

# Public Document Pack



Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

**Bill Cullen** MBA (ISM), BA(Hons) MRTPI  
*Chief Executive*

Date: 07 June 2019

**To: Members of the Ethical Governance and  
Personnel Committee**

Mr R Webber-Jones (Chairman)	Mr A Furlong
Mr MB Cartwright (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs L Hodgkins
Mr RG Allen	Mr E Hollick
Mr DC Bill MBE	Mr LJP O'Shea
Mrs MA Cook	

Copy to all other Members of the Council

(other recipients for information)

Dear member,

There will be a meeting of the **ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** in the De Montfort Suite - Hinckley Hub on **MONDAY, 17 JUNE 2019** at **6.30 pm** and your attendance is required.

The agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Owen'.

Rebecca Owen  
Democratic Services Manager

**A G E N D A**

1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS
2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 4)  
To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.
3. ADDITIONAL URGENT BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES  
To be advised of any additional items of business which the Chairman decides by reason of special circumstances shall be taken as matters of urgency at this meeting.
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST  
To receive verbally from members any disclosures which they are required to make in accordance with the Council's code of conduct or in pursuance of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. **This is in addition to the need for such disclosure to be also given when the relevant matter is reached on the agenda.**
5. QUESTIONS  
To hear any questions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.
6. COMPLAINTS UPDATE (Verbal Report)  
To provide an update on the progress of any complaints currently under consideration.
7. WORKPLACE SURVEILLANCE POLICY (Pages 5 - 14)  
To receive the revised Workplace Surveillance Policy for approval.
8. EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING POLICY (Pages 15 - 26)  
To consider the updated Employee Volunteering Policy.
9. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH AS MATTERS OF URGENCY  
As announced under item 3.

# Agenda Item 2

## HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

### ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

6 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 10.30 AM

PRESENT: Mrs R Camamile - Chairman  
Mr RG Allen – Vice-Chairman  
Mr DC Bill MBE (for Ms BM Witherford), Mr MB Cartwright, Mrs MA Cook (for Mr K Morrell), Mr MA Hall (for Mr LJP O'Shea), Mr KWP Lynch (for Mr WJ Crooks) and Mr M Nickerson

Also in attendance: Mr G Grimes, Independent Person

Officers in attendance: Julie Kenny and Rebecca Owen

#### 367 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Crooks, Morrell, O'Shea and Witherford, with the following substitutions authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10:

Councillor Bill for Councillor Witherford  
Councillor Cook for Councillor Morrell  
Councillor Hall for Councillor O'Shea  
Councillor Lynch for Councillor Crooks.

#### 368 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Nickerson and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2018 be confirmed and signed by the chairman.

#### 369 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

#### 370 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS UPDATE

It was noted that all outstanding complaints were on the agenda for this meeting.

#### 371 REVIEW OF PENSION DISCRETIONARY POLICIES

Members received a report which reviewed the employer pension discretions in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to ensure they were fit for purpose. It was explained that there were extensive rules around the discretions and we were not bound to adopt all of the discretions. It was moved by Councillor Allen, seconded by Councillor Bill and

RESOLVED –

- (i) The existing discretions currently in place be maintained;

- (ii) The two additional discretions in relation to pension scheme members who left the council between 1 April 1998 to 31 March 2014 be adopted.

372 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS 2017-18

The annual report on corporate complaints was presented to the committee. It was noted that each year further work was undertaken to look for trends in complaints to identify problem areas but due to the small numbers, no trends were evident.

A member asked for more detail on the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman case that had been remedied and on the Housing Ombudsman case. It was agreed that this information would be sought and sent to members outside of the meeting.

The reason for the high number of refuse & recycling complaints was queried and the need to register these as complaints was queried. It was noted that whilst 'missed bins' were reported under the service's own procedures, should this be a repeated occurrence it was accepted as a complaint. Members acknowledged that, given refuse & recycling was a service that every household in the borough used, the number of complaints was relatively low and not a cause for concern. Members asked that refuse collectors be reminded of the importance of replacing a bin from the same spot as it was collected as this was the reason for some of the complaints. The Executive member for neighbourhood services confirmed that operatives were frequently reminded of this.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

373 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS

Members received a report on local government ethical standards following the review undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life. The recommendations of the review that would be submitted to the relevant body, including the government, were noted and the best practice recommendations, which authorities were expected to implement, were discussed.

Members supported consideration of all best practice recommendations, whilst concerned about how some would work in practice in small parish councils. It was noted that some of the recommendations were already in operation in HBBC and that others would enhance current practice.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The report be noted;
- (ii) A revised code of conduct incorporating the best practice recommendations be drafted for consideration at a future meeting.

374 MATTERS FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED

On the motion of Councillor Allen seconded by Councillor Cartwright, it was

RESOLVED – in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 10 of Part I of Schedule 12A of that Act.

375 COMPLAINT 2018/13

Consideration was given to a complaint about a parish councillor having been abusive and threatening towards another councillor. It was acknowledged that, in light of the lack of evidence from the witnesses put forward by the complainant, it was a case of the complainant's word against the subject member's, although it was noted that had the shouting been as the complainant had alleged, the witnesses would have noticed it.

Concern was expressed about the number of complaints received over the last couple of years about councillors from this particular parish and members considered whether the recommended mediation should be extended to the entire parish council and not just the two members concerned. It was noted that the Monitoring Officer had offered advice and assistance to the parish council previously.

In relation to standards in parish councils in general, it was welcomed that parish councillors would be invited to some of the borough council's induction sessions following the elections in May, including training on the code of conduct and behaviours.

It was moved by Councillor Camamile, seconded by Councillor Allen and

RESOLVED – the complaint be referred to the Monitoring Officer to resolve through other action by way of mediation.

376 COMPLAINT 2018/14

The committee considered a complaint about a councillor which alleged predetermination and inappropriate lobbying. It was noted that the two witnesses who had provided evidence to support the complaint had been contacted as part of the fact finding exercise and all evidence had been taken into consideration.

The Independent Person supported the recommendation, finding that the explanation given for the actions undertaken was logical and agreeing that the councillor ceased lobbying when they realised they would be sitting on the Planning Committee.

It was suggested that the allegations made amounted to bribery which was a serious allegation and should have been reported to the police by the complainant, and also that if unfounded the subject member may wish to take legal action for defamation. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the complainant had said they would report the matter to the police.

It was moved by Councillor Allen that the matter be referred for investigation by an independent investigator. In the absence of a seconder, the motion fell.

The meeting adjourned at 12.05pm to distribute and consider a letter that had been sent anonymously to one of the committee members. The meeting reconvened at 12.20pm and the Monitoring Officer confirmed that she had also been sent the letter and had given consideration to the contents but it did not alter her recommendation.

Councillor Camamile, seconded by Councillor Hall, moved that no further action be taken as they felt there was no clear evidence to show predetermination and that the lobbying ceased as soon as the subject member realised they would be sitting on the Planning Committee. They also felt that the alleged bribery was certainly, given the circumstances at the time, a kind gesture towards a colleague.

Councillor Allen repeated his motion that the matter be referred for an independent investigation, which was seconded by Councillor Bill.

As the first valid motion on the table, a vote was taken on Councillor Camamile's proposal that no further action be taken. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED – No further action be taken.

(The Meeting closed at 12.40 pm)

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CHAIRMAN



## Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE      17 JUNE 2019

WARDS AFFECTED: 'ALL WARDS'

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### WORKPLACE SURVEILLANCE POLICY

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#### **Report of Director (Corporate Services)**

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present to members for approval the revised Workplace Surveillance Policy.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the policy be approved.

#### 3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

3.1 Employers have the right to monitor employee's activities in many situations at work. The council currently undertakes a variety of surveillance activity such as:

- Camera Surveillance – CCTV vehicle cameras and Body-Worn Video
- Computer surveillance – covering internet usage, software access and email use
- Tracking surveillance – tracking in council vans and door access systems
- Checking work mobile phone records

All these forms of monitoring are currently covered by the Data Protection Act 2018. The Act doesn't prevent monitoring in the workplace; however it does set out rules about the circumstances and the way in which the monitoring is carried out.

3.2 The council currently operates surveillance as set out above and has associated policies that govern each type of surveillance. For employment purposes it is good practice to have an overarching policy in place that clearly informs staff that the necessary monitoring is required to meet the council's business and legal obligations, and will only take place if reasonable justified. It will also signpost to other relevant surveillance policies/procedures.

3.3 The policy also sets out the reasons (such as the prevention and detection of crime, health and safety monitoring and employee conduct matters) why data is being accessed and the procedures that are followed to access such data. By having a policy in place will ensure that a consistent and transparent process is followed and employees are fully aware that this is taking place.

3.4 The policy has recently been refreshed to incorporate ongoing monitoring of health and safety practices.

4. EXEMPTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES

4.1 The report to be taken in open session.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [IB]

5.1 None.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [AR]

6.1 These are contained within the body of the report.

7. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The policy ensures that the council provides a safe and healthy workplace whilst meeting the obligations of the Data Protection Act 2018.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Consultation has taken place with Unison. Feedback was positive.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

9.1 It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

None

10. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
  - Environmental implications
  - ICT implications
  - Asset Management implications
  - Procurement implications
  - Human Resources implications
  - Planning implications
  - Data Protection implications
  - Voluntary Sector
- 

Background papers: None.

Contact Officer: Julie Stay, HR & Transformation Manager Ext 5688  
Executive Member: Councillor S Bray

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# HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

## WORKPLACE SURVEILLANCE POLICY

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The council recognises its obligations to ensure where reasonable practicable, a safe and healthy workplace. Employers may monitor, using certain surveillance devices, to safeguard against any risks associated with employees, customers and others in the workplace and assist management to optimise performance, improve efficiency and customer service.
- 1.2 Whilst the council does not intend to use surveillance methods or monitor staff movements, it may from time to time, or with cause, access surveillance systems and data records in order to investigate complaints or conduct matters. This data may be used as evidence in work place investigations as appropriate.
- 1.3 Surveillance data will be submitted to the police, upon request, for the purpose of the prevention and detection of crime.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy will set out how the council will monitor the use of its information and communication technology systems, along with the use of surveillance cameras (CCTV, in-vehicle cameras and body worn cameras).

### 3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all council employees including agency staff, consultants and contractors (workers).

### 4. Communication of this policy

- 4.1 It is management's responsibility to make users aware of this policy by:
  - Introducing this policy as part of the induction process
  - Informing staff that they are accepting terms of the council's Acceptable Usage Policy for Email, the Internet and Corporate Network Access
  - Regular staff training in regard to the principals of the Data Protection Act 1998 (General Data Protection Regulation from 25 May 2018)

### 5. Privacy

- 5.1 This policy seeks to strike the balance between respecting staff privacy whilst allowing the necessary monitoring required meeting the council's business and legal obligations. Staff will be informed, through this policy, that monitoring is taking place, what form this will take and the reasons for monitoring.
- 5.2 The council recognises that employees have a legitimate expectation that they should be able to keep their private lives private and they are entitled to a degree of privacy in the work place. Therefore this policy will always be used in a way that is consistent and compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998

(General Data Protection Regulation from 25 May 2018) and the Human Rights Act 1998.

## **6. Types of surveillance equipment in use**

6.1 The types of workplace surveillance that the council will use include the following:

### ➤ **Camera surveillance**

- CCTV based at council properties (including parks and car parks) and with commercial estates - please refer to the CCTV procedure
- Vehicle cameras (refuse trucks only) - please refer to the guidance on surveillance captured in council vehicles
- Body-Worn Video – please refer to the Body-Worn Video Standard Operating Procedure

### ➤ **Computer surveillance**

This includes electronic communications such as internet usage, software access and email use - please refer to the council's Acceptable Usage Policy for Email, the Internet and Corporate Network Access

### ➤ **Tracking surveillance**

- Council-owned vehicles with tracking devices - please refer to Acceptable Use of Vehicles and Equipment Policy
- Door Access system for council buildings

### ➤ **Mobile telephone data**

Telephone usage activity on work mobiles - please refer to Corporate Mobile Device Policy

Data and information is monitored and gathered by the council in the interest of safety and security. It may also include information about employees' activities to ensure that they carry out their duties efficiently and safely, for training purposes and record keeping.

## **7. How the surveillance is carried out**

### **7.1 Camera surveillance**

CCTV - The council uses camera surveillance to monitor security and to provide employee and public safety. Areas that are subject to camera surveillance will display appropriate signage to inform employees and the public in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (General Data Protection Regulation from 25 May 2018). Data is stored for 30 days.

Vehicle Cameras – cameras are installed on council vehicles (HGV) primarily for the prevention and detection of crime. It can also be used as evidence in

accidents and potential claims against the vehicles by residents. Data is stored for 30 days.

Body-Worn Video – used by officers undertaking front-line enforcement duties such as investigating suspected criminal acts who are vulnerable to abuse and threatening behaviour, both verbal and physical, from members of the public. Data is stored for 6 months (unless action is being taken).

## 7.2 Computer surveillance

Computer surveillance is used for the general security of the council's property and assets, for the protection of council related information and to ensure that the council's computer and mobile resources are not misused. Access to and usage of services include: Email use, internet access and network access which may be monitored (including details of websites visited) for performance and management purposes.

The council uses software applications to record activity such as: logon details and times, email activity, and internet access. Email traffic is not routinely read however it is continually monitored by software to ensure the security and stability of the council's network. The council reserves the right to access any files sent or received over the network to ensure compliance with IT policies. Internet usage is monitored by a web security filter to restrict access to inappropriate sites.

## 7.3 Tracking surveillance

**Vehicles Surveillance** - GPS devices have been fitted to council vehicles to assist in council operations, provide security of the vehicle and to assist in the safety of staff. As part of the council's fleet management procedures the council is required to audit vehicle movements including:

- Locations visited
- Time spent at locations
- Days and times of journeys
- Speed of journeys

The council also has a legal obligation to track vehicles when tachographs are fitted i.e. Lorries and vehicles over 5.5 tonnes. Data is stored for 12 months.

**Building surveillance** – for security purposes the council undertakes surveillance of workers through the operation of building access swipe cards (TDSI Door Access system). Data is stored for 90 days.

## 8. When data is accessed

### 8.1 Continuity of service

The council has the right to inspect the data on its ICT systems to fulfil business need; this includes access when a user is unexpectedly absent or is on annual leave. The staff member will be notified, where practicable, before any access is made.

## 8.2 Complaints, accidents and monitoring

**Vehicle surveillance access** - footage is only downloaded in the following circumstances:

- When a complaint about staff conduct has been received from a member of the public
- Following an accident / incident (alleged or otherwise) either involving the vehicle or a member of staff in the vicinity of the vehicle
- For monitoring and auditing of health and safety practices

In these circumstances, footage may only be viewed with the consent of Head of Street Scene Services, the Business Development and Street Scene Manager or Director (Environment and Planning).

Any requests to view footage for any other reason may only be viewed with the consent of either Director (Corporate Services), the Information Governance Officer or the HR and Transformation Manager.

Footage recorded from refuse wagons is only available to view for 30 days unless downloaded. A log book will be kept to record requests, action taken and the outcome.

**Camera surveillance access (CCTV)** – the council's system has a recording facility and a live on-premises capability but no off-site live viewing facility.

Footage is only viewed in the following circumstances:

- For the prevention and detection of crime
- To provide evidence in civil proceedings or tribunals
- For monitoring and auditing of health and safety practices

Access may only be given to designated council staff to view data following approval of the Director (Corporate Services) or the Information Governance Officer.

In respect of commercial premises, permission may also be given by the Commercial Estates Surveyor, Principal Surveyor or Senior Surveyor.

A log book will be kept to record requests, action taken and the outcome.

**Body-Worn Video access** - Viewing of recorded images should take place in a restricted area and access may only be given to designated council staff to view data following approval of the Director (Corporate Services) or the Information Governance Officer. Unauthorised persons shall not be allowed access to that area when a viewing is taking place and arrangements should be put in place to ensure that viewing screens cannot be overlooked.

### **8.3 Investigation – Disciplinary matters**

Managers, who strongly suspect employees of misconduct and believe that the data from any of the above sources may support their case, should primarily discuss their concerns with the HR and Transformation Manager (who will follow the relevant procedures for those documents to be requested and examined).

To seek camera footage, the HR and Transformation Manager will follow the procedures outlined within 8.2.

Any request for IT data will be formally requested by the HR & Transformation Manager, after taking consideration of the nature and severity of the alleged misconduct and the grounds to request such data. On no account should operational managers contact ICT Services direct for access to information.

Any request for door access data should be formally requested by the HR & Transformation Manager to the Facilities Manager.

If any such records are used in a formal disciplinary case, then the use of such records should be reasonable and proportionate to the case. All records should be kept secure and destroyed at the conclusion of the case (allowing for the time period to expire for appeals and employment tribunal claims).

### **8.4 Covert monitoring**

Covert monitoring (carrying out monitoring in secret without staff being told they are being monitored) is rare but may be considered necessary when employers have a genuine reason, such as criminal activity or equivalent malpractice. Covert monitoring is strictly covered by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act and advice must be sought from the Legal Manager or the HR & Transformation Manager in the first instance.

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## Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

17 JUNE 2019

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

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### EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING POLICY

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#### Report of the Director (Corporate Services)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present to members an updated Employee Volunteering Policy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Committee approves the Employee Volunteering Policy as set out (Appendix 1).

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

3.1 An initial volunteering policy was adopted in 2013, setting out the authority's commitment in supporting employees to undertake volunteering opportunities, and the associated arrangements and procedures to enable employees to take up this opportunity.

3.2 Since the adoption of this policy, HBBC has introduced and further developed a range of associated work streams:

- a) The introduction of our local **Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Partnership** arrangements. Whilst the Borough Council has had a long standing relationship with the voluntary & community sector, this has been strengthened through the establishment of our VCS partnership. This is a partnership between HBBC and the VCS, overseen by Next Generation on behalf of the VCS, and delivered via an agreed SLA with the authority.

These are now well established arrangements, including an overarching VCS development forum, an extensive VCS database, and importantly locality based commissioning aimed at helping to sustain our important frontline delivery VCS services.

- b) The VCS undertakes a unique and invaluable role in delivering essential front line services to our communities, which complement statutory provision. However, fundamentally the VCS is reliant on volunteers to meet the needs of the community it serves. Therefore through the VCS partnership we have recently introduced the **Hinckley & Bosworth Volunteering Hub**. This provides a one stop shop for VCS organisations wishing to promote volunteering opportunities, and access to opportunities for those wanting to volunteer. The volunteering hub can be accessed on line, as well as the provision of a drop in service based at Next Generation.
- c) The introduction of the **Volunteering Strategy** builds on the ongoing work of the VCS partnership, and responds to a priority need expressed by the VCS i.e. the need to be able to easily access help and support which reflects the needs of volunteers and those managing volunteers. Furthermore, the strategy has been informed by, and is presented as a joint document setting out the aims and commitment of both HBBC and the VCS. (Volunteering Strategy was approved at Council January 2019).
- d) The current **HBBC Corporate Plan** expressly sets out our commitment to support an effective and viable voluntary and community sector.

### 3.3 Refreshed Volunteering Policy

The key notable changes to the previous policy are as follows:

- An increase from 8 hours to 2 days per annum (pro rata for part time employees) paid time to undertake volunteering activities
- In recognition that volunteering activities may take place outside of normal office hours e.g. evening and weekend events, the refreshed policy proposes that this time can be accrued as TOIL. This has been suggested to enable more flexibility and equality of opportunity for all employees to undertake volunteering activities, recognising some service areas deliver essential front line service provision full time
- References the place of volunteering in supporting employee health and wellbeing
- Updated to reflect the support available via the VCS Partnership arrangements, and specifically the Volunteering Hub
- Updated to indicate that SLT have made a commitment to support in the identification of appropriate HBBC volunteering opportunities i.e. community clean ups, tidy gardens, Borough wide events, etc. indicating that these will be put forward as suggested ideas that employees may wish to take up.

## 4. EXEMPTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES

- 4.1 To be taken in public session.

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (IB)

- 5.1 Although there are no financial implications arising directly from the report, there is a potential resource costs should there be high demand from employees.

## 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (MR)

- 6.1 None.

## 7. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The contents of the report relate to and support the People, Place and Prosperity corporate priorities, and will specifically support the delivery of the following ambition: 'Support an effective and viable voluntary and community sector.'

## 8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The volunteering strategy which this supports has been informed by the Voluntary and Community Sector, through the comprehensive VCS database, and specifically the VCS Development Forum, via the VCS Partnership arrangements..

## 9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

## 10. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The utilisation of up to date evidence sources and data, informed via the VCS Development Forum, and VCS database, has helped to inform the ongoing development of our VCS arrangements, including the volunteering strategy. These mechanisms also ensure resources are aligned with Borough priorities, and gives VCS organisations from all areas of the Borough, including rural areas, access to support via the VCS partnership.

## 11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:
- Community Safety implications
  - Environmental implications
  - ICT implications
  - Asset Management implications
  - Procurement implications
  - Human Resources implications
  - Planning implications
  - Data Protection implications
  - Voluntary Sector

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Background papers: Hinckley and Bosworth Volunteering Strategy

Contact Officer: Julie Kenny (01455 255985)  
Executive Member: Councillor SL Bray

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# EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING POLICY

## **Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Employee Volunteering Policy**

### **What is the purpose of this Policy?**

- To set out the authority's commitment to supporting employees to undertake volunteering opportunities
- To set out the specific arrangements/procedures to enable employees to take up this opportunity
- To set out the requirements and expectations on employees in relation to volunteering opportunities
- To promote the benefits to the employee, community and the authority of an Employee Volunteering Policy

### **The Local Authority's Commitment**

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council recognises the contribution that an employee volunteering scheme can make to the wider community, enabling employees to 'give something back' to their community, whilst at the same time enhancing learning and development opportunities for its employees.

The authority also wishes to continue to enhance its relationship and support to the voluntary and community sector (VCS), and to work with the VCS in promoting volunteering opportunities, and securing take up. This is reflected in authority's corporate priorities.

The authority's commitment to supporting and enabling volunteering is set out in the **Borough's Volunteering Strategy**, this can be accessed via the HBBC intranet under key policies and strategies.

The authority will encourage its employees to take up opportunities, but recognises that volunteering is a matter of personal choice.

This policy applies to **all** employees of the council.

### **Why Employee Volunteering Can Make a Difference**

#### **Benefits to Employees:**

Employee volunteering can be viewed as one approach to enabling ongoing lifelong learning, by offering opportunities to enhance or develop new skills from working in a new and/or different environment

Volunteering can help build new networks, sometimes with staff from within the authority, but also with colleagues from other organisations, sectors, and the community.

Volunteering can improve life skills and self confidence by offering experiences outside normal comfort zones, and the chance to tackle new challenges in a supported way.

Volunteering can help employees to get a wider perspective of some of the issues in their local community, and a chance to contribute to an issue they really care about.

It can support an individual's health and wellbeing, as well as being very motivating and fulfilling to do something that helps others.

Volunteering can be extremely enjoyable, with a chance to do something completely different from your day job.

### **Benefits to the Local Community:**

The voluntary and community sector relies on outside support to meet the needs of the community it serves. Employee volunteers can contribute time, skills and enthusiasm to get things done. Skilled employee volunteers can not only provide the professional skills which voluntary organisations can struggle to afford, but also help the organisation's own staff to learn and develop

Employee volunteering schemes are part of the process of ensuring a broader range and number of people are enabled to become involved, and give back to their community

### **Benefits to the Council:**

HBBC recognises the importance of playing an active part in the local community, and sees employee volunteering as one way of enabling employees to get involved in community activities.

Employees will have the opportunity to develop and practice a wide range of skills: leadership, communication, creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, project management and team working; all of which can be brought back to the authority.

Employee volunteering can help the authority and its staff to build on, and establish new and important relationships in the wider community, and to gain a closer understanding of the make up and needs of its community.

Employee volunteers make great ambassadors to enhance the reputation and profile of the authority, as an employer of choice and a great place to work.

Employees are the most valuable asset that HBBC has, it is important that employees feel valued by being supported to learn and develop, and through

recognition by their employer of the qualities, skills and expertise they have to offer to others. Employee volunteering helps to create a positive and supportive culture.

### **What support will be provided by the authority?**

The authority will grant a **maximum of 2 days paid time during a 12 month period** (this will be on a pro rata basis for part time employees). It is recognised that some activities that staff may wish to volunteer for will take place outside of normal office hours e.g. evening and weekend events, and therefore this time will be accrued as TOIL.

If an individual wishes to contribute more hours to volunteering activities, this will be in their own time. **Please note paid volunteering hours will be restricted to volunteering opportunities that are undertaken within the Borough area of Hinckley and Bosworth.**

The volunteering hours must be agreed **at least 4 weeks in advance** with the employee's line manager, and will be **subject to the manager's discretion**, and within the context of the need to maintain service levels, as always being the first priority.

The authority will communicate opportunities for volunteering through the intranet, staff newsletter, staff briefing sessions, workspace, etc. The HBBC Strategic Leadership Team will support in the identification of appropriate HBBC volunteering opportunities i.e. community clean ups, tidy gardens, Borough wide events, etc. however these will be put forward as suggested ideas that employees may wish to take up.

Employees will also be encouraged to access the Hinckley & Bosworth developing Volunteering Hub Service, overseen by Next Generation as part of our local Voluntary and Community Sector Partnership arrangements – an on line and drop in service for finding out what volunteering opportunities are available within the Borough. Contact Next Generation on 01455 632984, or visit the VCS Partnership website at <http://nextgenhinckley.org/>

### **What is expected of Employees?**

Whilst being supported by the authority, it will be the responsibility of employees to organise their own volunteering activities.

Once a volunteering activity has been identified and the employee has made contact with the voluntary organisation/charity, the employee should complete **an Employee Volunteering Request Form, attached at Appendix 1**, and forward this to their line manager.

The employee and line manager will arrange to meet and discuss the application, subsequently, if the line manager supports the application, time off will be authorised. However, all decisions are at the line manager's

discretion, reserving the right to decline the application, for reasons which could include service needs, planned changes, etc.

Once agreed the employee should agree specific times and dates in conjunction with the line manager and the voluntary organisation.

Once agreed or declined a copy of the Employee Volunteering Request Form should be forwarded to HR for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

### **Conditions of Volunteering Activities Supported by this Policy**

An employee who wishes to participate in a volunteer activity in the community must adhere to the following conditions:

- Time away from work must be agreed with their line manager in advance, and reasonable notice of the request must be given (**at least 4 weeks in advance**).
- Employees must complete the **Employee Volunteering Request Form**
- Reasonable notice is required to allow both the individual and their line manager to organise any necessary cover within their team.
- The volunteering activity should not bring the Council into disrepute.
- The volunteering activity must not conflict with the employee's work for the Council for example, acting as a Treasurer for a charity that you have regular contact with in your council role. Employees should seek further advice from their line manager if they are concerned about potential conflicts of interest.
- Employees must complete the **Employee Volunteering Feedback Form**, following completion of their volunteering activity.

As an employee of the Council it is important to adhere to Council's policies and procedures including:

- The Code of Conduct.
- Employees must also respect confidentiality when undertaking voluntary activity. In practice, this will mean being aware of sensitive or confidential information disclosed.
- Time taken for voluntary activities must be recorded as 'Volunteer Hours' on timesheets
- Employees who accept a volunteering activity are expected to attend and meet their commitment. If an employee fails to attend a pre-agreed volunteering activity they will need to explain their non-attendance to their line manager. If non-attendance is due to sickness absence, then it must be reported by the usual sickness absence notification. Please refer to the Sickness Absence Reporting Requirements. If no reason for the absence is provided for the employee's non-attendance, this should be treated as an unauthorised absence and no payment for the time not worked will be made.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Evaluation of the Employee Volunteering Policy and programme is essential so that we can improve and build on it.

The authority will monitor and evaluate its impact to ensure long term success. Therefore, employees must complete the **Employee Volunteering Feedback Form, attached at Appendix 2**, and forward a copy to the HR Team, to review whether our Employee Volunteering approach is successful and worthwhile.

It is the responsibility of the line manager and the employee to monitor the number of volunteering hours undertaken.

### **Health and Safety**

If an employee undertakes a volunteering activity, they will be automatically covered by the Council's Public Liability Insurance and the Council's Employer's Liability Insurance.

However, employees may need to undertake a risk assessment and have any additional health and safety training that is relevant to the activity i.e. manual handling. The employee must check with the voluntary agency, whether this is a requirement prior to the volunteering commencing.

### **DBS Checks and Process**

If employees are going to be working with children, then the Disclosure and Barring Service process must be undertaken before any volunteering activity can commence. Employees must check and be advised by the voluntary agency, whether this is a requirement prior to the volunteering commencing.

**For any questions regarding the Employee Volunteer Policy please contact the HR Team.**



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