

POLICY STATEMENT

Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV)



Summary and Objectives	Approved by
<p>The Council has introduced an employer-supported volunteer schemes (ESV), recognising that there are multiple and mutual benefits to the employer and employee. The ESV scheme can promote the Council’s reputation as an employer of choice and, enhance Barnet’s reputation as a great place to work and help the Council to attract, recruit and retain the best employees. The benefits of volunteering for staff include increased wellbeing and opportunities for personal development.</p> <p>Employer-supported volunteering involves the Council giving members of staff paid time off or other support to enable them to do something unrelated to their paid job in a voluntary capacity. This will involve a combination of active support – developing proposals to release staff in paid work time to volunteer, promoting volunteer opportunities more actively, as teambuilding activities or part of away days, and more low-level support (helping staff access volunteer opportunities in their spare time).</p> <p>Subject to the agreement of the line manager the ESV policy stipulates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnet staff will be able to take up to 2 days of paid volunteering leave per annum, pro rata for part time staff; • The timing of which is to be agreed in advance with the line manager; • The policy is not compulsory and employees will not be required to take the 2 days if they do not wish to do so; • Volunteering will be recognised in Barnet’s staff appraisal system; • Volunteering opportunities will be sourced for staff; • Opportunities through this policy will focus on volunteering with Barnet charities for the benefit of Barnet residents. 	<p>FINAL DRAFT</p> <hr/> <p>Date</p> <p>Approved:</p> <p>Review due:</p>

In Scope
<p>This policy statement covers all employees of the Council. (The term staff or workforce is used in this policy statement to include all these groups.)</p>

Out of Scope

This policy is an employee related benefit; it does not cover temporary or agency staff or employees of other organisations delivering services on behalf of Barnet, elected members or, residents. This excludes staff employed by Barnet Homes and CAPITA.

The brokerage service provided by Groundwork will be available to all those interested in volunteering within the borough.

POLICY STATEMENT DETAIL

It is the policy of the Council to:

- **Allow Barnet staff to take up to 2 days of paid volunteering leave** per annum, pro rata for part time employees
- The timing of is to be agreed in advance with the line manager, but may be taken in small time allocations
- The uptake of the ESV offer will be on a **voluntary basis**
- Volunteering will be **recognised in Barnet's staff appraisal system**
- **Brokerage** support will be provided for **individuals or groups** to source suitable volunteering opportunities.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Council will:

- Provide Guidance to Managers on managing paid volunteering leave
- Promote local volunteering opportunities
- Provide local brokerage support for individuals and groups who express an interest in volunteering via the Council's Local Infrastructure Partner
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy

All managers are expected to:

- Consider the opportunities that volunteering presents for team-building
- Refer staff who express an interest in volunteering to the Council's brokerage partner
- Consider during staff appraisals how volunteering could benefit staff members to reach their potential
 - Comply with the 'Guidance for Line Managers' Document

All staff are expected to:

- Consider how volunteering could help them meet personal and development objectives

PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

Models of Volunteering

Different models of volunteering are set out below. These enable the Council and managers to support employees to participate and to achieve different outcomes. Managers should provide guidance on the best model to meet the particular needs.

Team volunteering

Team volunteering is often a one-off group event. It is usually a practical task e.g. clearing a local park or painting a community hall. Team volunteering opportunities are excellent for teambuilding and motivation and can often be carried out in a single day.

Individual volunteering

Where individuals choose their own volunteering opportunity and carry it out either in their own time or using their volunteering leave. Individual volunteering can take place as virtual volunteering where an individual might complete desk research or online monitoring. Individual volunteering can take place as skilled place volunteering where skills are developed through practical challenges.

Pro bono volunteering

This involves using professional skills such as legal, accounting, proposal writing or marketing expertise to support community organisations and is a great way to provide valuable services and create impact. Pro bono volunteering can take place as team or individual opportunities.

Brokerage Service – currently Groundwork

Once the type of volunteering opportunity has been decided on, contact should be made with the Council's volunteer brokerage partner. For group volunteering, the manager should make contact whilst the individual should make contact for individual opportunities.

There will be a dedicated page on the Groundwork website, where staff can access the brokerage service. On the dedicated webpage, there will be a registration forms and opportunities to consider. Referrals and connections will be made via Groundwork and the organisation will then be in touch directly to arrange the volunteering.

Groundwork will case manage journeys from registration to placement, and then evaluate user experience.

Choice of Activities

The Council will work with the brokerage service to identify opportunities that both meet the local demand from voluntary and community groups, help the Council to achieve its objectives set out in the Corporate Plan, and meet the interests of employees.

Recognising Employees

Recognising the efforts of employees is important to let them know that their efforts are appreciated and to inspire other staff members, partner organisations and residents to take part in volunteering opportunities. Methods for recognising employees will include:

- Recognising Volunteer of the Year within the Staff Awards ceremonies
- Recognising local volunteering as a contribution towards Corporate Goals within the appraisal system
- Recognising volunteering as a training and development opportunity within the appraisal system

Application of the policy

Any volunteering time will need to be agreed between an employee and their line manager to ensure that there is no impact on service delivery. Line managers should consider flexible, short-term and virtual volunteering opportunities.

Health and Safety

Where volunteering activity involves an element of risk to staff, line manager shall satisfy themselves that volunteers have considered, evaluated and accepted the risks. Responsibility to undertake the risk assessment lies with the voluntary organisation. The Council is only responsible for the health and safety of volunteers working within its own services or undertaking and not for any with outside organisations.

Insurance

The Council's insurance only provides cover for staff undertaking activities within its own services, businesses and undertakings. During the times that Council staff are undertaking voluntary work for a charity or organisation, they would have to be covered by the charity or organisation's employer liability insurance. Therefore approval of any volunteering opportunities will be subject to the employee providing copies of the appropriate insurance documents from the outside organisation.

Employees who give the benefit of their professional advice e.g. financial advice, must personally ensure that they are not in breach of any professional conduct rules that they must comply with and that they have professional indemnity insurance for the advice that they are giving or that they are covered by the insurance of the organisation they are volunteering for. The Council will not provide this professional indemnity insurance.

Monitoring and Data

This policy will be reviewed after 1 year to ensure that it is operating in the way that was originally intended.

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The scheme is in addition to, and is not a substitution for other existing Council schemes covered in Section 6 (Public Service) of the Council's Special Leave Policy, which includes:

- Membership of Public Bodies and School Governors
- Annual Training with H.M. Forces and Territorial Army
- Jury Service and Justices of the Peace

KEY LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

February 2016 Version 1.0

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