

Meeting of:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	19 DECEMBER 2023
Report Title:	VOLUNTEER POLICY REVIEW
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING
Responsible Officer:	ALIAH AWAN-WILLIAMS CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING OFFICER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	<p>This report presents a new Volunteer Policy for Cabinet approval. The policy sets out how the Council meets the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 in safeguarding children and adults at risk.</p> <p>This policy seeks to ensure that the Council has effective arrangements in place for volunteering. It provides a framework for every directorate and service area within and across the Council. It sets out responsibilities in relation to volunteers and duties of the team manager. It lays out the methods by which the Council will be assured that it is fulfilling its duties and that effective practices are in place to support individuals to flourish and be part of our thriving community.</p>

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval of the Volunteer Policy which is **Appendix 1** to this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council requires a Volunteer Policy to set out how it fulfills its statutory responsibilities for how we interact and engage volunteers.
- 2.2 The policy provides a framework for volunteers that all directorates and departments within the Council should operate consistently within. The intention of the policy is to support quality service delivery, promote good practice and ensure services are delivered in a way that volunteers are supported to fulfil their potential.
- 2.3 The policy is intended to be enabling; to ensure that all parts of the Council understand how to implement effective volunteer management arrangements.

This is a policy for a positive, preventative and proactive approach to volunteering. To be effective, the policy must be owned and implemented across the whole Council and promoted with partners and in wider communities.

- 2.4 The policy is intended as an enabler of a positive culture, of proactively identifying, mitigating, managing, and minimising risks to safety and wellbeing, whilst ensuring decisive and timely action to address serious concerns.
- 2.5 This process has been overseen by the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Board and consultation with Trade Unions has taken place.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 The Volunteer Policy appended to this report at **Appendix 1** has been developed to provide robust policy in the engagement, management and monitoring of volunteers by the Council. It recognises that volunteers make a considerable contribution to the wellbeing of people and communities in the county borough and that volunteering should be a positive experience for volunteers themselves.
- 3.2 The policy provides a clear set of requirements for the Council's volunteer programme which aims to: define the role and value of involving volunteers within the organisation; ensure consistency that all volunteers are treated equally and fairly; set out how staff and managers should support and supervise volunteers effectively to ensure the safety of volunteers, staff and others; and, address how to resolve any issues that may arise.
- 3.3 Every directorate is required under the policy to ensure that they monitor the number of volunteers engaged and is able to provide assurance regarding their safe recruitment, compliance with mandatory training and oversight of the work they do.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:-

Involvement	The Volunteer Policy has been developed through the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Board which includes members from across the Council who have been engaged in the development of this policy. There has also been engagement with Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) in the development of this policy and engagement with Trade Union partners.
Long term	There will be a positive long-term impact of this policy due to meeting regulatory requirements as well as providing a safe and effective framework for volunteering.
Prevention	Volunteers can be engaged in a variety of roles including those which prevent escalation of need to key partners.
Integration	This policy will be implemented and used across the Council and promoted to key partners.
Collaboration	There is strong collaboration, particularly with BAVO, to promote the valuable contribution that volunteers make to the quality of life in the county borough.

6. Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 There are no sustainability or climate change implications arising directly from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 The Council's Volunteer Policy has been developed to ensure it is robust and provides clear standards for all directorates and services.
- 7.2 The Volunteer Policy has been developed to ensure that volunteers are engaged safely, undertake mandatory safeguarding awareness training and that there is robust monitoring of the work that volunteers do.
- 7.3 The implementation of this reviewed policy will further enable the Council to robustly fulfil its volunteering responsibilities.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no additional financial implications from implementing this reviewed policy.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Volunteer Policy at **Appendix 1** to this report.

Background documents: None