

RBKC Employee Volunteering Scheme Guidance

Summary

Volunteering is a great way to support the local community and your own wellbeing whilst developing new skills. By volunteering you are also demonstrating that you really are behaving in line with our value of 'Putting Communities First'.

The RBKC employee volunteering scheme is designed to encourage and enable our employees to support the community, organisations and charities with their time and skills.

This document outlines the general principles of how the scheme will operate. Its key objective is to give all staff employed by RBKC the opportunity to volunteer in the communities that the council serves.

Volunteering Scheme Benefits

Research has shown that volunteering strengthens business, motivates staff and makes a real difference in communities. Outcomes for employees who volunteer may include:

- A sense of achievement and wellbeing. 'Give' is one of the five ways to wellbeing. As well as helping others, volunteering has shown to improve a volunteers' wellbeing too.
- A greater understanding of the borough, residents and local communities.
- Increased team working, networking and better relationships.
- Learning and additional skills gained.

Key Principles

- The scheme offers employees up to:
 - 14.4 hours (2 days) paid volunteering leave every year to support an organisation within the borough.
 - 86.4 hours (12 days) paid volunteering leave every year to continue to support borough specific projects (e.g. the Grenfell Recovery Strategy) with the local community.
- The leave will be pro-rata for part-time staff

Volunteering leave is in addition to annual leave and other types of leave

- Staff must volunteer for an organisation or community group within the borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
- Volunteering can be undertaken during normal working hours and subject to agreement by the employee's line manager. Volunteering within this scheme can also be undertaken outside of normal working hours, and for this you will receive plain time off in lieu according to the number of hours worked, up to the maximum volunteering leave quota. This will need to be recorded and managed locally.

- All requests for volunteering time should not conflict with other work-related responsibilities, create need for overtime or cause conflicts with employee's schedules.
- All the Councils employment related policies and procedures apply when volunteering under the scheme.

Types of volunteering under this scheme might include:

- Bespoke volunteering opportunities – offered by our volunteering partner organisation [Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea](#)
- Team volunteering events (community challenges) – these enable employees to volunteer their labour in the community on organised projects. Local examples might include volunteering for environment works, community gardening, parks, litter sweeps etc.
- Skills based volunteering – where employees volunteer their business, professional or work skills to help a community organisation or individuals.
- Service specific projects – identified by managers of services across the Council that would benefit from having groups of volunteers for specific community projects.

The above are examples only and are not an exhaustive list.

Responsibilities

Employees are expected to:

- Be committed to the volunteering work they have signed up to
- Turn up to the volunteering work as agreed or have a contingency plan in place to cover eventualities which may prevent them undertaking the work as agreed
- Respect confidentiality where appropriate of the work RBKC and of partner organisations
- Be responsible for their own health & safety and that of others

Managers are expected to:

- Promote volunteering to employees as a personal development opportunity
- Consider the impact that any volunteering may have on their service area and manage resources appropriately
- Encourage and support the volunteer(s) to fulfil their volunteering commitments
- Review the volunteering experience with the individual or team and make sure reference is made when managing performance.

Managers and Employees are expected to:

- Ensure that an adequate health and safety check have been conducted.
- Establish any additional expenses that may be incurred as part of the volunteering

Expenses and costs payable

- Any expense requests would need to be agreed by the line manager before payment is made. For more information please refer to the [Expenses Policy](#)

- RBKC will also support reasonable requests by employees for the use of its facilities in support of volunteering, for example, use of computers, photocopiers, meeting rooms.
- Some volunteering opportunities may have additional cost implications for resources etc. Where this is the case it is at the discretion of the line/team manager as to whether this should be approved and to identify adequate resources to cover the costs.

Process

1. Employee/team identifies the volunteering opportunity.
2. Volunteering opportunity is discussed with the individual's/team's line manager to agree dates and time required. Consider links with the performance management process and personal development plans.
3. Employee/Team contacts the organisation to make all the necessary arrangements required for the volunteering opportunity to take place. This would include any volunteering induction and additional checks required such as DBS.
4. Employee/Team complete the volunteering.
5. Employee/Team review and discuss the volunteering experience and learning with their line manager.
6. Employee completes and submits the Volunteering Recognition form so that their volunteering can be formally recognised.

Further information

- Visit the [Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea](#) website for information on local volunteering opportunities.
- [Kensington and Chelsea Social Council](#) is Kensington and Chelsea's recognised voluntary sector 'infrastructure' organisation and they support voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) through the provision of training, advice and information.
- [Health and Wellbeing Hub](#) on KCnet

Updated – June 2022