



Report of the Director of Environments and Neighbourhoods

South Leeds (Outer) Area Committee

Date: Monday 30th November 2009

Subject: 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering

Electoral Wards Affected:
Ardsley and Robin Hood
Morley North
Morley South
Rothwell

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 Leader of the Council to make 2010 A Year of Volunteering in Leeds. This proposal was agreed by Executive Board on 16th October 2009. At the October Area Committee, Members agreed to participate in this initiative and requested that AMT develop project ideas for the participation in the initiative and this be presented at the November Area Committee. This report explains the range of benefits that volunteering can provide to individuals and the wider community and provides an outline city wide programme of activities that have already been proposed through consultation with Executive Members, Directorates, voluntary and community organisations and key partners. The arrangements for steering, coordinating and resourcing the Year of Volunteering are identified. It also outlines a draft programme of activities for the Area Committee to approve that will define the Outer South Area Committees' role in this city wide initiative.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to explain how 2010 will be made a A Year of Volunteering in Leeds and outline progress in relation to developing a programme of activities for running and resourcing this programme .
- 1.2 The report requests Members to approve the draft programme of activities that will define how the Outer South Area Committee participate in this initiative.

2.0. Background

2.1. The Year of Volunteering supports the key performance indicator; NI 6 'adults who participate in volunteering' and the Leeds Strategic Plan improvement priority to "Increase number of local people engaged in activities to meet community needs and improve the quality of life for local residents'.

2.2. Participation in volunteering is seen as one of the main ways of measuring whether Leeds is meeting this improvement priority. The recent 2008 Place Survey results showed that 19.9% of people sampled in Leeds were currently participating in formal volunteering. The aim is to increase this to 24% by 2010/11 and will be measurable through the Place Survey. The success of this initiative will directly influence achieving a city wide improvement target.

2.3 Why is volunteering important?

Volunteering provides a number of benefits to individuals and also to the wider community. It helps unlock the talent and creativity needed to lead communities and helps people to develop new skills, confidence and a sense of achievement that may also be transferable into a work environment. Volunteering is also a way to help local people to develop a sense of belonging to their community. It promotes neighbourhoods, civic pride and participation and responsibility by providing a focus and outlet for a range of age-groups and communities. It also supports the development of the Third Sector in the city.

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.

2.4 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)".

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 effectively celebrate and promote volunteering 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 global recession. It is also seen as an opportunity to attract new resources into the city. Initial responses to the idea have been sought from the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) in the City, from Executive Members and from Council Directorates. 2011 is the European Year of Volunteering and is anticipated that the Leeds experience will be able to contribute and also be sustained by this following celebration.

3.2. Mission and Aims for the Year of Volunteering

Following consultation (see 3.1), 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

A programme is being developed with input from a wide range of stakeholders through two key groups:

- A strategic steering group has been established. This is chaired by Cllr. Brett and has cross party representation through Cllr. Blackburn, Cllr. Feldman, Cllr. Yeadon and Cllr. Gettings. Partner organisations are also making nominations and these include NHS (Leeds), Police, Universities and the Environment Agency. The group will maintain an overview of the planned activity and work to champion the programme within their respective organisations and remove any barriers to implementation.
- An operational group led by Voluntary Action – Leeds. The membership of this group is formed by the ten people who have taken on responsibility for promoting and co-ordinating activities in each of the monthly themes during the year. These include representatives from voluntary sector organisations, city council directorates and partner agencies. Area Management will be represented as the lead on the March 2009 "Volunteering in the Neighbourhood".

At neighbourhood level, Chairs of all the Area Committees have agreed to support the development of the 2010 Year of Volunteering through local programmes with a focus on neighbourhood volunteering that links to the city wide programme. Programme co-ordination will be provided through two part time posts that reflect the joint leadership by the Council and the VCFS. Regular progress on the implementation of the Year of Volunteering will also be reported to the Corporate Leadership Team, Leeds Initiative Leeds Strategy Group and VCFS Strategy Group.

3.4 Year of Volunteering Outline Programme

Through the above groups and channels, Council officers and Voluntary Action-Leeds are working together to develop a programme of activities for the Year of Volunteering. To date this includes:

- A city wide programme of events with ten of the months in 2010 focusing on a particular type of volunteering or client group within the community. The programme has been developed to link with existing and planned activity. (See **Appendix 1** for current progress).
- Local programmes developed by Area Committees with a focus on neighbourhood volunteering with links to the city wide programmed.
- A design competition for children and young people. Schools and individuals will be recognised and the winning pictures featured in the city wide programme of events and publicity for the year.
- A series of high profile events, including a launch event in January 2010, an event in National Volunteers Week in June 2010 and a final celebration and awards event in December 2010.
- A Volunteer Awards programme run throughout the year e.g. Area based awards run through Area Committees; Police; Environmental; Young peoples awards etc culminating in the final celebration and awards event at the end of the year to recognise the winners and name the Volunteer of the Year.
- Expanding a City Centre Volunteer Centre. The unit would act as a focal point and provide brokerage linking potential volunteers with opportunities.
- Taking the Volunteer Centre out into the community. Working with the Mobile Library Service to take out the Volunteer Centre service to targeted communities.
- Launching a revised Compact for Leeds with a toolkit that will support organisations using volunteers to deliver a good volunteering experience and provide a Volunteers Managers Training Programme
- Launch of Leeds Volunteering KiteMark
- Promoting Community Activity through expanding funding opportunities and ideas and how to' packs.

4.0 Resourcing the Year of Volunteering

- 4.1 There will be funding provided by the Council to support some of the costs of programme coordination 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.

- 4.2 In terms of the activities, all organisations in the city currently utilizing 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.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 Work is being undertaken to provide a Year of Volunteering logo and a range of resources such as banners and template branded posters and leaflets as a resource to be made available to all Directorates and community groups to use as marketing tools to promote Year of Volunteering.

5.0 The Outer South Area Committee Programme

- 5.1 AMT recommend to Members to utilise and adapt the substantial amount of work already undertaken by the Area Committee to support and develop volunteering and brand it as 'Year of Volunteering'. This method also assists with resource implications of initiative.
- 5.2 There are a number of ways in which the Area Committee can become involved in recognising and rewarding volunteering, as well as supporting voluntary organisations to not only increase membership but to develop and retain their volunteers. As outlined in Appendix 1, the only request is that as March has been identified as Volunteering in Neighbourhoods and Area Committees have a key role to play, that a local, high profile project e.g. event, promotional activity, distribution of volunteer pack is delivered.

5.3

| Project | Description | Timescale |
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| Small Grants Scheme | <p>£10,000 Well being Funds allocated in 2010 branded as a grant to support volunteering in Outer South. Provides funding to initiative without taking from other AC priorities. Criteria to promote projects that have big impact on voluntary groups. e.g. training (First Aid, Risk Assessment, Food Hygiene, Health and Safety), retention of volunteers, own celebration events, trips out to celebrate their work. Targeted at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In Bloom Groups ➤ Sports Clubs ➤ Arts Groups ➤ Other community groups | January - December 2010 |
| Supporting Volunteers Event | <p>Significant network/market style event to support volunteering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increasing membership ➤ Retention of volunteers through training, fund raising ➤ Groups showcase their work | March 2010 |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Some catering and refreshments provided. ➤ Theme, e.g. Coffee morning involve MEA, Rothwell Live at Home, Care and Repair Leeds, VAL, Leeds Voice, Leeds Fed. | |
| Town Centre Management Business Awards | As Summits are undergoing a review, the potential to link with Year of Volunteering is strong through a Business Awards ceremony that includes recognition of volunteering in the business community. | April 2010 |
| Promote Youth Volunteering | <p>The Learning Partnerships, youth volunteering development and coordinators scheme; ' V Fifty Award', a nationally recognised certificate. Area Committee to promote scheme to community groups across the Outer South. Scheme requires recording of volunteering hours undertaken by young people aged 16-25, accreditation certificate if they complete 50 volunteering hours over 12months.</p> <p>Nominate Outer South Groups to the Queen's Award for Volunteering Service. Children and Young People's Working Group to support.</p> | January - December 2010 |
| Volunteer Support Packs | Volunteer packs created, would include branded posters and leaflets to increase membership, information on funding, training, small grants, community skips. Distribution across the Outer South the community groups. | May – July 2010 |
| Outer South Community Heroes Event | Recognition and thank you event for volunteers from community groups across the Outer South developed from inaugural one held in September 2009. | September 2010 |
| Morley Literature Festival | Friends of Morley Literature Festival required support and Year of Volunteering Event organised by Friends could be vehicle for this. Promotion of Friends at Festival under banner of Year of Volunteering. | October 2010 |
| Seigen Circle | Develop event/activity with Siegen Circle that links to Year of Volunteering, exploring possibility of focusing on intergenerational work. | TBC |
| Engage and Support Key Voluntary Organisations to participate in Year of Voluntary through organising own activities. | Tenants and Residents Groups, Morley Elderly Action, Rothwell Live at Home and Care and Repair Leeds all approached to investigate potential developing their own programme as part of Year of Volunteering. | Ongoing, January – December 2010 |

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| Rothwell Wood Lane training and skills fair have volunteering element to it. | The strong link between developing skills of the unemployed through volunteering, the planned training and skills fair in Wood Lane as part of the NIP, to also have a strong promotion of how you become a volunteer. | February 2010 |
| Community Engagement Events | Participatory Budgeting in Gildersome Meet with Drighlington Parish Council to discuss possibility of revisiting and celebrating PB projects. | February - May 2010 |
| Neighbourhood Improvement Plans | Ongoing commitment of Area Committee. Work to support TARA volunteers. | January – December 2010 |
| Supported Areas | Ongoing commitment of Area Committee. Work to support TARA volunteers. | January – December 2010 |

6.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

- 6.1 This report supports Council policy as outlined in the priorities of the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-11, the Council's commitment to the Compact for Leeds and the Outer South Area Committee Area Delivery Plan.
- 6.2 Governance and reporting arrangements are broadly outlined in the report in paragraph 3.3.

7.0 Legal and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications as a result of this report
- 7.2 Resource implications would be on the Area Committee revenue Well being Budget for 2010/11 to support initiatives outlined in 5.0.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 2010 Year of Volunteering is an opportunity to celebrate and promote volunteering in Leeds. It has 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.
- 8.2 A successful Year of Volunteering will require active leadership and contributions by all key stakeholders in the city including Area Committees.

9.0. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a) Note the contents of this report
- b) Endorse and support the proposal, missions and aims for 2010 being the Year of Volunteering.
- c) Discuss and agree to the programme of activities outlined in 5.0 to form the Area Committee's participation in Year of Volunteering.

Background Papers

- Area Managers Report 19th October 2009
- Area Working - Regeneration Management Team, '2010 – A Year of Volunteering 4th August 2009'