

Frome Town Council Constitution

Chapter 19 - Volunteer Policy

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Introduction

We recognise the valuable contribution that volunteers can make to Frome Town Council. They can bring a richness of skills and experience and can often provide a bridge to community involvement that it is difficult for paid staff to achieve. We recognise that volunteers are motivated because it is their choice to volunteer and give of their time freely; in return, we want to provide volunteers with opportunities that will help them to develop new skills and experiences.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers. The volunteer handbook gives further details about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

Status of Volunteers

A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment. We will discuss the role with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the role's requirements.

We will discuss with volunteers the amount of time that they are willing to commit to volunteering, the frequency of their availability and how this will fit in with our needs.

Volunteers are encouraged to let us know as soon as possible if they are not available so that a substitute can be found or different arrangements can be made.

Volunteers wishing to withdraw from their voluntary role are asked to give their named contact as much notice as possible.

Principles

Our organisation:

- Recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to paid staff.
- Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the volunteer centre's work.
- Will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- Expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers.
- Recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible

Recruitment

We will endeavour to recruit volunteers through a range of methods including word of mouth, advertising, talking to other agencies and making contact with local volunteering organisations.

We will also endeavour to help any volunteer overcome barriers that may make it difficult for them to volunteer at Frome Town Council.

The Frome Town Council Equal Opportunities Policy will be adhered to at all times in relation to the recruitment and support of volunteers.

All volunteers will be asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement, which requires them to abide by the policies and procedures of Frome Town Council. It sets out what the volunteer and what the project can expect from each other.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and references may be required for **some** volunteer roles, especially where regular contact with children is necessary. This requirement would be discussed with relevant volunteers. A volunteer will be informed if we intend to apply for DBS checks. DBS checks are not a reflection on the individual, but a legal requirement in certain circumstances.

Health and Safety

Frome Town Council has responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow the Health and Safety policies and procedures. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers should not act outside their authorised area of work. Volunteers should report all accidents to the appropriate person and should be recorded in the accident book.

We will provide volunteers with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise.

Safeguarding

Frome Town Council takes their role in the safeguarding of volunteers, staff and other members of the public seriously and as such have a Safeguarding policy to be followed at all times; it outlines the responsibility of volunteers and FTC in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Insurance

Frome Town Council will ensure that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. We will also ensure that volunteers are provided with professional and public liability insurance. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

Induction and Training

All volunteers will receive an induction, to familiarise them with the work of Frome Town Council in general and their own particular area of work. Training will be offered where it helps to fulfil the role.

Support and Supervision

All volunteers will have a named person as their main contact. They will be given regular feedback and provided with an opportunity to discuss how things are going and air any problems.

Networking meetings between volunteers will be developed to encourage peer support and share experiences.

Expenses

Volunteers will be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses incurred on behalf of Frome Town Council as long as this has been approved in advance. Receipts will be required.

Grievance

The relationship between Frome Town Council and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and it does not imply any contract. However, it is important that Frome Town Council is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to those who visit the premises, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service. If, in their role volunteering for us, a volunteer does not meet with our standards, their case will be dealt with in the same manner as paid staff.

If a volunteer has any concerns regarding our treatment of them and this has been fully discussed with their named contact, but they are still not satisfied, any complaint may be taken to the Project Manager or their manager.

Volunteer Agreement

This volunteer agreement describes the arrangement between Frome Town Council and you. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of you volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience enjoyable and rewarding.

Purpose of role:

Possible Tasks:

Part 1: The Organisation

What you can expect from Frome Town Council (FTC):

1. Induction and training.

FTC will provide you with:

- An introduction to the Project and your volunteering role within it.
- Training related to your responsibilities as a volunteer. We hope that you will take advantage of this to improve and maintain your skills.
- A named contact who will supervise your volunteering and with whom you can discuss your work.
- Personal liability insurance to cover you while you are fulfilling authorised volunteer work.
- Injury insurance for injuries incurred while fulfilling your authorised volunteer work.
- Reimbursement of any specific expenses incurred for FTC which has been previously approved, with receipts where possible.

2. Supervision, support and flexibility.

- To explain what will be required and to encourage and support you in your volunteer work.
- To provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering role, your successes and problems you may have.
- To help develop your volunteering role with us.

3. Health and safety

- To provide adequate training in support of our health and safety policy.

4. Complaints or issues effecting your volunteering

- To try to resolve fairly any problems, complaints and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us. If you run into problems when performing your duties, you should discuss any complaint or problems with your volunteer coordinator in the first instance or the managing member of FTC staff if the issue is with your coordinator.

Part 2: The Volunteer

What we expect from you:

We will discuss with you the amount of time that you are willing to commit to volunteering, the frequency of your availability and how this will fit in with our needs. If, for any reason, you will not be attending a previously agreed volunteering session we would be grateful if you could let other volunteers and the volunteer coordinator know via telephone or email so that a substitute can be found or different arrangements can be made. If we have no work for you we will let you know as soon as possible.

We expect you:

- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability;
- To follow the organisation's policies & procedures and standards, including Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity, in relation to its staff, volunteers and customers.
- To maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its users as appropriate. In the course of your volunteering you may come across confidential information about the project, its staff, and its customers. You must respect this confidentiality and not disclose this information except where required to do so by law.
- To be aware of the importance of safeguarding policies and procedures and to always discuss with a colleague any safeguarding concerns.
- To meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed with you and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible.

Ideas:

You may have ideas for the better performance of your duties or of ways in which we can meet our objectives as an organisation. Please discuss these with the volunteer co-ordinator.

Termination:

Either you or the organisation can terminate this agreement with or without notice at any time.

This agreement is binding in honour only. It is not intended by the parties to be a legally binding agreement nor is it intended to create an employment relationship between us now or at any time in the future. It may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party.

	Signed and dated by the Volunteer
	Signed and dated by FTC staff member/manager