



## Report of the Head of Adult Social Services and Tackling Poverty

### Social Care and Tackling Poverty Service Transformation Committee – 11 September 2023

## Swansea Council Volunteering Policy Development

**Purpose:** The report is for information purposes only.

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#### For Information

### 1 Background

1.1 Development of a Swansea Council Volunteering Policy will set out consistent principles and practice by which volunteers are involved across the organisation. The policy aims to create a common understanding and definition of volunteering and clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained consistently in relation to the management of volunteers within Swansea Council whilst also recognising the importance of volunteers to Swansea Council.

1.2 It is proposed that the Swansea Council Volunteering Policy will include 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

1.3 The current Draft Swansea Council Volunteering Policy is attached at **Appendix A**. This draft policy takes account of best practice as identified by Third Sector Support Wales and as such defines volunteering, sets out standards and commitments to roles and responsibilities, recruitment and selection, induction and training and support and supervision.

## **2 Progress since April 2023**

2.1 Following a meeting of the Volunteering Development Working Group during May, the Draft Swansea Council Volunteering Policy was taken to the Corporate Safeguarding Operational Group during July for initial review and comments.

2.2 Work is ongoing in conjunction with Human Resources and Organisational Development and Swansea Council for Voluntary Service to both refine the draft policy and inform the development of a Volunteer Management Toolkit and Volunteer Handbook, incorporating feedback from the Corporate Safeguarding Operational Group.

2.3 A Volunteering Policy Steering Group has also been established comprising of officers from the Tackling Poverty Service, Human Resources and Organisational Development and Swansea Council for Voluntary Service. The Steering Group is set to meet during September to finalise the Draft Policy.

2.4 Funding has been secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund to provide the resources required to support the completion and implementation of this work during 2023/24. It is anticipated that a Volunteering Development Officer post will be established early in 2024.

## **3 Next Steps**

3.1 The Volunteering Policy Steering Group will continue working to complete the Draft Swansea Council Volunteering Policy and develop a Corporate Volunteer Handbook and Tool Kit for Volunteer Management as outlined within

the draft policy.

- 3.2 Consistent baseline data for all volunteers hosted across services within Swansea Council to be established.
- 3.3 Engagement with current volunteers to undertake experience mapping and ongoing engagement and coproduction.

#### **4 Integrated Assessment Implications**

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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'.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 An Integrated Impact Screening has been completed for this report with no further assessment required (See Appendix B). This is an IIA Screening for the 'For Information' Report to the Social Care and Tackling Poverty Service Transformation Committee regarding the development of a Swansea Council Volunteering Policy. A full IIA will be carried out as part of the policy development process in due course.

## **5 Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications.

## **6 Financial Implications**

6.1 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: Draft Swansea Council Volunteering Policy

Appendix B: IIA Screening Form