

# Volunteering Policy

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For Employees at Tewkesbury Borough  
Council



This policy outlines the principles and procedures for Tewkesbury Borough Council employees who would like to volunteer.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) seeks to play a leading role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the Borough it serves. As part of its commitment to engagement, TBC has introduced an Employee Volunteering Policy. The policy is intended to support, encourage and develop employees by facilitating their involvement in a wide range of local causes.

The council recognises the contribution that an employee-volunteering scheme can make to the wider community, allowing employees to 'give something back' to their community whilst at the same time enhancing flexibility and development opportunities for its employees.

Employee volunteering can also act as a development tool for employees, providing them with "hands on" experience and the opportunity to make a real, worthwhile difference to the community. A range of skills can be acquired through participating in voluntary work, which in turn will benefit local communities. Achievements and opportunities may be recognised in the employee Personal and Professional Development Scheme (PPD).

Volunteering is a chance to get out and meet new people, interact with other employees and explore new challenges. Volunteering opportunities will be promoted and supported by the council. TBC will work closely with Involve Gloucestershire, who will design and help us deliver employee volunteering projects. All volunteering activities must be undertaken within or in support of the Tewkesbury borough community.

This policy applies to all employees of the council, irrespective of their status or position.

## **2.0 Purpose of the volunteering policy**

- 2.1** The scheme allows employees to take up time to volunteer. This is a great way to help the community, develop new skills and support something worthwhile. Employees can get involved in activities that benefit individuals, organisations, clubs, charities, groups and the environment. The policy is designed to help and support employees wishing to volunteer and provide a framework of good practice.

## **3.0 What is a volunteer?**

- 3.1** A volunteer is a person who donates their time, skill and experience for the benefit of society, the community and the environment. All volunteering activity must be able to demonstrate a positive social, economic and environmental impact.

- 3.2** A volunteer refers to any person employed by TBC who undertakes an activity on behalf of and agreed by the authority within the working week.
- 3.3** Volunteers are not classed as an employee and there is no legally binding contractual relationship between the volunteer and the organisation that they volunteer for.

#### **4.0 Employee Volunteering and Time Allowed**

- 4.1** The council will work with Involve Gloucestershire to help employees volunteer, by allowing up to ten members of staff to take part in up to two challenge volunteering days in a year. This will involve a team activity for a “one-off” practical task completed by a group of employees often in one day. This will be designed to offer great team building opportunities, and give employees a day away from their usual working environment where they can develop new skills and go home with a real sense of achievement. Teams can take part in a half or full day volunteering activity; working on projects such as painting buildings, undertaking a community garden project or taking on other exciting opportunities. The activities are designed to meet community needs; they will support team building and learning and development, as well as giving individuals the chance to try something new.
- 4.2** Whilst individual activities will not be supported by the council, they are a great way to develop individual skills in specific areas of work and work with different community groups. Examples include volunteering in the Youth Service (including the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award), Ranger Service, undertaking administration tasks, coaching and even fundraising.

Information on opportunities can be obtained from Involve Gloucestershire and by visiting [www.involvegloucestershire.org.uk](http://www.involvegloucestershire.org.uk).

#### **5.0 Why volunteer?**

- 5.1** Benefits to the person:
- Personal achievement and developing self-worth through giving back to the community.
  - Broadening a person’s outlook of the community.
  - Transfer a person’s skills and experience to the community.
  - Develop new personal skills and experiences and giving their expertise and contribute to lifelong learning.
  - Improve an individual’s employability.
  - Create a ‘can do’ attitude.
  - Increase social health and wellbeing.
  - Help adjust for the future, retirement prospects into the voluntary sector and beyond.
  - Learning important life and work skills from working in a new and different environment.
  - Meeting new people and provide networking opportunities for staff with colleagues from other sections.

- Boost confidence by giving staff the opportunity to work outside their comfort zone.
- Giving staff a wider perspective of some of the issues in the local community.

## **5.2** Benefits to the community:

- Helps organisations and people to deliver their service.
- Improve communities.
- Build a robust and resilient society.
- Improve relationships with communities and the authority.
- Employee volunteers contribute time, skills and enthusiasm to get things done.

## **5.3** Benefits to the Council:

- Helps the local community.
- Improves local reputation as employee volunteers make great ambassadors for the council.
- Build important relationships in the wider community.
- Enhance the skills of employees.
- Improve levels of recruitment and retention as it is important that employees feel good about working for TBC.
- Create a positive culture.

## **6.0** Aims

### **6.1** The aim of this is to increase volunteering opportunities for employees by:

- Releasing them from their normal duties.
- Encouraging people to volunteer in their own time.
- Broadening volunteering boundaries.
- Encouraging volunteering to develop communication throughout the community.

### **6.2** Employees are offered the opportunity to carry out volunteering work with the support of and under the sponsorship of the council.

### **6.3** All volunteering can help demonstrate the ability to drive collaboration and inclusion. As well as developing specific skills, volunteering can also help to broaden horizons through working with people from different backgrounds and sectors.

## **7.0 Types of volunteering supported**

**7.1** The authority supports employees who are undertaking community or charitable activities, including:

- Community care work.
- Environmental work and conservation projects.
- Fundraising for community projects or charities.
- The administration of public events.

**7.2** The types of volunteering that will be supported are entirely at the discretion of the council. Volunteering will be open to all employees, and they can also make suggestions for developing new partnerships with organisations, or specific projects that can be initiated.

## **8.0 How to make an application**

**8.1** Employees should complete the Employee Volunteering Request Form, which will be made available on the intranet, and forwarded to Sharon Marriott. The Management Team will decide which ones are to be approved. Approval must be obtained in advance.

## **9.0 What happens next?**

**9.1** A copy of the request form confirming the Management Teams decision will be sent to the Human Resources section, who shall advise Involve Gloucestershire of those employees who have been selected to volunteer. Those who are unsuccessful will be advised accordingly.

## **10.0 Working with vulnerable adults and children – Individual Volunteering Activities**

**10.1** An employee undertaking a volunteering opportunity not supported by the council will need to make sure that they have the correct clearances. An enhanced DBS check will be required for certain activities, e.g. volunteers who work with young people (under 18 years) or vulnerable adults, on a regular basis or more than once in 4 weeks are required to have a DBS check. It is the responsibility of the organisation/charity providing the volunteering activity, together with the volunteer to identify if a DBS check is necessary, that it has been undertaken and received back prior to the volunteering taking place. The cost of the DBS check will be borne by the employee unless the organisation/charity is paying for it.

## **11.0 Feedback**

**11.1** Volunteers will be asked to provide feedback by completing an evaluation form and we may also contact the organisation for feedback. This will help us to improve the volunteering experience and understand the impact we are making.

## **12.0 Volunteering principles**

- 12.1**
- The volunteer agrees to respect the privacy, property and confidentiality of others.
  - They will be committed.
  - They will inform all involved if unable to attend.
  - They must act in an appropriate way as they are representing the council.
  - They must adhere to the Code of Conduct.

## **13.0 Equal Opportunities**

**13.1** Managers will make any necessary adjustments to ensure that all requesting to be part of the volunteering scheme are treated equally.

## **14.0 Health and Safety**

**14.1** The Health and Safety of our employees is of the upmost importance. Please bear in mind that whilst you are volunteering, the responsibility of your health and safety lies with the organisation that you are volunteering with. The council will ensure that you are made aware of their Health and Safety policy and procedures for reporting accidents and the risk assessment concerning the volunteering activity.

**14.2** All volunteers have the responsibility to ensure the safety of themselves and others around them.

## **15.0 Insurance**

**15.1** If an employee undertakes a TBC volunteering activity, they will be automatically covered by the council's Public Liability Insurance and Employers Liability Insurance. A full risk assessment will need to be undertaken. TBC will take responsibility for also checking that adequate insurance cover is provided by the host organisation.

If an employee has organised the volunteering themselves they will need to ensure that personal injury and public liability insurance is in place. Employees should seek advice from the Human Resources section if they are unsure.

## **16.0 Expenses**

**16.1** Travel and subsistence expenses related to an employee's volunteering are not a claimable business expense.

## **17.0 Monitoring and review**

**17.1** The Human Resource Section is responsible for reviewing the operation of the Employee Volunteering policy and procedures to ensure that it is in accordance with other relevant policies of the council.

## **18.0 Volunteering conditions**

**18.1** The authority reserves the right to refuse an employees' request to undertake volunteering. A request may be refused if it is believed, for example, that:

- There will be a detrimental impact on the business needs of the employee's section.
- Work within the section cannot be rearranged to accommodate the employee's varied hours.

Time off for volunteering is not an entitlement.

In order to maintain services to our customers the council reserves the right to withdraw approval after it has been given or recall an employee should the situation demand it.

## **19.0 Communication**

**19.1** Active volunteering days will be promoted in the following ways through:

The intranet  
Notice Boards  
Employee Induction  
PPD's  
Cascade through team talks, staff briefings

## EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING REQUEST FORM

This form must be completed if you wish to volunteer on behalf of Tewkesbury Borough Council. Volunteering should not be arranged before approval is given by the Management Team.

### EMPLOYEE SECTION

<b>Employee's Name:</b>	
<b>Post Title:</b>	
<b>Full Time/Part Time/Job Share:</b>	<b>Weekly Hours:</b>
<b>Section:</b>	

### REASON FOR REQUEST

<b>Benefits of the volunteering you wish to undertake:</b>
<b>Time off required: (date and number of hours requested)</b>
Signed: _____ Date: _____

### MANAGEMENT TEAM DECISION

Management Team (don't support/support) the volunteering request above. If not agreed please give the reason(s) for this decision ( <i>To be completed by Sharon Marriott</i> ).
Signed: _____ Date: _____

*Sharon Marriott to retain original and a copy sent to the HR section*



# Evaluation Form

Please remember to keep a copy and use as part of your PPD review.

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Section</b>	
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<b>What did you enjoy about the volunteering activity?</b>	
<b>What new skills or knowledge did you acquire?</b>	
<b>What did you least enjoy about the volunteering activity?</b>	
<b>Are there any changes to the policy you would wish us to reflect on?</b>	
<b>What did you learn about the community?</b>	

**Any other comments (continue on separate sheet if necessary):**

**How would you rate the overall volunteering activity?**

1	poor	
2	satisfactory	
3	good	
4	excellent	

1	2	3	4
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*Employee to retain original and a copy sent to the HR section.*