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VOLUNTEER POLICY
OF
ALBRIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Document Control

Information:

Title:	Volunteer Policy		
Document Purpose:	This document is to give clear guidelines on the Council's Volunteer Policy and Procedure and the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and to ensure good practice in working with volunteers This document is to be reviewed annually by the Parish Council. The Council commits itself to review the policy as and when changes in legislation or other factors make this necessary. The policy will be subject to a comprehensive review two years after its introduction		
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community. It is undertaken freely and by choice without concern for financial gain.
- 1.02 The Council believes in the value of voluntary work as an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of a free and democratic society.
- 1.03 The Council supports and promotes volunteering in public and third sector organisations.
- 1.04 The Council takes responsibility for ensuring that volunteers within its own organisation are appropriately involved, valued for their contribution, and respected by Councillors and Council staff.
- 1.05 The aim of this policy is to ensure volunteers are safe and appreciated when volunteering with the council. It is designed to provide a framework for how the council will manage volunteers and what volunteers can expect from the council; it sets out the principles and practice by which the council will involve volunteers.
- 1.06 Officers may identify the opportunity for volunteering with the council, but the Parish Clerk in consultation with the HR Committee must approve all volunteering opportunities.
- 1.07 This volunteer policy and accompanying guidelines are intended for use by the Council's paid staff, Councillors and volunteers.

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.01 To encourage employees and Councillors to work positively with any volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- 1.02 To set out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and provide a set of guidelines to ensure good practice in working with volunteers
- 1.03 To provide volunteers with satisfying roles and the opportunity for personal development. The council seek to help volunteers meet these needs.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.01 As an employer and engager of volunteers, the Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunities. This principle will apply to service delivery, recruitment, promotion, training, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions.
- 2.02 Volunteers will be expected to adhere to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, a copy of which can be found within the Council's Volunteer Handbook.
- 2.03 The Council will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.

3. RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION

- 3.01 The council may recruit volunteers using a range of methods, including word of mouth, advertising, talking with other organisations or engaging volunteers through another organisation. It may also directly approach people who have previously volunteered with the council.
- 3.02 Recruitment of volunteers will be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. Appropriate targeting may be used.
- 3.03 The Council will endeavour to help a volunteer overcome barriers which may make it difficult for them to volunteer.
- 3.04 Certain voluntary roles may require an interview process with the Parish Clerk and HR Committee to assess their suitability and it may be necessary to obtain references and a DBS check at the discretion of the Council. An example of this requirement could be for working with elderly, vulnerable or children.
- 3.05 Volunteers will be given an induction session which will aim to:
- Familiarise volunteers of the work of Albrighton Parish Council
 - Volunteers will be provided with information on their chosen area of work and specific tasks to be undertaken, as well as their responsibilities to the Council.
 - Volunteers will receive full information about their chosen area of work and will be given a clear idea of their responsibilities to the Council.

4. SUPPORT, INVOLVEMENT AND PROBLEM SOLVING

- 4.01 For all volunteering roles, there will be a named contact who has responsibility for the volunteers(s), this could be a paid member of staff or a Councillor.
- 4.02 The council may offer training and development opportunities where it helps fulfil the volunteer's role or where it is required for health and safety purposes or in compliance with law.
- 4.03 Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning the Parish Council, its facilities, services and events to their named contact or the Parish Clerk.
- 4.04 The council wishes to identify and resolve any problems at the earliest possible stage and volunteers are encouraged to raise any grievance or complaint to the Parish Clerk. The volunteer may wish to have someone with them for support when raising any issues or problems.

5. EXPENSES

- 5.01 The Council will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses for activities, which are required to undertake their voluntary role. This must be agreed in advance and any such expense, which has not been agreed prior, may be declined at the discretion of the Council. Receipts must be provided.
- 5.02 If a DBS check is deemed required. The volunteer is requested to pay the fee, which can then be claimed back if a clear DBS is returned and no evidence is shown that would stop the individual from participating within that role.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 6.01 The Council has responsibility for the health and safety of its volunteers and will undertake a risk assessment of all volunteering activities.
- 6.02 All volunteers will be required to adhere to the Health and Safety Policies set out by the Parish Council. They have a duty of care to themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers may also need to disclose any medical conditions, which affect their ability to undertake certain activities.
- 6.03 Volunteers will be covered by the Council's Insurance whilst carrying out official and agreed duties. Council Insurance will not cover any duties carried outside of the Voluntary agreement.
- 6.04 The Council will inform volunteers of any specific health and safety measures, which must be taken into consideration during a voluntary activity and volunteers, must wear any PPE as required.
- 6.05 Volunteers must report any accidents to the named contact and all incidents recorded in the accident logbook.

7. VOLUNTEER CONDUCT

- 7.01 The Council is committed to ensuring that volunteer's work complements the work of paid staff, and that it will not be used as a substitute for paid work.
- 7.02 Steps will be taken to ensure that staff at all levels are clear about the roles of volunteers and to foster good working relationships between staff and volunteers.
- 7.03 The Council recognises the need for training for those working alongside and managing volunteers.
- 7.04 Volunteers may have access to personal data or sensitive information about the work of the council, its volunteers and staff, customers or other organisations. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) volunteers will only have access to personal or sensitive information they need to fulfil their specific role. The Parish Clerk and their named contact shall approve this.
- 7.05 The Council stress that confidentiality is paramount and volunteers should not pass on information to any individual or third party organisation, unless required to do so by law. This applies to during and after their voluntary work.
- 7.06 Volunteers using the council's computers/IT network will observe the council's IT policy and all volunteers are expected to observe the council's policies on Data Protection and Social Media use.
- 7.07 On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference.
- 7.08 The Council will systemically monitor and evaluate its involvement of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy.
- 7.09 Whilst volunteers are not employees, they still represent the council and there are certain expectations the council has for its volunteers.

Volunteers are expected to:

- Undertake their volunteering duties to the best of their ability
- Treat all volunteers, staff, contractors and members of the public fairly and courteously
- Respect decisions taken by staff and follow all reasonable instructions, follow safety procedures and wear any PPE provided

- Wear appropriate clothing (including suitable footwear), provided identification (if required), and take necessary steps to protect themselves in the environment they are working in (e.g. protection from UV rays through the use of sunscreen and a hat)
- Not behave in a way which could bring the council into disrepute
- Return any equipment/clothing supplied at the end of their duties

8. **RIGHT TO LEAVE**

- 8.01 The council recognises that volunteers give their time freely and are under no obligation to give notice. However, it is greatly appreciated if volunteers can provide advance notice if they are either unable to attend their volunteer role or wish to end their volunteering arrangement with the council.

Note

- “Staff” refers to paid staff and those undertaking placements with the Council
- This document refers to other policies, which are available in the Council’s Volunteer Handbook.