



## VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Biggleswade Town Council is a local council, the tier of government closest to our community.

### Our purpose:

is to build the success of Biggleswade, creating a single town community, identifying the economic, physical and social needs and delivering services to meet those needs, working collaboratively with the community and partners.

To achieve this, all members of the council will work together and with others, to serve and lead the community with a determination to undertake the fullest range of services, responding to the wider need of its residents with fair and proportionate governance.

### Our vision:

Our Town will be vibrant and continually developing. One community, working collaboratively to deliver a shared blueprint of an improved local environment. The Town will seek to become Master of its own Destiny and through localised planning will shape its infrastructure, ensuring the protection of its amenities and open spaces.

To achieve this, we will strive to satisfy the needs of our community in work, rest and play. We will stimulate new economic growth within our town. We will develop the confidence and presence to positively influence others whilst acting in a culture of honesty trust and openness.

### Our Main Priorities are:

- Stimulating new growth within the town whilst developing and protecting amenities.
- Building the success of a sustainable Biggleswade.
- Creation of a single Biggleswade community.
- Developing the potential of the council to tackle local issues, deliver better services and effective leadership.

### *The Biggleswade Community Promise*

Biggleswade Town Council promise to be open, trustworthy and honest; providing value for money whilst empowering and working with the community to achieve success for all.

Many of our activities involve working in partnership with community and voluntary groups, also volunteers work directly with us for a number of reasons:

- To increase our contact with the local community we serve
- To help ensure our services reflect the needs of our community
- To increase skills, experience, perspectives and diversity in the workplace and
- To temporarily increase our skills and capacity.

We will ensure that volunteers feel part of the Town Council structure by enabling them to contribute to our ongoing development. We will have systems in place to involve volunteers in staff information sessions, and regular supervision.

Biggleswade Town Council does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff. We expect that staff at all levels will work positively with any volunteers and where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.

We acknowledge that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing training for them to do their role effectively.

Volunteers may come through community groups, direct from the community or be students from a local educational institute.

### **Guidelines:**

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of volunteering with the Town Council. More information can be found on our Website and in copies of policies mentioned here.

### **Recruitment:**

All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.

### **Volunteer Agreement and Task Descriptions**

Each volunteer will have an agreement establishing what Biggleswade Town Council undertakes to provide for them. Also volunteers will be asked to agree to a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking. Neither of these documents is intended to form a contract. Biggleswade Town Council has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers. Each volunteer will also be given an information pack about the Council.

### **Expenses**

Volunteers working a minimum of five hours per day will be able to claim expenses for lunch this would be paid against a receipt and no more than **£3.50**. Any travel expenses carried out on behalf of the Town Council would also be met.

## **Induction and training**

All volunteers will receive an induction into Biggleswade Town Council and their own area of work. Training will be provided as appropriate. Where possible, volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff.

## **Support**

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will be provided with regular supervision to feed back on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

## **The Volunteer's Voice**

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Biggleswade Town Council and its work to staff and councillors to their main point of contact.

## **Insurance**

All volunteers are covered by Biggleswade Town Council's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on our behalf.

## **Health and Safety**

Volunteers are covered by Biggleswade Town Council's Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which will be available to each volunteer. Volunteers will be made aware of the Council's Child and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures and where necessary DBS (formerly CRB) checks and training will be undertaken.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Biggleswade Town Council operates an Equality Policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. A copy will be provided. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our Equality policy.

## **Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults**

If the volunteer is to work in a regulated activity within the Council, the Council will carry out enhanced DBS (CRB) checks and ensure the volunteer is not on the Barred list with the Disclosure and Barring Service. The Council has a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy which will be made available to you. The Council will ensure there is a proportionate balance between civil liberties and safeguarding vulnerable groups, including children.

## **Problem Solving**

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers. A copy of the procedure is included in the Volunteers Handbook.

## **Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.