

Employee Volunteering Policy

1. Purpose of this policy

- 1.1 Lancaster City Council is committed to supporting employee volunteering and acknowledges the many benefits to our employees and local communities that this brings.
- 1.2 By encouraging volunteering, we aim to support our employees to develop personal and professional skills, and increase personal resilience and wellbeing; at the same time as building stronger relationships with our local communities and helping us to deliver the priorities in our Corporate Plan:
- A sustainable district
 - An inclusive and prosperous local economy
 - Happy and healthy communities
 - A co-operative, kind and responsible council

2. Who can get involved

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees of Lancaster City Council with a permanent or temporary contract.
- 2.2 Teams may wish to volunteer together to assist with their team development. This can be arranged outside of this policy, subject to manager discretion.

3. What is volunteering and what are the benefits

- 3.1 Volunteering your time and skills gives you the chance to build connections with local communities and give back to society while working on issues you feel strongly or passionate about. Benefits to you can include developing skills such as coaching or organisational ability and:
- Improved communication
 - Increased confidence
 - Team working
 - Creativity
 - Resilience
 - Gaining an overall sense of fulfilment

4. Which organisations can I volunteer with

- 4.1 You can support Bay Volunteers, the Lancaster District CVS Volunteer Centre, and Council departments who offer internal volunteering opportunities. Please refer to our Volunteers support webpage for further information.
- 4.2 If you wish to volunteer with another non-profit organisation that works within the Lancaster district and you can demonstrate that there would be a benefit to our local communities, please talk to your line manager.
- 4.3 We will not be able to support you to volunteer with organisations who make a profit, or if you are volunteering to support a friend or family member.
- 4.4 If there is a conflict of interest with your Lancaster City Council role or if there will be an adverse impact on your health and wellbeing, those volunteering roles will also not be supported under this policy.

5. Time Off

- 5.1 We will offer two paid days (pro-rata) of Volunteering Leave per year (01 April to 31 March), on the basis that you match the days by volunteering on an unpaid basis for at least the same duration as the time you are requesting.
- 5.2 How and when the leave is to be taken can be discussed with your line manager, considering the need to deliver our services.
- 5.3 If you wish to apply for Volunteering Leave, please discuss the request with your Line Manager, and complete a request for Volunteering Leave in MyView.
- 5.4 Whilst we will aim to support your request, there may be operational reasons why your line manager cannot support it, such as the costs and difficulties in providing cover for you. You will be advised in a timely manner as to whether your request can be supported or not.

6. My View

- 6.1 All requests for Volunteering Leave will be recorded on MyView by the employee, in the same way as annual leave.
- 6.2 You may also wish to update your 'Record of Learning' on Learning Zone.

7. Expenses, health and safety, and safeguarding

- 7.1 Any expenses (e.g. travel/equipment costs) to be claimed as a result of volunteering must be agreed and raised with Bay Volunteers, Lancaster District CVS Volunteer Centre, or the relevant organisation you are volunteering with; the Council will not reimburse any expenses incurred.
- 7.2 It is the responsibility of the volunteering organisation to ensure adequate Health & Safety, training and insurance provisions are in place.

7.3 In situations where there is a requirement for a DBS clearance to allow the employee to volunteer (e.g. elderly people or adults with a learning disability), it is the responsibility of the volunteering organisation to identify whether this check would be necessary and ensure that this has been undertaken before commencement of any volunteering activity.

8. Further information

8.1 A Staff Volunteering Page has been added to the Staff Wellbeing & Inclusion intranet site to explore the benefits of volunteering and provide useful information. We will also seek case studies and stories from colleagues.

9. Review

9.1 This Policy will be reviewed two years after implementation, or earlier in the event of further changes in legislation. The Policy will also be kept under review as it is implemented, so it can be refined and developed according to learning and experience.

Document Control:

Version no.	Effective Date	Reason	Review due
		New policy	