

Employee Volunteering Policy

1. Who does this policy apply to?

- 1.1 This policy applies to all employees of Lancaster City Council with a permanent or temporary contract.

2. What is the purpose of this policy?

- 2.1 LCC is committed to supporting employee volunteering and acknowledges the many benefits to our employees and local communities that this brings. The purpose of the policy is also to support the voluntary sector where we recognise that we may not be able to financially support external organisations, but where we acknowledge our biggest resource, our staff may be able to help.
- 2.2 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

3. What roles do the employee, line managers, the Council and HR play in this policy?

3.1 Employee Responsibilities

- If you wish to apply for Volunteering Leave, to discuss the request with your line manager, complete an Application Form for Volunteering Leave, and make a request for Volunteering Leave in MyView.
- To match the days paid leave with the same amount of volunteering on an unpaid basis outside of work time.
- For reservist employees to give as much notice as possible of training commitments.
- To consider updating the record of learning on Learning Zone.

3.2 Line Manager Responsibilities

- To discuss how and when Volunteering Leave is to be taken considering the needs of the service.
- To approve requests for volunteering where possible and where not possible operationally, to communicate this to the employee and consider any alternative dates or possibilities together.

3.3 HR Responsibilities

- To support line managers and employees with the implementation of this policy.

3.4 Council responsibilities

- To offer two paid days (pro-rata) of Volunteering Leave per year (1 April – 31 March), provided that the employee matches the days by volunteering on an unpaid basis for at least the same duration as the time off they request.

4. Volunteering and the benefits

- 4.1 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, organisational ability, improved communication, increased confidence, team working, creativity, resilience and gaining an overall sense of fulfilment.
- 4.2 Teams may wish to volunteer together to assist with their team development. This can be arranged outside of this policy, subject to manager discretion.

5. Organisations to volunteer with

- 5.1 You are able to 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.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 We will not be able to support you to volunteer with organisations who make a profit, or if you are solely volunteering to support a friend or family member.
- 5.4 If there is a conflict of interest with your LCC 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.

6. Expenses, health and safety, and safeguarding

- 6.1 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; LCC will not reimburse any expenses incurred.
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the volunteering organisation to ensure adequate Health and Safety, training and insurance provisions are in place.
- 6.3 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.

7. Further Information

- 7.1 A Staff Volunteering Page has been added to the Staff Wellbeing and Inclusion intranet site to explore the benefits of volunteering and provide useful information. We will also seek case studies and stories from colleagues (always subject to our data protection policies).

8. Review

- 8.1 This Policy will be reviewed two years after implementation, or earlier in the event of changes in legislation. The Policy will 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
1.0	01.11.2022	New policy	31.10.2024
2.0		Formatting changes only	2026