

Supported Volunteering Policy

CCG

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Supported Volunteering Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 The employee volunteering scheme has been developed in collaboration with our community partner, Bury Voluntary Community & Faith Alliance (third sector organisation). The scheme supports the commitment of the Council and the CCG to getting involved with the community, and helping make the borough a better place to live. The scheme also supports staff who already volunteer, and those who want to give something back within the borough by volunteering.

1.2 These guidelines have been produced to assist:

- Managers when dealing with a request for paid time off under this scheme.
- Employees who are requesting time off.

A flowchart (Appendix A) has been developed to guide employees and managers through the process.

2. Scope

2.1 These guidelines apply to all directly employed Council and CCG employees. The guidelines do not apply to school support staff, teachers, agency staff, casual staff or contractors.

3. About volunteering

3.1 An employee may wish to volunteer to develop new skills, or to use existing skills and expertise to help a voluntary organisation and give something back to the local community.

3.2 Volunteer placements can range from helping out at a community group to providing professional skills to an organisation. Volunteering can be carried out on an individual basis or as part of a team.

Some examples of volunteering opportunities are:

- Professional Support – e.g. financial skills offered to a local charity
- Environmental activities
- Wildlife conservation
- Working with people and families
- Supporting culture and sporting projects
- Supporting Borough wide community events
- Working with local community groups

3.3 The employee volunteering scheme aims to give something back to the borough. The Council and CCG will support this by:

- Releasing employees from normal duties for up to three days with pay each leave year (pro-rata for part-time staff) to undertake volunteering activities within the borough or supporting residents of the borough in activities outside of the borough
- Encouraging employees to volunteer in their own time too
- Broadening volunteering boundaries
- Encouraging volunteering to be used for development
- Supporting employees to source volunteering opportunities within the borough
- Reviewing and revising the scheme where appropriate or necessary.

Please note, duties associated with school governance, and public duties, for example acting as a magistrate, election candidacy, support at polling stations and trade union activities are covered by the Council's or CCG's local conditions of service and/or separate HR policies and are therefore are not eligible volunteering activities under this scheme.

3.4 Teams may wish to volunteer together to assist their team development/ bonding whilst contributing to projects or activities across the borough of Bury. Team volunteering should also fulfil the eligibility criteria (below) and can be approved at the discretion of the appropriate Head or Director of Service, taking account of organisational and service delivery.

4. Eligibility criteria

4.1 When applying for paid time off under the scheme, there are certain eligibility criteria that must be met. These are detailed below:

- Time taken to volunteer will not disrupt or adversely affect an individual or team
- There are no conflicts of interests in relation to the placement and the employee's substantive role
- Activities benefit the environment, individuals (other than close relatives), charities and community groups within the borough of Bury
- The placement must be with an organisation based within the borough of Bury and, in most circumstances, take place during an employee's usual working hours
- Activities must be with an organisation registered with Bury VCFA
- Activities undertaken are with organisations which are 'not for profit'

- Flexibility in covering a volunteer's role in their absence is encouraged and must not incur any additional costs.

5. Entitlement to paid volunteer leave under the scheme

- 5.1 Where possible, managers are expected to support volunteering activities. Employees are encouraged to share information around volunteering in their one to one meetings and employee reviews.
- 5.2 There is no guarantee volunteering request will be accepted each request must be considered by the manager on a case by case basis (see paragraph 7.2 below). If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision of their manager to approve their volunteering request they can seek redress via the Grievance Procedure.
- 5.3 Managers are expected to demonstrate flexibility for cover arrangements in order to facilitate employees to give something back to the local community whilst ensuring service delivery will not be affected.
- 5.4 Entitlement to paid volunteer leave is up to three paid days;
 - For Council employees this is the equivalent to 22 hours 12 minutes (22.2 Hours) for full time staff during each leave year (1st April to 31st March)
 - For CCG employees this is the equivalent to 22 hours 30 minutes (22.5 Hours) for full time staff during each leave year. (1st April to 31st March)
 - For part time staff, the volunteering hours are calculated pro-rata to their working hours in the same way as annual leave.
- 5.5 Employees can use their entitlement flexibly, for example one day or half a day at a time. The minimum amount of time spent on a volunteering activity is half a day.
- 5.6 Employees can 'top-up' volunteering allowances with annual leave, flexi leave or unpaid leave if necessary. For example, employees could use two days' annual leave and three days' volunteering allowance for a week spent volunteering on a local project or event.
- 5.7 Employees cannot carry over any unused entitlement to the next leave year. Any remaining entitlement will be lost at the end of the leave year.
- 5.8 Employees volunteering at specified events that are borough wide community events i.e. Bury Pride, Bury 10k, Enlighten event, and Remembrance Day Parade, or on other activities which benefit the local community but are outside of normal working hours; such as at the winter night shelter or as an unpaid member on the Board of, for example, a

Housing or Charity Association, will need to log their volunteer leave, and the hours volunteered will be credited to their annual leave entitlement. This will

also apply when the volunteering activity is at a weekend or outside of normal working hours for people who work part time or on shifts.

- 5.9 Employees will not normally be granted paid volunteer leave if the host organisation is outside of the borough of Bury. Under these circumstances, employees will need to cover any time off work by using annual leave, flexi leave or unpaid leave. In exceptional circumstances the Chief Executive will have absolute discretion to waive this clause and grant paid volunteer leave.

Volunteering can be undertaken for national organisations, i.e. national charities, providing the volunteering activity is at a local level.

6. Sourcing the placement

- 6.1 Employees must source a voluntary placement through Bury VCFA or in support of agreed corporate activity e.g. Equality group activities or activities at events referenced in 5.8 above.

- 6.2 Once an employee has decided on a placement, they will need to send a copy of the placement request form to the voluntary organisation where they wish to volunteer. The form is available to complete online or at Appendix B.

A copy of this form should also be given to the employee's line manager.

Please note, if the employee is volunteering as part of a group, only one placement request form needs to be completed and returned per group, but with all participating employees' names cited thereon.

- 6.3 The placement request form will indicate if employees need any specialist training, equipment or information prior to the voluntary placement. The form also outlines any health and safety risks and what is being done to minimise the risks. Through the form, voluntary organisations are asked to confirm that a full risk assessment has been or will be carried out **before** the placement takes place.

- 6.4 If the placement involves an employee using their own vehicle, they must ensure they have the correct motor insurance policy that covers this.

If appropriate, any subsistence and travel expenses should be claimed through the organisation with which the employee is volunteering. This should be discussed with the organisation at the outset. Neither the Council nor CCG will not reimburse expenses linked to volunteering.

- 6.5 Whilst undertaking a placement volunteers will be covered by the host organisation's insurance policy. Schemes sourced through Bury VCFA will

have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance and be compliant with H&S legislation.

7. Before the placement

7.1 On receipt of a completed placement request form, the manager will:

- Encourage the employee to discuss further information around their placement during the employee's one to one meeting
- Check their employee(s) entitlement to ensure they have enough remaining volunteering allowance
- Ensure the time requested will not impact upon service delivery and any necessary cover arrangements can be put into place
- Check the placement meets the scheme's eligibility criteria
- Ensure there are no conflicts of interest
- Review the completed placement request form, considering any potential health and safety risks to the individual/team during the placement and how these risks are being/will be minimised. Should they have any concerns about the activity they should contact the voluntary organisation in the first instance. If concerns remain the manager should contact their Corporate HR or their departmental HR teams
- Ensure the placement does not involve a conflict of interest, political restrictions or political campaigning.

7.2 The manager will then either:

- Approve the employee's request to volunteer, or
- Advise the employee that their application cannot be supported because it does not meet the scheme's eligibility criteria. Managers are expected to do this as soon as possible and provide appropriate notice as employees will need to contact the provider organisation and may wish to consider looking at different opportunities or volunteer in their own time.

7.3 Once the manager has approved the employee's request to volunteer, the employee needs to request time off as part of the scheme. Managers will then approve the employee's leave request in the same way as they do for other leave such as flexi leave and annual leave.

7.4 Once a manager has approved an employee's request to volunteer under the scheme, employees are then responsible for confirming details of their voluntary placement with the voluntary organisation.

8. During the placement

- 8.1 Whilst volunteering, the employee code of conduct still applies and employees are expected to:
- Respect the privacy, property and confidentiality of others.
 - Report any problems they experience to their manager and Bury VCFA
 - Aim to fulfil the commitment they have made and inform their named contact in the voluntary organisation if they are unable to attend.
 - Act in a professional way, recognising they are representing the Council or CCG while carrying out the volunteering activities.
- 8.2 Employees' managers or a nominated representative should be contactable throughout the voluntary activity.
- 8.3 The organisation providing the placement is responsible for providing any induction or training to allow the volunteer to perform their placement role and remain safe and ensure suitable supervision during the placement. The organisation is also responsible for providing any specified PPE or specialist equipment/training to undertake the volunteer placement.
- 8.4 The employee is required to provide a confirmation slip from the organisation to show volunteering hours and give this to their manager on their return. The manager will record the volunteering leave on iTrent.

9. Review

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed in conjunction with the relevant Trade Unions after one year, and thereafter every three years or earlier if deemed necessary.

Employee Flow Chart

Step 1

Have you found a volunteering opportunity which meets the Scheme's eligibility criteria?

If no –Visit the VCFA website to look at available opportunities to benefit the Borough

Step 2

Ask the voluntary organisation to complete and return a placement request form to you.

Once you have the completed the form, share this with your manager and discuss your request for a volunteer placement in more detail.

Is your request for a volunteer placement approved by your manager?

Yes

No

Step 3

Request and have authorised leave from your manager in the usual way

Ask the reason why the approval has not been given, and if appropriate, go back to step 1 or seek advice from your HR Team

Step 4

Before you volunteer ensure that you exchange contact details with your manager so you can contact each other if necessary

Enjoy your volunteering

Manager Flow Chart

Step 1

Employee shares the completed placement request form with their line manager, ideally at least 3 weeks before the voluntary placement

Step 2

The employee's line manager reviews the completed placement request form and checks the placement fits against the scheme's eligibility criteria

Step 3

The manager and employee meet up to discuss the placement in more detail and the manager either approves the request for leave or lets the employee know why the request cannot be approved, after seeking advice from HR

If the request to volunteer is approved move to step 4. If not, move back to step 1 if appropriate

Step 4

The employee then requests leave to volunteer and the manager approves the request.

If the request is outside the employee's working week, once there is confirmation that the volunteering hours requested have been completed, the manager should email Departmental HR to request the hours are credited to the employee's annual leave balance

Step 5

The manager ensures that the employee has their contact details (or the contact details of a nominated person) and they are contactable during their placement

Step 6

The employee volunteers

Step 7

After the employee has volunteered the employee's line manager discusses the employee's voluntary placements with them and should encourage the employee to share their experience

Volunteering Placement Request Form

When sourcing a voluntary placement, please ensure the voluntary organisation completes and returns this form to you. You are required to share this form with your line manager, ideally at least three weeks before undertaking your voluntary activity. Please note your manager must approve requested paid time off before you commence the placement.

Your details

Name	
Telephone contact details	

Are there any special requirements or reasonable adjustments required to enable you to undertake this volunteering activity? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes please confirm how these are being accommodated

Volunteering organisation contact information

Name of voluntary organisation	
Address of voluntary organisation	
Contact phone no.	
Contact email address	

Volunteer activity co-ordinator's name	
Form completed by (name and job title of activity co-ordinator)	

Volunteering Activity

Start date of activity	
Start time	
End time	
Location	
Description of volunteering activity	
Pre-placement requirements	<p>Are there any specialist skills required before completing the placement?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p>
Equipment requirements (including safety equipment)	<p>Is any specialist equipment needed, in order to complete the volunteering activity?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

	<p>If yes, who is responsible for providing the equipment?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Organisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer(s)</p> <p>If the voluntary organisation is providing the equipment, will any instruction or training on how to use this be provided?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable</p> <p>If no equipment (including safety equipment) is to be provided by the organisation, is the volunteer expected to provide any equipment of their own?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p>
<p>Personal protection equipment (PPE)</p>	<p>Will any PPE be needed in order to complete the volunteering activity?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Please confirm the PPE will be provided by the voluntary organisation?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

Welfare facilities	<p>Are welfare facilities (toilets, washing, drinking, eating changing) provided onsite or nearby?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
First aid	<p>Are first aid arrangements in place for the volunteer(s)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Supervision ratio (if applicable)	<p>If the activities are being undertaken with children, young or vulnerable adults, or people with disabilities is the volunteer to support user ratio appropriate?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)	<p>Is a DBS check required?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes under which section of the legislation is this required?</p> <p>Will the DBS check be carried out and funded by the voluntary organisation? If no the placement cannot proceed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

Please note, the section below is not an exhaustive list.

Will the volunteering activity include:	Yes	No
A risk of slips/trips, for example, on grass, mud or rock		
Working at height (e.g. using ladders)		
Working near water		
Moving and lifting heavy items		
Exposure to cold, heat, sun or noise		
Working alone		
Working with animals		
Working with young people or vulnerable adults		
The volunteer driving your or their own vehicle		

If you have answered yes to any of the above questions, please outline below what action(s) will be put into place to minimise the risk of an injury and any checks you carry out to ensure the volunteer is adequately insured to drive a vehicle whilst undertaking their volunteering.

Declaration

I confirm that:

A health and safety risk assessment has been carried out ☐

Or a health and ☐ safety risk assessment will be carried out prior to activity commencing ☐

That any special requirements or reasonable adjustments required for me to undertake the volunteering activity are in place ☐

A check has been carried out and the volunteer named above is adequately insured to drive a vehicle whilst undertaking their volunteering ☐

Signed:

Print Name:

Position:

Date:

Thank you for completing this form.