

GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

Policy Number 07.POL.3

Volunteer Policy

Version 1.1

Adopted 19 April 2016

Last Reviewed 18 July 2017

Business Unit:	Community Strengthening
Responsible Officer:	Community Development Officer
Approved By:	Chief Executive Officer
Next Review:	August 2018

PURPOSE

Greater Shepparton City Council recognises, where there is a vibrant culture of volunteering, communities are stronger due to the inclusiveness volunteering promotes in the community. Volunteers play a vital role in the Greater Shepparton community with many clubs, groups and organisations relying heavily on volunteers to continue to deliver the services and functions they provide to the community. Volunteering is an essential community resource which promotes active citizenship and social inclusion. This policy outlines Council’s commitment to volunteers across the municipality.

OBJECTIVE

The following list of objectives has been developed for how Council interacts with volunteers:

- Ensure standards of best practice and consistency in supporting volunteers within Council and the municipality
- Provide a consistent approach to recruitment of volunteers across Council
- Engage and retain volunteers
- Recognise and celebrate volunteers across the municipality
- Work to raise the profile of volunteering across the municipality
- Respond to emerging trends and issues in the volunteer sector

SCOPE

Council is committed to the vision of volunteering within our region, recognising that volunteers are essential to all of Council’s programs. Council relies heavily on volunteers to run many of our essential programs. This policy ensures volunteers across the municipality are supported with standards of best practice and consistency.

DEFINITIONS

Reference term	Definition
Volunteer	Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain
Greater Shepparton City Council's Volunteer Strategy 2014-2018	This document outlines Council’s commitment to volunteers. Key Directions and Action Plan were adopted by Council in August 2014.
Volunteering Australia	Peak body in Australia for volunteering organisations and volunteers.
National Standards for Volunteer Involvement	Set of standards created by Volunteering Australia to manage volunteers and volunteer programs.
Principles of Volunteering	Rationale for involving volunteers in projects, activities and or programs

POLICY

1. Definition of Volunteering

Volunteering Australia defines that volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain

Greater Shepparton City Council as a local government body reflects this definition in their commitment to volunteers.

2. Principles of Volunteering

Volunteering Australia developed the Principles of Volunteering in 1996 as a result of national consultation. These principles are a rationale or philosophy for involving volunteers in programs. Greater Shepparton City Council accepts these Principles of Volunteering:

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer
- Volunteer work is unpaid
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice
- Volunteering is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government allowances
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality

3. National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

Volunteering Australia has developed National Standards for volunteering, consisting of eight key elements. These elements represent the main activities that typically occur in organisations that involve volunteers regardless of their size or function. Greater Shepparton City Council has reflected the below key elements through the Procedure:

- **Leadership and Management:**
The governing body and senior employees lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement. This standard assists the organization to provide clear direction and guidance for the work of volunteers, as well as understand and mitigate any risks related to involving volunteers.
- **Commitment to Volunteer Involvement:**
Setting out its commitment to volunteer involvement ensures that the organisation has a clear idea of why it is involving volunteers, the values and principles it will apply in its work with volunteers, and how the involvement of volunteers will enhance and support the work of the organisation.

- **Volunteer Roles:**
Volunteers are engaged in meaningful and appropriate roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives. This standard assists the organisation to match volunteers with appropriate work roles, provide relevant and satisfying activities for volunteers and ensure involvement of volunteers contributes to the organisation.
- **Recruitment and Selection:**
Recruitment and selection ensures that the organisation is effective in attracting appropriate volunteers and in screening to maintain safety and security. This standard helps ensure the organisation ensures prospective volunteers are provided with information to make informed decisions about working with the organisation to implement consistent procedures for assessing, selecting and placing new volunteers.
- **Support and Development:**
Volunteers understand their roles and gain knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties. This standard assists the organisation to identify and provide orientation, skills development and ongoing support needed by volunteers, and to manage situations fairly and consistently where a volunteer may not be meeting the requirements of their role.
- **Workplace Safety and Wellbeing:**
The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace. This standard assists the organisation to meet its obligations for the health and safety of volunteers, manage risk and provide a supportive and responsive workplace for volunteers.
- **Volunteer Recognition:**
Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged. Volunteer recognition ensures that the organisation understands the contribution made by its volunteers and that it lets them know that this contribution is appreciated. This standard assists the organisation to develop and maintain a respectful relationship with its volunteers, ensuring that volunteers are encouraged to actively participate in the business of the organisation, provide feedback and appreciate the way their work benefits the organisation.
- **Quality Management and Continuous Improvement:**
Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement. This ensures that the organisation has a way of monitoring how well its involvement of volunteers is working, and identifying and implementing ways of improving the outcomes for both volunteers and the organisation. This standard assists the organisation to follow good practice in its policies and procedures, implement processes for review and evaluation, and systematically make ongoing positive change.

4. Council's Key Strategic Directions

In August 2014 Council adopted the Volunteer Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2018. The strategy provides a framework to ensure best practice standards of Council's volunteers at a local level. Below are listed key strategic directions in which Council endeavours to achieve in the volunteer sector.

- Key Strategic Direction 1: Promotion
Council will work to raise the profile of volunteering across the Greater Shepparton municipality.
- Key Strategic Direction 2: Recruitment
Council will provide a consistent approach to recruitment of volunteers
- Key Strategic Direction 3: Supporting
Council will work towards ensuring our volunteers across the Greater Shepparton City Council municipality are supported with standards of best practice and consistency; providing opportunities to share information
- Key Strategic Direction 4: Celebrate and Recognise
Council will acknowledge the valued contributions of volunteering in the Greater Shepparton municipality.

RELATED POLICIES, DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES

- Greater Shepparton City Council, Council Plan 2013-2017
Goal 1: Active and Engaged Communities
- Community Development Framework
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Greater Shepparton City Council Volunteer Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2018
- Managing Volunteers CEO Directive

RELATED LEGISLATION

- N/A

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years by the Community Development Officer in partnership with internal and external stakeholders. It may be reviewed earlier upon recommendation from Greater Shepparton City Council Executive Team.



2/8/17

Peter Harriott
Chief Executive Officer

Date

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: Title of Appendix
Attachment 1: Managing Volunteers Procedure
Volunteer Induction Booklet

