



Weston-super-Mare Town Council Volunteer Policy

Weston-super-Mare Town Council is committed to providing and promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our community. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all and not to discriminate on grounds of sex, marital or civil partnership status, race, ethnic origin, disability, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or age. These are known as “protected characteristics”.

Mission Statement

The Weston Town Council policy for volunteering aims is to ensure fairness, consistency and compliance with law on employment, safety and working with volunteers. As such it represents a foundation of guidance for good volunteering management practice throughout the Town Council and represents a commitment to managing volunteers in a way that enhances the quality of the volunteering experience.

Why do we involve volunteers?

- Volunteers add value to the Council’s work through their gifts of time knowledge, skills and experience
- To develop the skills of volunteering individuals and groups
- To increase contact with the local community
- To help ensure that our services meet the needs to the community.

Recruitment

Weston Town Council will aim to identify worthwhile and satisfying opportunities for volunteers.

Weston Town Council will produce role descriptions for all voluntary opportunities.

Weston Town Council will aim to help volunteers overcome any barriers that may prevent them from volunteering at a Town Council location (to include Weston Museum, The Blakehay Theatre or Milton Cemetery).

Weston Town Council will operate its Equal Opportunities policy at all times in relation to the recruitment and support of volunteers.

There is no minimum age for volunteers provided they are undertaking suitable tasks for which there is no legal minimum, they are supervised and not left alone and a parent or guardian has given permission if they are under 18 years of age.

Informal interviews will be held with all prospective volunteers to ensure that their skills, interests and suitability are best served by the volunteering opportunity. References may also be taken up.

Induction

All volunteers will receive a welcome pack which contains essential information for all volunteers as well as specific information regarding their own area of work.

Training will be offered where it will benefit volunteers and funding permits.

All volunteers will be asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement which outlines the arrangement between Weston Town Council and the volunteers. It will be clearly explained and copies of appropriate policies and procedures will be made available.

Any volunteer whose role may entail regular contact with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to a DBS disclosure.

Support and Supervision

All volunteers will have a named person as their main contact. They will all be provided with supervision to feedback on progress, discuss any future developments and any problems.

All volunteers are covered by Weston Town Council's insurance policy.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity to claim reimbursement of agreed mileage and other reasonable out-of-pocket expenses subject to prior agreement.

Weston Town Council will ensure that volunteers are made aware of Health and Safety procedures and will, as far as practicable, provide a safe environment for volunteers.

Volunteers will be encouraged to express their views on matters concerning the organisation and their opinion will be sought regarding any changes or developments that may affect them.

Weston Town Council will respect the confidentiality of volunteers and will not release any information about them without their agreement.

Weston Town Council will supply a reference to any regular volunteer seeking other voluntary work or paid employment.

Volunteers will be introduced to staff members, made to feel welcome, valued for what they offer and thanked for their contribution.

Termination

Weston Town Council reserves the right to terminate the volunteer relationship. This will be done in writing and Weston Town Council will try, where possible, to give volunteers at least two weeks notice of the termination of the volunteering relationship but has the right to terminate with notice at any time without prejudice.

If a volunteer wishes to withdraw from their voluntary role, it is asked that they give as much notice as possible; Weston Town Council would appreciate at least two weeks notice but recognises the right of a volunteer to leave at any time.

Weston Town Council will offer an exit interview to a volunteer leaving.

Monitoring and Review

Weston Town Council will be responsible for regularly reviewing and updating the Volunteer Policy to ensure that it is always in accordance with volunteering best policy and the Equal Opportunity Policy.