

**MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 5PM ON
7 SEPTEMBER 2023
BOURGES/MIERSEN, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors Alison Jones (Chair), Thulbourn, Sainsbury, J Allen, Ray, Rush and Wiggin

Officers Present: Sarah Spendelow HR Manager
Adesuwa Omoregie Interim Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Karen S Dunleavy Democratic Services Officer

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jamil and Fitzgerald. Councillors Thulbourn, and Ray attended as substitutes.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

8. INTRODUCTION OF NEW VOLUNTEERING POLICY ACROSS PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

The HR Manager introduced the report which outlined information in relation to opportunities for all employees to volunteer to support organisations in the Peterborough area, and be paid for this time off, would be a suitable addition to the new benefits package launched in July 2023. It would also enable council employees to further contribute to the deliverables of the Corporate Strategy under the Sustainable Future City Council theme – how we work, how we serve, how we enable. The Volunteering Policy, if adopted, could be a major contributor to the Council’s aim of being an employer of choice in attracting new employees and retaining existing employees. It would also be beneficial in helping and supporting local charitable and other organisations and could be a way for the council to give back to its communities.

The Employment Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members commented that there was a contradiction in policy as it stated that there were opportunities for staff to volunteer outside of Peterborough. Members were advised that the Council’s Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) agreed to consider opportunities outside of Peterborough and that the application form would be amended accordingly.
- Members suggested that a list of Mayors charities should be provided to staff.

- Risk assessments would be undertaken for volunteer positions.
- Members were advised that staff attendance at volunteer arrangements would be managed in the correct way.
- Members commented that a list of preferred charities should be made available to staff and exceptions made for other charitable causes outside of that list. Members were advised that the feedback from CLT was to support staff in their volunteer choices across the board, however, a six-month review could be conducted to evaluate the type of volunteer schemes being undertaken.
- No targets had been set and the scheme was more about the Council becoming an attractive place to work.
- It was difficult to understand at the early stages, what staff take up would be for the volunteer scheme as there was no benchmark, but this could be included in the six-month review.
- The Mayor's Charities and Parish Council community schemes could be explored to actively encourage staff to take up those volunteer opportunities.
- There were difficulties in recruiting to areas in the Council and the volunteer scheme was a good way to attract new staff.
- Members commented that some volunteer opportunities would take more than two days to train staff.
- It would be beneficial for the Council to create a communications and marketing tool through the volunteer scheme.
- Councillors could be contacted about schemes being undertaken in their wards.
- It would be beneficial for staff to report back on their progress and photos to feed into the communications side of the scheme.
- There could be an opportunity for volunteer organisations to bid for PCC staff volunteers, which would benefit community projects.
- Members were advised that staff would complete a form on the internal leave system, and data could be extracted to show if the policy had been successful in attracting new staff due to the introduction of the volunteer policy.
- There had been no specific staff resource to manage the volunteer requests.
- Members commented that staff awards could be offered for the best volunteer teams.
- Members raised concerns about the volunteer opportunities being made available outside of Peterborough and would prefer for this to be considered by CLT.

RESOLVED:

The Employment Committee **RESOLVED** (unanimous) to approve the Peterborough City Council Volunteering Policy.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Employment Committee approved the Peterborough City Council Volunteering Policy and agreed that the HR Manager, would conduct a review on all points raised and report back to Members at Committee.

Chairman
7 September 2023
Start 5:00pm – 5.27pm End