STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

VOLUNTERS POLICY

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1. Introduction

Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council (STC) acknowledges that volunteers play a valuable role in its activities, contributing their time, skills, and experience in an unpaid capacity, benefiting both the local community and them.

This policy applies to volunteers who support Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council (STC) in its work. To manage volunteer involvement effectively, the Council may create a volunteer database, ensuring that all data is stored and retained in line with GDPR regulations. The public rightly expects the highest standards of conduct from anyone representing the Town Council, including volunteers. To uphold these standards, the Council has set out guidelines outlining the expected behaviour and conduct expected. While not exhaustive, these guidelines provide clarity on expected conduct, recognising that certain behaviours may depend on specific circumstances. Volunteers are encouraged to review these guidelines carefully and seek clarification where needed.

STC seeks to involve volunteers to:

- Ensure our services meet the needs of our residents
- Provide new skills and perspectives
- Increase our contact with the local community we serve.

2. Principles and Values

The Volunteer Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- STC will ensure that volunteers are properly briefed before undertaking activities on behalf of the Council.

- STC expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers

- STC is proud of our commitment to equal opportunities and seeks to create a diverse and inclusive working environment for staff and volunteers.

- Individuals should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner,

always, and should not bring the reputation as a representative of the Town Council into disrepute by their actions.

3. Preparing for Volunteers

Before involving volunteers in any role, STC will ensure that the following are in place to ensure their safety and efficiency:

- All volunteers to be provided with a written role description that explains the role purpose and main duties/responsibilities
- All volunteers will be provided with any training required for the role
- A risk assessment will be undertaken for volunteer activity
- STC will ensure that volunteers have access to the necessary equipment to carry out their duties/tasks, including high viz clothing for working in the carriageway.
- The Civic Officer is responsible for the management of volunteers. She/he will ensure that volunteers are properly inducted into STC and have access to this policy and other relevant policies.

4. Insurance

STC's liability insurance covers the activities of volunteers and liability towards them, on condition that the volunteer is working at the sole request and under the sole control of the council. To this end, every activity that is carried out by the volunteer requires approval prior to the activity taking place.

The Town Council does not insure a volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform their motor insurance company that they are using their car in the act of volunteering.

Volunteers will carry out only the least hazardous work and contractors will be used by the Town Council for manning road closures and security.

5. Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

STC will create clear role descriptions for each volunteer opportunity. These will be available to ensure that potential volunteers, staff and the organisation are clear on the purpose of the role.

6. Expectations of Volunteers

STC expects volunteers to:

- Be reliable, honest, and present themselves in a professional manner.
- Respect confidentiality and act in accordance with data protection laws.
- Comply with all council policies and procedures relevant to their role.
- Carry out their volunteering tasks responsibly, ensuring they reflect the Council's values and do not bring it into disrepute.
- Avoid expressing personal views in public or on social media in a way that contradicts the Council's aims and objectives.
- Report any concerns, incidents, or issues to the Town Clerk.

Failure to meet these expectations may result in a review of the volunteer's role and, in serious cases, their removal from volunteering with STC.

7. Policies and Procedures

STC recognises that volunteers are a part of the team and should be protected and bound by STC policies and procedures that are designed to keep all interested parties safe and ensure work is carried out to a high and consistent standard. A number of policies are in place to protect staff and volunteers and these can be viewed on the Council's website or alternatively a copy can be obtained from the Town Clerk.

8. Expenses

STC will consider reimbursing volunteers for any reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure, and completion of an expenses claim form e.g. car parking charges.

Date of policy: February 2025
Approving Committee: Personnel Committee
Date of Committee meeting: 11 February 2025

Policy Review: Every four years or sooner if there are changes in legislation or other relevant matters.