

APPENDIX 2

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

HUMAN RESOURCES

GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENTS

USE OF VOLUNTEERS

**Human Resources
Updated September 2016**

Guidelines for Managers on Use of Volunteers

1. Introduction

These guidelines are intended to cover those persons who are unpaid who carry out specific activities to supplement the services provided to the public. The use of volunteers is not intended to replace paid employees.

These guidelines do not apply to those persons who wish to obtain work experience placements.

2. Approval

Where new arrangements for the introduction of volunteers are proposed the matter should be reported to the relevant Directorate/Service Management Team with a clear definition of their role and the numbers who will be involved. The trades unions and employees in the area concerned should be consulted on the matter.

3. Operation of a Volunteer Scheme

Recruitment:- The role of the volunteer will be clearly described in a written form similar to a job profile/specification. The person responsible for the volunteer/s will be identified. This description of activities to be undertaken by the volunteer will form the basis of identifying the skills, experience, knowledge and qualifications that are required to undertake this voluntary opportunity.

The position should be advertised using appropriate channels to encourage a diverse, suitably qualified / experienced range of potential volunteers to contact you. It is recommended that one of these channels is to advertise for volunteers via Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) who can assist you to place the opportunity onto the [Do-It website](#).

Potential volunteers can also apply via VAR / Do-It and managers should discuss this with VAR as part of the preparations to recruit volunteers.

There should be two written references for potential volunteers. These references must be verbally checked by phoning the provider.

Other checks will depend upon the nature of the role. For example, some roles will require an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Information, including the forms to use, how to apply and completing ID checks can be found on the [council's website](#). Although the DBS will process these free of charge if the volunteer box is 'ticked' there will be an internal charge to HR to pay North Yorkshire Council to process this application.

If an enhanced DBS is not required for the volunteer role a Basic Disclosure will be required for any volunteer who will be granted access to the Council's IT system – see the [Baseline Personnel Security Standard](#) information on the intranet; the same process as for employees must be followed.

Where qualifications are required the certificates should be checked e.g. driving licence.

The identity of the applicant should be verified by examination of documentary evidence that includes national insurance number e.g. payslip, N.I. card.

Managers must also check that the potential volunteer has the legal right to volunteer within the UK.

Appointment

When the volunteer is appointed a written agreement should be made with the person chosen. This should give start dates; times of attendance; health and safety issues; confidentiality requirements; training and support; termination arrangements; named supervisor; probationary period; insurance cover; procedure for notifying absences etc.. A model agreement is given later in the document.

The individual should receive induction into the role with the above elements, in particular health and safety being covered.

If needed, for the voluntary role, personal protective equipment should be issued and training provided in its use.

A probationary period should be used to assess the person's suitability using the one which applies to existing employees.

There should be a clause on confidentiality in the written agreement and a form of words is included in the example given later.

In relation to insurance cover it is necessary to check with the Authority's Insurance officer that they are covered by the Authority's policies.

The termination arrangements should be explicitly stated in the agreement unless there are particular circumstances normally a week's notice terminating the arrangement by either side should be used.

Training and Support

There should be adequate training and support for the volunteer, especially on health and safety issues.

The employee responsible for the volunteers should regularly review the training requirements of the staff, at least every 6 months.

Depending on the volunteer role being undertaken there may be a requirement for regular, formal/semi-formal supervision sessions. If not, it would be good practice to review how the volunteer is feeling and the role is working out once a quarter.

Expenses

The reimbursement of expenses is a matter for each service to monitor and control. If it is necessary to reimburse volunteers for incurring additional subsistence and travel costs the [Council's Subsistence Rates](#) document should be used for the rates to be used as a basis for payments. Any payments should be made following a claim which is authorised by the appropriate employee and recorded for audit purposes.

It is important that any expenses paid only cover actual and directly related costs eg actual bus tickets cost so, for example, if the person buys a one week travel card you could pay 1/7 the cost for each day the person volunteers

Record Keeping

The personal details of volunteers should be recorded and held in the same way as for paid employees. Where references are requested on the volunteer these should normally be provided and kept on file by the service hosting the volunteer. They do not need to be sent to Human Resources..

Review

The operation of a volunteer scheme should be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure it is meeting the requirements of the Service.

Written Agreement with Volunteer

NAME:

ADDRESS:

**TITLE OF VOLUNTEER:
(If appropriate)**

COMMENCEMENT DATE:

LOCATION:

TIMES OF ATTENDANCE:

Named Supervisor:

Probationary Period (If appropriate)

You will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months to assess your suitability and for you to assess the suitability of the position.

Termination Arrangements

One week's notice by either side will be required, in writing to end the arrangement.

Training and Support

Your training requirements will be reviewed every 6 months.

Expenses

Any payments can only be made following a claim for actual expenditure necessarily incurred, accompanied by receipts as appropriate and authorised by a named supervisor. Payments will be made via the Council's payment system directly into your bank account.

Confidentiality

All volunteers handling, or with access to, confidential information should be aware of the serious consequences that its disclosure could bring.

No volunteer shall communicate to the public the content of documents and particulars of service users relating to the Authority unless required by law or expressly authorised to do so. It is a grave betrayal of trust, and to use confidential information either in a careless or ill-considered discussion, or by the exploiting of such information for personal gain. It could also be illegal eg break the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

Procedure for Notifying Absence

If you are unable to attend due to illness please notify your named supervisor as soon as possible and preferably before the start of the normal working day.

For holidays, please let your named supervisor know in advance when you can or as soon as possible. We appreciate you volunteering your time to the Council so you deserve a break and we hope you have a good time.

Health and Safety

You are required to comply with the Council's health and safety rules, and with all the rules laid down by the Health and Safety at Work Act and subsequent regulations / legislation eg manual handling.

You are required to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of yourself and of others affected by your activity; you must make use of all protective clothing and equipment; and you must co-operate with management in all respects for the full implementation of the Health and Safety Policy.

Signed (Volunteer)..... Date:.....

Signed (Manager) Date:.....