



Westbury Town Council

Volunteering Policy

Introduction and scope

Many of the Town Council's activities involve working in partnership with community and voluntary groups and volunteers who also work directly with the Council for a number of reasons:

- To encourage involvement and increase our contact with the local community we serve
- To help ensure our services reflect the needs of our community
- To increase skills, experience, perspectives and diversity in the workplace
- To temporarily increase our skills and capacity.

Westbury Town Council recognises the value and importance of volunteers and this policy aims to ensure that all volunteers can work with us in a safe and supported environment.

We do not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff. We expect that staff at all levels will work positively with any volunteers and where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.

A copy of this policy must be given to all volunteers.

Policy aims

This policy sets out the principles for voluntary involvement in activities authorised by Westbury Town Council, who acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways and that volunteering can benefit the council, local communities and the volunteers themselves.

This policy applies to volunteers working on behalf of the Town Council, not those employed by the Town Council.

Volunteer Work

All volunteering work must be agreed by the Town Clerk before commencing. Such work needs to be set out in a clear and understandable format. The final decision about the type of work and its execution lies with the Town Clerk.

All volunteers must be over 16 years of age.

Training & Risk Assessment

Volunteers must be adequately trained to be able them to carry out the role required. The exact nature of the training will depend on the role and the findings from the required risk assessment.

A risk assessment will be undertaken to identify any risks that might be faced and how they will be managed. The Town Clerk is to receive a copy of the risk assessment prior to the work being

undertaken. Visual inspections of the work area must be carried out and recorded prior to work commencing.

The risk assessment should include as a minimum

- The job or activity.
- The existing competency of volunteers
- The circumstances of the work (e.g. the degree of supervision)
- The tools and/or equipment being used
- Training requirements.

The training standard must be sufficient to ensure the Health and Safety of volunteers and any people who might be affected by the work.

Where appropriate, volunteers will be provided with any necessary PPE, tools and training to enable them to carry out agreed tasks. If volunteers use their own tools, they do so at their own risk. Westbury Town Council cannot be held liable for any injury caused by them through the use of faulty equipment/tools. Volunteers should only carry out tasks that have the prior approval of the Town Clerk.

All volunteers will receive an induction into Westbury Town Council and their own area of work. Training will be provided as appropriate. Where possible, volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff. Volunteers must be informed about the task and its purpose, health, safety and supervision arrangements.

If required, Westbury Town Council may complete a DBS check.

Health & Safety

All works undertaken by volunteers shall have regard to the Health & Safety at Work Act. Volunteers will not be authorised to carry out work that the Council considers hazardous, or would contravene the principles of the Health and Safety at Work Act, taking into account the competence of the volunteer(s) carrying out the proposed work.

Volunteers are covered by Westbury Town Council's Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which will be provided to each volunteer.

All volunteers are covered by Westbury Town Council's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on our behalf. Only volunteer work that has been authorised by the Town Clerk will be covered by the Town Council's insurance, however the council does not insure volunteer's personal possessions.

The Town Council Insurance Policy with Zurich currently provides cover for 1 Full Time Equivalent & 10 Volunteers Max. (To calculate the Full Time Equivalent numbers, you need to calculate the total hours that volunteers are likely to work over a 35-hour week in a 52 week year).

As long as they have received training where appropriate; are supervised if the activity requires this and a risk assessment is carried out with a written record retained, then we can accommodate the cover.

Equal Opportunities

Westbury Town Council operates an Equal Opportunities Policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

Problem Solving

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. Westbury Town Council has a policy and procedure for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers.

Expenses

Travel expenses carried out on behalf of the Town Council will be met.

Council Business

All volunteers must have due regard to the fact that they are carrying out authorised work on behalf of Westbury Town Council and as such are representing the Council, both in quality of work and possible interaction with the public.