

Hatley Parish Council

Volunteering Policy – December 2019

1. Introduction

Hatley Parish Council enlists the help of volunteers to allow the council to develop its services to the local community. Volunteers will not be introduced to replace paid staff of the Parish Council.

2. Principles

Hatley Parish Council

- recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to paid staff;
- will ensure that volunteers skills and experiences are matched to the role they are undertaking;
- expects that staff will work positively with volunteers;
- will ensure that volunteers receive appropriate training, support and equipment needed in order to carry out their role;
- will reimburse reasonable expenses incurred – which must be authorised in advance with the Parish Council and are payable against a valid receipt;
- will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities.

3. Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers will be from all sections of the community and will be in line with Hatley Parish Council's Equal and Diversity Policy. Acceptance of an offer to volunteer will be subject to suitability to carry out the required task.

4. Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

Volunteers will receive a role description, identifying the skills and experience that are needed. This will include full information about their chosen area of work and offer a clear idea of their responsibilities.

Volunteers will be expected to

- maintain and uphold the good name and reputation of the council;
- treat all members, officers, service users and members of the public with respect and dignity;
- adhere to all relevant council policies and procedures, including its Safeguarding policy;
- maintain, where appropriate, current Disclosure and Barring Service certification.

5. Induction and Training

Volunteers will be offered appropriate training and support. This will be delivered by a suitably qualified Councillor or the Parish Clerk and will include a tour of the area of activity, an explanation of the volunteer's role and a description of required essential procedures such as timekeeping.

6. Support

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person, usually the relevant Lead Councillor, who will provide advice and guidance as needed. This support might involve regular meetings to discuss any issues that may have arisen.

7. The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them. Hatley Parish Council is committed to developing consultation and representational procedures for volunteers.

8. Records

Any potential volunteer will be expected to complete a short, simple application form. This will request the name, address and contact details of the volunteer, a brief description of their experience and skills, details of the volunteer's current Disclosure and Barring Service status (if relevant) and a referee. Minimum details will be kept on volunteers. This will include the volunteer's placement details, crisis contact, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with Hatley Parish Council's policies and procedures, most particularly with respect to data protection.

9. Expenses

Hatley Parish Council will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses, subject to compliance with the Council's policies and procedures.

10. Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by the Parish Council's insurance while carrying out agreed duties provided Council policy is adhered to. For this purpose, advance notice of any activity to be carried out will be required, including the nature of the work, the time and date of the work and the name of volunteer. This will be supplied by the relevant Lead Councillor.

11. Health and Safety

Hatley Parish Council will take all reasonably practical steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety and welfare while at work.

12. Equal Opportunities

Volunteers and staff will work in compliance with Hatley Parish Council's Equality and Diversity policy and will prevent discrimination on any grounds.

13. Problems

Volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have at any time, initially with their named contact.

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

Hatley Parish Council will systematically monitor and evaluate its use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy.

Due to be formally adopted at the ordinary meeting of Hatley Parish Council on Tuesday 21st January 2020. This policy will be reviewed annually.