

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Volunteering Vision, Aims and Policy 2019 - 2024

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1 Executive Summary

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Volunteering Policy provides a focus for the council in how it makes use of volunteers in providing services to the community as well as how it can usefully encourage volunteering opportunities, and the take up of those opportunities across the Borough.

The volunteering policy is three fold:-

- 1.1 **Volunteers registered with the Council for working in the community.**
As part of the Council, the Community Engagement Team will link up with partners and stakeholders in the community to identify local priorities, activities and opportunities for volunteers registered with the council to work on.
- 1.2 **Encouraging Oadby and Wigston Borough Council staff to volunteer in the Community**
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council will support its employees who undertake voluntary roles and are exploring ways in which its existing staff population can contribute to Oadby and Wigston community through volunteering.
- 1.3 **Volunteers working in the Council to support services.**
The Council seeks to encourage and facilitate volunteering to support the delivery of the local and strategic priorities identified within the Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024 and within its services provided to the community.

The Council recognises the benefits of volunteering for individuals, organisations and communities. These include the individual benefits of pride and an enhanced sense of belonging in the community.

In addition, there are wider community benefits including retaining or providing services that would otherwise be financial unviable. Other Council partners are supportive of the use of volunteers and a volunteering policy.

Volunteering can be via short term one off events or attached to a more permanent scheme or services.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Corporate Plan sets out a vision of 'A Stronger Borough Together, Improving the Lives of Our Communities'. Volunteering has a key role to play in this. As well as making specific reference to working with the 'voluntary sector partners' and providing specific Council services with the support of volunteers.

The policy is to encourage more people to get involved in volunteering and give the Council a lead role in removing or reducing barriers to volunteering. The policy recognises the challenges of the Council's ability to impact individual decisions and therefore its focus is on making the best use of volunteers and volunteering opportunities to maximise the personal, organisation and community benefits from volunteering.

2 Volunteering Strategy – The Vision and Aims

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is committed to:-

- 2.1 Overseeing , obtaining and increasing the number of people who volunteer in Oadby and Wigston Borough but also the number of volunteering opportunities available for those people.
- 2.2 Promoting opportunities for organisations that rely on volunteers to collaborate and share best practice.
- 2.3 Making the best possible use of the time, energy and skills that volunteers provide across the council services, out in the community and with partners.
- 2.4 Keeping volunteers, those they support and those that commission them safe.
- 2.5 Recognising the value of volunteers.

By making these commitments Oadby and Wigston Borough Council will achieve the following:

- 2.6 Deliver more and improved greater services and support through volunteering to more people across Oadby and Wigston Borough than is otherwise currently possible.
- 2.7 Provide individuals with more skills and experience in order to improve their employability.
- 2.8 Provide individuals with a sense of purpose, involvement and passion for their community in order to help improve self-confidence, opportunities, health and wellbeing.
- 2.9 Support the building of community cohesion by linking individuals and groups through volunteering.

3 Volunteering Policy – Objectives

We will improve and grow our volunteering within Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. Volunteers can be involved in supporting one off activities, often related to one off events or campaigns. Other volunteering opportunities may be part of ongoing schemes.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council can make use of volunteers in the following services:

- Local Area Boards support by the Community & Wellbeing Teams
- Supporting initiatives run by University of Leicester for community engagement
- Right to Read/Schools
- Chatter Natter
- Community Fridge/Foodbanks
- Action Homeless
- Grand Union Canal
- Gardening
- Pride of the Borough
- Park Volunteering
- Supporting the UK Armed Forces

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, as part of the volunteering policy, will have a continual review process concerning the use of volunteers within the Council and policies and procedures will be updated accordingly. This will include:-

- Recruitment of volunteers including the registration form.
- Vetting of volunteers including Disclosure and Barring (DBS) requirements for volunteers working with the public in roles where this is a requirement e.g. working with children or vulnerable adults.
- Induction of new volunteers, which is pertinent to the role and service.
- Required training, including safeguard, as necessary.
- Review meetings and on-going support and training.
- How we recognise and celebrate the contributions and successes of volunteering.

A process has been developed to promote and support the use of volunteers registered with the volunteers registered with the Council working in the community, Council staff working in the community, volunteers working in the Council. Officers and Managers will act as internal volunteering experts and as a source of knowledge and experience to be called on for support if and when required.

Increasing the number of opportunities to volunteer will require a council wide response as more volunteers will need to be managed within existing resources.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council will develop a central register of volunteers for management information and statistics purposes electronically to ensure proper volunteer management and appropriate safeguarding procedures. This will comply with GDPR regulations of May 2018.

All volunteering opportunities will be advertised on a single page on the council's external facing website www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/volunteering with links to more details where appropriate.

In addition, promotion of specific opportunities will be as appropriate for that opportunity; within the community or within an interest group.

Volunteers will be accepted in accordance with the principles of fairness, consistency and openness in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and should aim to reflect the diversity in the Borough.