



Patchway Town Council

Volunteering Policy

Introduction

Many of the Town Council's activities involve working in partnership with community and voluntary groups, also volunteers work directly with the Council, some key reasons are:

- 1. To increase our contact with the local community we serve**
- 2. To ensure our services best reflect the needs of our community**
- 3. To increase skills, experience, perspectives and diversity in the workplace**
- 4. To temporarily increase capacity.**

We will ensure that volunteers are included as part of the Town Council structure by enabling them to contribute to our ongoing service and development.

We will invite volunteers to join staff information sessions, these will be optional for volunteers. Volunteers will receive regular supervision.

We expect that staff at all levels will work positively with any volunteers and where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their role.

We acknowledge that volunteers require satisfying roles and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing training for them to do their assigned role effectively.

Volunteers may come through community groups or directly from the community.

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of volunteering with the Town Council. More information can be found on our website.

Recruitment

All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their placement might be realised.

An interview does not guarantee any placement, but details may be held for six months in case a suitable position is found. Applicant will be advised accordingly.

A placement of a volunteer does not replace paid staff. There is no contract implied or otherwise to do so.

Volunteer Agreement and Task Descriptions

Patchway Town Council undertakes to provide a signed for written agreement outlining the specific work and associated duties they will be undertaking. Each volunteer will receive an information pack about the Council.

A volunteer is governed by the same insurances, acceptances and policy as that of paid staff.

Expenses



Volunteers will receive reasonable out-of-pocket expenses. The Council believes that volunteers should not be in any respect financially disadvantaged by volunteering. These expenses must be claimed within three months and receipts produced. Before accruing any expenses, the Volunteer will seek permission from the Town Clerk. It is anticipated that volunteer expenses will not exceed £5 per day.

Where exceptional working is required, the Town Council may supply certain items, such as litter-picks, high-visibility coats, gloves and plastic bags.

Volunteers may request sundries such as pen and paper and use of office supplies to undertake their duties. Anything else at discretionary approval.

Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction into Patchway Town Council services and their own area of volunteering, with appropriate training provision.

Where possible, volunteers may be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff. This is discretionary based upon factors including role, timeline of expected service, and cost

All volunteers will receive appropriate documentation and are expected to adhere to conditions therein.

Support

All volunteers will have a named, paid member of staff allocated as their main point of contact. This contact will provide regular supervision, feedback on progress, and opportunities to discuss future development and air any problems.

Volunteers may from time to time be asked to undertake other capable duties.

The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Patchway Town Council operations, its work to staff and upon elected councillors to their main point of contact. This is confidential.

Where a complaint is to be made, this is taken by the most senior paid staff member on duty and will be handled appropriately as per our complaints policy.

All volunteers are expected to follow our IT and social media policy and to exercise media caution in what they might say or publish.

Insurance

Patchway Town Council's insurance policy covers volunteers whilst they are engaged on any assigned volunteering role on behalf of Patchway Town Council.

All volunteers must make every effort not to behave in a way that invalidates the insurance policy

Health and Safety



Volunteers are covered by Patchway Town Council's Health and Safety Policy; a copy will be provided to each volunteer.

A copy of Patchway Town Council's Safeguarding policy will be provided to each volunteer.

Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

A copy of Patchway Town Council's Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy will be provided to each volunteer.

Equal Opportunities

A copy of Patchway Town Council's Equality & Diversity Policy will be provided to each volunteer.

Problem Solving and Complaints

A copy of Patchway Town Council's Complaints Policy and procedure will be provided to each volunteer.

General Data Protection Regulation and social media

Patchway Town Council's GDPR and Social Media policies are available for consultation in the main office. Volunteers are advised to read them at induction.

Confidentiality, honesty and good standing

All volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality and behaviours as paid staff.

Discipline

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers. A copy of the procedure is included in the Volunteers Handbook.

Public at large

All volunteers whilst engaged upon assignment may encounter the general public at large. All volunteers are expected to remain polite and disengage from situations that might escalate and are to report back to their nominated contact or most senior paid staff member on duty.

Volunteers should advise the public to take all concerns to the Town Council.

All volunteers are under the guidance and instructions of the Patchway Town Council paid staff members; no other instructions are valid unless such are being given in public safety requirements or by members of the emergency services.

All volunteers are to know where the defibrillator emergency pack is situated within their working area and the procedure used to gain access. This information will be given at induction. Volunteers are not expected to be a first-aider unless they have undertaken specific training.