Portsmouth City Council

Volunteer Strategy 2018-2021

Introduction

Our vision and aspirations

Individuals, groups and communities will be inspired to volunteer, developing and applying their skills, talents and passions so that together we can deliver better outcomes for the communities of Portsmouth.

Our aspirations through this strategy are to:

- Deliver a consistently high quality, enjoyable volunteer experience
- Diversify our volunteer population so that it is more reflective of our service users and the communities we seek to serve
- Increase the contribution volunteers make throughout the council, demonstrating their impact on the lives of the communities of Portsmouth

We want the experience of supporting Portsmouth City Council services as a volunteer to be outstanding and inspirational. We will achieve this through building on our existing foundations over the next three years by:

1. **Embedding volunteering and social action throughout the council**

2. Promote volunteering by improving the profile, quality and range of volunteering opportunities.

3. Provide flexible inclusive opportunities for volunteering that consider individuals' diverse needs and overcome barriers to getting involved particularly for young people and those from disadvantaged communities.

4. Increasing our use of technology

5. Develop and support staff who recruit and manage volunteers

With this strategy we will build a consistent and united volunteering culture across the Council. We will increase not only the number of volunteers, but their diversity, their contribution and the ways in which communities can engage with us to deliver better outcomes for the city.

Context:

A number of PCC directorates have had volunteers supporting a number of services over many years. Following the introduction of the Volunteer Policy in December 2015, we are now well placed to develop and enhance volunteering across the Council; however we recognise there is more we can do.

The world we live in is now faster, more hectic and offers more choice than ever before and volunteering experiences can't remain stuck in the past. We do not need to abandon all traditional roles, but we do need to start exercising more creativity and flexibility in the way volunteer roles are identified and set up to ensure that there will match the expectations of existing and prospective volunteers now and in the future.

Volunteer Survey 2016

In June 2016 the Council conducted a survey of its volunteers at the same time it conducted a staff survey. The full results are available in a separate report. Key findings from the survey:

- 141 respondents - unable to give percentage of responses as we do not know the number of current volunteers
- 96% rated there volunteering experience as excellent or good
- 56% of respondents were retired - 65% over 55 years of age
- 61% of respondents were female, 14% are working, 8% stay at home parents and 7% students
- 74% have volunteered for over a year, while 44% have been doing so for more than 3 years
- 61% might consider volunteering more
- On average a volunteer will spend just over 14 hours every month and 8% volunteer for 30 hours per week or more.
- 45% of respondents did not feel part of PCC, although 88% felt that their opinion was valued
- 22% said that there was no training for their role, although the training received was considered to be excellent or good.

> *"Part of recognising what volunteers do is including them in the wider picture, letting them see what they are part of, and making them feel proud of what they are doing as part of the organisation, rather than just an individual person. Feeling that other people are aware is going on is also a boost". Feedback from PCC Volunteer survey 2016*

Where we are now:

- We have a good system of maintaining and updating policy and guidance in relation to volunteers and volunteering, but no way of auditing the use of policy and templates.
- We have clear policy and procedures in place for introducing new volunteers to their role, the organisation, its work, policies, practices and relevant personnel.
- The survey showed that 96% of volunteers rated their volunteering experience as excellent or good. However there was variation in terms of communication, training, support, also depending on where you are working within the council
- We have no accurate way to confirm the number of volunteering roles, how many volunteers are there actively performing each role, or how many hours are being worked by volunteers across PCC services
- From the volunteer survey it was clear that the majority of volunteers are not on the PCC intranet / email system and we have no central way of communicating to some of our most effective ambassadors
- We believe we have a lack of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and younger volunteers

Where we want to be:

- There is an expressed commitment to the involvement of volunteers, and recognition throughout the council that volunteering is a two-way process which benefits volunteers and the organisation.
- A more diverse organisation, with volunteers who are reflective of service user population, particularly young people and those from disadvantaged communities
- An effective communication strategy that ensures all our volunteers feel part of PCC, and that there opinion is valued
- Offering high quality, consistently good volunteering experiences wherever volunteers are supporting us
- The organisation commits appropriate resources to working with all volunteers, such as money, management, staff time and materials.
- The whole organisation is aware of the need to give volunteers recognition

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"In my experience (both as a volunteer and as someone who is in charge of volunteers), volunteers generally feel happy if their work is acknowledged and appreciated and they know they are appreciated. Work that you do to ensure that happens is not wasted".
Feedback from PCC Volunteer survey 2016

How we will get there:

1. Embedding volunteering and social action throughout the council

Reviewing and updating our existing professional support for volunteering, aligning it to the delivery of this strategy and embedding a culture of employee volunteering throughout the council. We will do this by:

- Establishing a stakeholder group to maintain momentum in delivering the strategy and ensuring it remains relevant to the needs of the council and our volunteers
- Working with senior leaders to establish new and innovative ways of embedding volunteering and social action within their work and their teams
- The use of volunteers is considered is all key strategy developed with the council, including measuring the impact that volunteers on services provided

2. Improving the quality of the volunteer experience, how we engage and recognise the contribution of our volunteers

Ensuring we become a place of choice for volunteers, highly recommended with a growing population of volunteers who are engaged with our purpose and delivering more for the communities of Portsmouth. We will do this by:

- Continuing the use of volunteer satisfaction survey across the organisation, ensuring that by 2018 our volunteer engagement score is above the sector average
- Creating a volunteer forum(s) giving volunteers the chance to engage in conversations directly with senior managers about their volunteer experience and to help shape the future direction of the council
- Piloting new ways of engaging communities and recruiting volunteers, increasing the hours they contribute by 20% by 2021, including:
    - Volunteer 'volunteer managers'
    - cross service volunteering initiatives
    - Increasing our engagement with national initiatives such as National Citizens Service (NCS) and Step Up to Serve
- Improved learning and development offer for our volunteers
- Develop a volunteer recognition scheme in conjunction with Portsmouth Together
- Achieving external recognition for our staff involvement and volunteer schemes.

3. Provide flexible inclusive opportunities for volunteering that consider individuals' diverse needs and overcome barriers to getting involved particularly for young people and those from disadvantaged communities.

Building a volunteer population that we know, and can evidence, is more reflective of the communities and children we seek to serve. We will do this by:

- Building wider community partnerships through Portsmouth Together Partnership
- Working with the Diversity Officer and HR to improve our volunteering equality and diversity agenda
- Creating specific campaigns to target young people, those with disabilities and & BME volunteers
- Reimbursing volunteering expenses fairly & easily

4. Increasing our use of technology

We will bring our volunteering experience into the digital age, through the introduction of a volunteer management system (VMS) that not only ensures that the council is compliant in its duty of care and statutory responsibilities, but also supports greater efficiency in the coordination of volunteers. We will develop this system to ensure that we can evidence the impact our volunteers make consistently and effectively. We will do this by:

- Introduce a volunteer management system (Volunteer Impact) including capturing and evidencing our volunteer's impact
- Using the 'Portsmouth Together' volunteering portal and the primary online volunteer recruitment tool
- Make the volunteer recruitment process more efficient
- Continue to develop our communications within our existing volunteer population and the wider community, through a range of communication tools and social media

5. Develop and support staff who recruit and manage volunteers

Embed high quality volunteer management within the councils learning culture, supporting everyone who manages / supervises volunteers, regardless of their primary role. We will do this by:

- Support volunteer managers and supervisors in there continued professional development
- Maximise attendance at the PCC Volunteer Network by all services that work with volunteers
- Embed understanding of volunteer management in Leadership and Management Behaviours including suitable apprenticeships

PCC Volunteering 2018-21 Action Plan

	Strategic Theme	Focus	Activity	Comments
1	Embedding volunteering and community engagement throughout the council	Volunteer Policy	Completed	
		Volunteer Strategy	Being developed	
		Stakeholder Group	Being developed	
		Develop 'volunteer impact' measurement	Work with existing and new volunteer schemes to encourage greater impact measurement	
2	Improving the quality of the volunteer experience, how we engage and recognise the contribution of our volunteers	PCC volunteer survey	Second survey in 2018	
		Volunteer management accreditation	Options being considered	
		Increase recognition of volunteer efforts		Increase use of 'Value You' project
		Increase number of volunteers nominated for Inspiring Volunteer awards	Next round opens January 2019	Start promoting December 2018
3	Provide flexible inclusive opportunities for volunteering that consider individuals' diverse needs and overcome barriers to getting involved particularly for young people and those from disadvantaged communities	Young people 16-24	Develop PCC younger persons volunteer programme	
		Those with disabilities	Options being considered	
		BME Communities	Options being considered	
4	Increasing our use of technology	Introduce volunteer management system	Volunteer Impact	
		Use Portsmouth Together website as main recruiting source online	All services to use the website	
		Electronic newsletter to PCC volunteers	Via Volunteer Impact system	
		Use of social media to encourage wider collaboration and recognition	Further work to be done by stakeholder group	
5	Develop and support staff who recruit and manage volunteers	Maintain library of policies, procedures and templates	Ongoing	

		PCC Volunteer management Network	Ongoing	
		Promote and support CPD in volunteer management	Options being considered	

Key Performance Indicators – by financial year

KPI		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
1	Increasing our overall volunteer numbers	Establish baseline		
2	Increase volunteers contribution in hours by 20% by 2019 (2016 baseline 14 hrs per month)	Establish baseline	Average 16 hours per month	Average 18 hours per month
3	Increase the percentage of volunteers recruited from BME communities	Establish baseline		
4	Increase the percentage of volunteers aged 16 – 25	Establish baseline		
5	Increase % of volunteers who feel they are part of PCC (2016 baseline 54 hrs %)	Establish baseline		
6	Increase the number of volunteers enquiring about volunteer opportunities	Establish baseline using Portsmouth Together data		
7	Time in days to respond to volunteer enquiries is below (3 or 5) working days	Establish baseline using Portsmouth Together data		