



Report of the South East Area Manager

South (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 11th November 2009

Subject: 2010 - Year of Volunteering in Leeds and Area Committee inputs

Electoral Wards Affected:
Beeston & Holbeck
City & Hunslet
Middleton Park

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council Function Delegated Executive Function available for Call In Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It has been proposed by the current Leader of the Council to make 2010 - A Year of Volunteering in Leeds. This report explains the range of benefits that volunteering can provide to individuals and the wider community, and the role of this Area Committee. Volunteering also supports the Leeds Strategic Plan improvement priority of "an increased number of local people engaged in activities to meet community needs and improve the quality of life for local residents". Creating transferable skills for individuals for future employment opportunities and developing community cohesion are two examples of the positive contributions that volunteering could make to help mitigate some of the negative impacts of the economic recession.

The report provides an outline citywide programme of activities that have already been proposed through consultation with Executive Members, Directorates, VCFS organisations and some key partners. It also identifies the programme of activities from this area committee.

Arrangements for steering, co-ordinating and resourcing the Year of Volunteering are also identified.

Recommendations seek Area Committee to approve the participation in the programme for 2010 – Year of Volunteering.

1.0. Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is to explain the proposal to make 2010 - A Year of Volunteering in Leeds and to outline progress in relation to developing a programme of activities and arrangements for running and resourcing this programme. It puts forward a programme of activities for this Area Committee and seeks Member approval for this.

2.0. Background Information

2.1. Why is volunteering important?

Volunteering provides a range of benefits to individuals and also to the wider community. It helps unlock the talent and creativity of individuals to lead activities, groups and communities and to build skills, confidence and independence that may also be transferable into a work environment. Volunteering is also a way to help people to develop a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood and community.

Volunteering activity plays a key role in developing community cohesion both locally and more broadly across the city through wider engagement and participation e.g. student and corporate volunteers. Volunteering brings many added benefits to organisations and services to citizens. For example, Council services have many hundreds of volunteers involved in a wide range of activities such as school governors, working with young people as mentors in schools and in the youth service, working on environmental projects with Parks and Countryside; archiving in the Museums and Galleries, helping out at Leeds International Film Festival and other major public events, providing a Books at Home service through Libraries and supporting people to lead independent lives through Adult Social Care. Area Committees already support many volunteer organisations through wellbeing funding.

2.2. How is volunteering defined?

The UK does not have one nationally recognised definition of volunteering. From a governmental perspective, the National Indicator Handbook defines regular volunteering as:

“... taking part in formal volunteering at least once a month. Formal volunteering is defined as giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations which support social, environmental, cultural or sporting objectives”.

From a voluntary and community sector perspective, the National Compact Volunteering Code of Practice 2005 defines it as:

“...an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives”.

The above definition has more recently been adapted for the Council Volunteering Survey as:

“...a non-compulsory activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something which is of benefit to the environment, society, groups or other individuals (excluding relatives)”.

2.3. What is our current commitment?

Leeds Strategic Plan has the following improvement priority:

“ An increased number of local people engaged in activities to meet community needs and improve the quality of life for local residents”

Participation in volunteering is seen as one of the main ways of measuring whether we are meeting this improvement priority. The recent 2008 Place Survey results showed 19.9% of the people sampled in Leeds were currently volunteering. Our target is by 20010/11 to increase this proportion to 24%.

The Active Citizenship Sub-group of the VCFS High Level Partnership Group, chaired by a member of the VCFS sector, is stimulating activity and closely following progress in achieving this particular improvement priority.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1. A Year of Volunteering

A Year of Volunteering is an opportunity to provide a focus and branding to a programme of activities that will help us effectively celebrate and promote volunteering in Leeds. The joint Leader of the Council, Cllr. Brett, has made the proposal for 2010 to be such a year in Leeds. Engaging more people in volunteering in the city at this particular time is anticipated to have a positive role in offering an additional and constructive outlet for all age-groups and communities, many of whom are experiencing negative impacts as a result of the impact of the global recession. It is also seen as an opportunity to attract new resources into the city.

3.2. Mission and Aims for the Year

Following consultation (see 3.1. above) four aims have been proposed for a year of volunteering:

- To celebrate and promote volunteering
- To increase community engagement through volunteering
- To create more volunteers and volunteering opportunities
- To deliver a quality volunteering experience

A 'mission' that could lead, energise and summarise the ambition could be to engage every citizen of Leeds in a volunteering opportunity during 2010.

3.3. Steering the development of the 2010 Year of Volunteering

Two steering groups are currently overseeing the development of approach and activity as follows:

- A Councillor steering group has recently been established. This is chaired by Cllr. Brett and has nominations from all political parties. These are: Cllr. Blackburn, Cllr.Feldman, Cllr.Yeadon and Cllr.Gettings
- The active citizen sub-group of the VCFS High Level Partnership Group, chaired by Richard Jackson from Voluntary Action-Leeds. This has membership from a range of voluntary sector organisations and a number of LCC Directorates. VCFS organisations include Leeds Infrastructure Consortium, Voluntary Action-Leeds, Leeds Ahead, Groundwork Leeds, Leeds Community Foundation, Renew-Leeds, Cardigan Centre, Leeds Initiative, Leeds Voice, Burley Lodge Centre.

Regular progress on the implementation of the Year of Volunteering will also be reported to Corporate Leadership Team, Leeds Initiative LAA Strategy Group and VCFS Strategy Group.

3.4. Year of Volunteering – Programme of Activities

Council officers and Voluntary Action-Leeds are working together to develop an outline programme of activities for the Year of Volunteering. Contributions from Executive members, Council Directorates, VCFS organisations, Area Committees and other Partners have (and continue to be) sought.

There is a strategic steering group for the city that includes the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector, partners such as the University of Leeds, NHS Leeds, and cross party representation from elected members. This group will oversee and guide further development of the programme and its implementation.

Co-ordination for the programme will be provided through two part time posts that reflect the joint leadership of the Year of Volunteering by the Council and the VCFS. A project management team is being established and will draw on expertise from Council and VCFS perspectives in areas of city marketing, communication & publicity, funding, award schemes, events organisation and sponsorship and community activity.

The detailed work will be undertaken by a number of sub groups including VCFS organisations and council officers with a lead role being played by Voluntary Action - Leeds.

3.5. Resourcing the Year of Volunteering

There will be funding provided by the Council to support some of the costs of programme co-ordination and delivery and to support work to secure sponsorship. In addition, a sponsorship package will need to be developed to encourage businesses and public and voluntary sector organisations to sponsor the programme and major events in the year.

In terms of the activities, all organisations in the city currently utilising volunteers, including the Council, are being encouraged to think of ways of applying for and generating funding that will fund a celebration or expansion of current activities. In addition, funding sources in terms of European and national grant funding and corporate sponsorship are also being explored.

Council Directorates, VCFS organisations and all participating partners will also be encouraged to explore ways to minimise additional costs for promoting and running the programme by incorporating and expanding appropriate work programmes.

4.0. The Area Committee programme

4.1 Examples of existing volunteer activity

Current activities in Area Committee area include:

- Environmental – there are several ‘in bloom’ groups across the area
- Sport – Beeston Broncos, Hunslet Nelson Cricket Club
- Cultural projects/festivals – Beeston Festival, Holbeck and Hunslet Galas
- Older People - volunteer support to Holbeck Elderly Aid
- The Area Committee small grants budget continues to support community and voluntary groups across Inner South

4.2 Area Committee and Year of the Volunteering

There are a number of ways in which Area Committee can become involved in recognising and rewarding volunteering as well as potentially providing an opportunity for voluntary organisations and organizations generally to attract new volunteers.

- An awards event for volunteers in projects that have either acquired funding by Area Committee or where Area Committee have had significant involvement
- One market place event whereby voluntary groups can advertise the service they provide with the intention of attracting new volunteers
- Having a number of market place events by theme where support is provided by Area Committee for voluntary groups to attract new volunteers eg one theme being for Older Support Networks, one for sport etc.
- Badging of existing activity eg local arts festivals, galas etc with a volunteer theme

5.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

5.1. This report supports Council policy as outlined in the priorities of the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-11 and as expressed in the Council's commitment to the Compact for Leeds

5.2. Governance and reporting arrangements are broadly outlined in the report in paragraph 3.3.

6.0 Legal and Resource Implications

6.1. The resource implications are outlined in 3.5 and 4.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1. 2010 Year of Volunteering is an opportunity to celebrate and promote volunteering in Leeds. It has the potential to engage every citizen, neighbourhood and community in making a contribution to the city whilst also building skills, confidence and independence at an individual level. Creating transferable skills for individuals for future employment opportunities and developing community cohesion are two examples of the positive contributions that volunteering could make to help mitigate some of the negative impacts of the economic recession.

7.2. 2010 Year of Volunteering is an opportunity to celebrate and promote volunteering all key stakeholders in the city including this area committee.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) Endorse and support the proposal, mission and aims for 2010 being the Year of Volunteering in Leeds.
- (ii) Support the development of 2010 Year of Volunteering by agreeing to hold up to 2 events in 2010.
- (iii) Agree to provide financial support from the Community Engagement funding stream of the Well Being Budget.
- (iv) Investigate sponsoring and encouraging additional activities with other partners.

Background Papers

None

Appendix 1: 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering: Outline Calendar of Events

Month	Leeds Y of V Theme for the month	Promotional and Celebration Events	Volunteering Initiatives	Links to International and National Celebration Days + Examples of Volunteer Centre focus for promotion of volunteering
January	2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the year of volunteering • Launch of the Leeds Compact Volunteering Standards and Toolkit and the Volunteer Management Training Programme • Formal opening of the Volunteer Centre • Launch of the Volunteer Centre community outreach initiative (Mobile Library Volunteer Centre outreach) 	<p>Throughout the Year there will be a wide range of on-going volunteering activity and targeted and time limited volunteering projects taking place</p> <p>The time limited /targeted projects will be captured on the Year of Volunteering website Calendar</p> <p>The on going volunteering opportunities are accessible through the V Base – volunteering database</p>	<p>World Braille Day</p> <p>Volunteer Centre: Focus on all Blind and Visually Impaired Charities looking for volunteers</p> <p>Talks and free Blind Awareness training for organisations using volunteers</p> <p>Links with e.g. RNIB, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Centre for Deaf and Blind</p>
February	Volunteering for Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leeds University Student Volunteering Week - programme of student volunteering activities - event at Riley Smith Hall Showcasing Student Volunteering Activity – open to all citizens with potential for invited audience event 		<p>National Heart month</p> <p>Volunteer Centre: Focus on Health related Charities looking for volunteers; promotional materials and activities</p> <p>Link with e.g.Heart Disease UK: Healthy eating PCT campaigns and Stop Smoking charities</p>

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March	Volunteering in every neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the Area Based Volunteering Celebration programme 2010 - celebration events programme for each of the Area Committees <i>See note * below</i> 		
April	Volunteering across the Generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leeds Intergenerational Festival (Adult Services) incorporating a focus on the role of volunteers in supporting intergenerational activity • Corporate Social Responsibility Awards Event • University of Leeds Volunteering Awards 		
May	Volunteering for Literacy and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books at Home Volunteer Celebration Event • Civic Reception for Governors in Leeds Schools (4000) – supported by Governors Support Service • School support and Mentors promotion and celebration event 		<p>National Share a Story month</p> <p>Volunteer Centre: Focus on Reading and Literacy Charities looking for volunteers Talks at schools to parents encouraging them to volunteer within the reading programmes Links with e.g. with Reading at Home, VRH</p>
June	Valuing Volunteering in Leeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Volunteering Week Programme of celebration and promotional activities, including: Volunteering Opportunities Market Place; Corporate Volunteering Celebration Event • Youth Volunteering Events (Children's Services) • Launch of the Leeds Volunteering Kitemark • LCC Volunteer Managers Network Celebration Event 		<p>National Volunteering Week</p> <p>Volunteer Centre: organising programme of Volunteer Appreciation Events</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Offending Service Celebration Event 		
July	Volunteering for Leisure Sport, Arts, Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get Creative – Young People and Arts Accreditation Event Sport Volunteering Visit to Leeds between July & Oct. re application for Football World Cup – Yorkshire 		
August	Volunteering and Environment, Parks and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community and City Pride Awards event 		National Parks Week Volunteer Centre: Focus on Environmental Projects, Parks and Wild life Trusts and charities looking for volunteers. Link with e.g: National Trust, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Harewood House, BTCV and Groundworks
September	Volunteering for a Safer Leeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re launch of Neighbourhood Watch schemes Celebrating Community Crime Fighters Leeds University /Union Student Volunteer Recruitment Programme 		Clean up the World Week
October	Volunteering for ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older Peoples Volunteering Promotion and Celebration Programme of Activities-organised by the Older People’s Forum Volunteering with and for Children and Young People – a programme of promotion and celebration activities coordinated by IYSS/Vinvolve Big V Bus – 2 day Student and Young Citizens Volunteering Taster Event and Film made by Young People about the 		International day of Older People Volunteer Centre: Focus on Older People charities looking for volunteers Link in with e.g. OPF, Elderly Action Groups within the city

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		value of Volunteering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Yorkshire Youth Justice Awards Event – including Awards for Volunteers involved in Youth Justice initiatives, including Leeds based services • Celebrating the role of volunteering in Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Leeds 		Black History Month
November	Children and Young People’s Volunteering Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compact Volunteering Kitemark Awards • Children and Young People’s Volunteering Month – coordination of programme of events by IYSS/ Vinvolve etc • Leeds University Volunteering and Community Week 	Film Festivals Volunteers (Adult & Children’s)	International Volunteer Managers Appreciation day
December	Celebrating Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Volunteer Celebration and Awards Ceremony • Youth Offending Service Volunteer Thank you Dinner and Dance at Royal Armouries 		International Day of Disabled Persons

