

Policy title: Volunteer Policy



Policy Control

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Directorate / Departmental ownership:	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism / Economy, Growth and Tourism
Officer responsible:	Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director Economy, Growth and Tourism
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Equality screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed by:	Sonya Stephenson, Head of Programmes
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1. Title of policy

Volunteer Policy

2. Statement

This policy has been developed to encourage and support volunteering within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (Council) and to provide guidance to ensure the interests of volunteers, staff and service users are met within our volunteering activities.

The Council has adopted the following definition of volunteering:

- 'Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside (or in addition to) one's immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice'.
(Source: Northern Ireland Volunteering Strategy 2012)

3. Aim

To develop and promote best practice in the involvement and support of volunteers in the work of the Council.

Specifically, the policy aims to:

- Encourage development of volunteering in all appropriate areas of the Council.
- Recognise and promote the importance of volunteering to the Council.
- To provide clear guidance to individuals, groups and corporate organisations considering volunteering opportunities with Council.
- Identify standards to which Council staff and volunteers are expected to adhere.

4. Scope

The Council recognises that volunteers offer their time freely. There is, however, an element of responsibility on both sides. It is important for volunteers to understand the benefits that will be gained from volunteering with the Council, and the Council's expectations of the volunteer.

Council employees volunteering during work hours is outside the scope of the policy and procedures

Council undertakes to provide volunteers with:

- A clear explanation of what they will be doing and why.
- Appropriate training, supervision and support for their role.
- A safe volunteering environment.
- Induction training.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment to undertake volunteering

activities safely.

Council expects volunteers to:

- Maintain good working relations with other volunteers, employees and service users.
- Be an ambassador and positively promote the Council.
- Strictly adhere to the Council's decisions, policies and procedures.
- Attend and be responsible at all times. Undertake their role safely, both for their own sake and that of others.
- Demonstrate high standards of voluntary work and attend training as required.
- Maintain strict confidentiality.

The key implementation principles of the Volunteering Policy and associated Volunteer Agreement are:

- Recruitment, selection and registration
- Safeguarding and health checks
- A Volunteer Agreement
- Appropriate and relevant induction and training
- Support and Supervision
- 'Adding value' to existing services
- Attendance

5. Related policies and legislation

The following, which is not an exhaustive list, are the principal related policies:

- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy and all other IT and staff policies
- Health and Safety Policy
- Disciplinary Policies
- Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees
- Local Government Employee and Councillors Working Relationship Protocol
- Safeguarding Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Bilingualism Policy
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Equality Scheme
- Access to Information Policy and Procedure
- Records Management Policy and Procedure
- Retention and Disposal Schedule

This following is not an exhaustive list of the related legislative provisions and measures requiring regulatory and legal compliance:

- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- The Data Protection Act (2018)
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

6. Definitions

Not applicable.

7. Department and Officer responsible

Directorate / Department	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism / Economy, Growth and Tourism
Officer(s) responsible for developing the policy	Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director Economy, Growth and Tourism

8. Policy approval process

Meeting	Date
CMT	11 August 2020
SMT	9 September 2020
Active & Healthy Communities	19 October 2020
Monthly Council Meeting	2 November 2020

9. Review Date

The policy will be reviewed in line with the Council's agreed policy review cycle i.e. every 4 years (as per Council's Equality Scheme commitment 4.31), or sooner to ensure it remains reflective of legislative developments.

10. Procedures and arrangements for monitoring the implementation and impact of the policy

Volunteer procedures have been developed to implement the practical outworking of the policy.

11. Equality Screening

The policy has been screened and the outcome is that it is not required to be subject to an EQIA (with no mitigating measures required)

12. Rural Needs Impact Assessment

Due regard to rural needs has been considered and a rural needs impact assessment has been completed.