

Personnel Committee

Volunteer Policy

30 September 2010

Report of the Head of People and Improvement

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the Council's policy in relation to volunteers.

This report is public

Recommendations

The committee is recommended:

- (1) To approve the Council's revised volunteer policy

Executive Summary

The volunteer policy is attached at appendix 1.

Volunteers provide an important resource for many organisations, and the recruitment and management should be treated the same as paid employees in many ways including insurance, health and safety, safeguarding and access to corporate information to ensure appropriate behaviour and advocacy of Council services.

Cherwell District Council currently use volunteers for events such as leading Nordic Walking and Jogging groups but these are managed through external sports organisations at present. The TIC/Museum have recently requested the recruitment of CDC volunteers but currently there is no policy in place to support managing the process so that:

- Agreement required via CMT to authorise the recruitment of Volunteers as there may be additional cost implications for the service.
- Agreement is in place between CDC and the volunteer (template included in the policy) to agree times of work and to confirm that it will not be paid employment.
- The council has a responsibility for the Insurance cover and Health &

Safety of its volunteers.

- There should be a central monitoring system in place so that we know how many volunteers we have at any current time and a copy of relevant paperwork.
- Monitoring in place to ensure safe working practises are in place and adhered to and we recruit safely in line with current legislation and CDC recruitment procedure.

Proposals

To approve the recommended Volunteer policy or leave without a policy where the council would be left open to the risk if no agreement is in place.

Conclusion

Volunteers can be an important source of additional resources however there are insurance, risk and resourcing implications in managing volunteers. It is therefore important that Cherwell District Council implements a standard process to safely recruit and manage its volunteers to avoid any future risk to the council.

This policy has been through consultation with Unison and the staff consultation group.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 The Council has an obligation to ensure its policies and procedures remain up to date in relation to employment law

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One Approval of the Volunteer policy

Option Two Leave without a policy where the council would be left open to the risk if no agreement is in place.

Implications

Financial: There are no financial implications in agreeing this policy and any volunteer requests will be considered by CMT on an individual basis.

Comments checked by Denise Westlake, Service Accountant, 01295 221982

Legal: It is essential that the Council's policies are clear and robust to avoid challenge.

Comments checked by Ross Chambers, Solicitor, 01295 221690

Risk Management: The risk of not approving recommendations is not adhering to the recruitment & Selection policy and associated legislation.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

Wards Affected

None

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	New volunteers policy and appendices
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Anne-Marie Scott, Head of People and Improvement
Contact Information	01295 221731 annemarie.scott@cherwell-dc.gov.uk