other opportunities include Volunteer Youth Hub Worker, Employment Support, Digital Buddies and Community Garden Volunteer.

3. Development of a Volunteering Strategy

- 3.1 It is suggested that the strategy will be based on the principles of volunteering as defined by WCVA (Wales Council for Voluntary Action):
 - Volunteering is undertaken by choice. Individuals have the right to volunteer, or indeed not to volunteer.
 - While volunteers should not normally receive or expect financial rewards or incentives, they should be reimbursed for reasonable out of pocket expenses.
 - The contribution of volunteers and paid staff should complement one another. Volunteers should not be used to replace paid staff or to undercut their pay and conditions of service. Volunteers should enhance the quality of the Council's activities.
 - Effective mechanisms should be in place to support and develop volunteers.

- Volunteers and paid staff should be able to carry out their duties in safe, secure and healthy environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence and discrimination. All should be treated sensitively with regard to their preferred language.
- Volunteers should have access to appropriate opportunities for learning and development.
- There should be a recognised process for the resolution of problems, for both staff and volunteers.
- Volunteers should not be used to undertake the work of paid staff in the case of industrial disputes.
- Volunteering should be open and accessible to all
- Mutual Benefit – both the volunteer and the Council should benefit from the relationship.
- The contribution of the volunteer should be recognised

3.2 A Working Group of Council Officers has been established to drive forward the coproduction of Swansea Council's Volunteering Strategy / Policy. The Working Group is coordinated and facilitated by the Tackling Poverty Service and supported by Swansea Council for Voluntary Service.

3.3 The Working Group has held a number of workshops to date, sharing different processes to volunteering, identifying good practice and what would be required from a Strategy and Policy to support quality volunteering and consistency.

3.4 A co-productive approach is being utilised. Plans are currently being made to include the voices of volunteers and potential future volunteers.

4. Regional Volunteering Project

4.1 In addition to enabling the initial mapping of existing and potential Council volunteering opportunities, the regional project has been developing bi-lingual resources to support volunteering which is informing the development of the Strategy and Policy.

4.2 Through the regional volunteering project, progress has been made in a collective understanding of what volunteering is and the role volunteering plays in the region in communities and public services.

4.3 A series of workshops with the regional partners has developed an action plan for Swansea Council, identifying strengths, good practice and actions to improve its volunteering offer.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Draft a Swansea Council Volunteering Policy.

5.2 Develop procedures to coordinate and improve volunteering opportunities hosted by Swansea Council.

- 5.3 Build on the initial mapping to further inform the development of the Strategy.
- 5.4 Engage a wide range of stakeholders to inform the development of the Strategy.
- 5.5 Coproduce a draft Swansea Council Volunteering Strategy for consideration of the Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty Corporate Delivery Committee prior to wider consultation.
- 5.6 Commit to continued regional partnership working to further develop the volunteering offer across the Swansea Bay region.

6. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 6.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
 - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
 - Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 6.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 6.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 6.4 An Integrated Impact Screening has been completed for this report with no further assessment required (See Appendix A). This is an IIA Screening for the 'For Information' Report to the Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty Corporate Delivery Committee regarding background information and initial actions to develop a coproduced Swansea Council Volunteering Strategy. The report is to inform of the context of the proposed strategy, findings of an

internal mapping exercise, the principles of volunteering and the proposed next steps. A full IIA will be carried out as part of the strategy development process in due course.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, it may lead to decisions being taken at a later date that may have costs attached, e.g. volunteer expenses. Any such costs will need to be managed within departmental resources at that time with due regard to the Council's medium term financial plan.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A - IIA Screening Form