



## Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

### Inner East Area Committee

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009



Subject: Year of the Volunteer

<p><b>Electoral Wards Affected:</b></p> <p><b>All Inner East Wards</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)</p>	<p><b>Specific Implications For:</b></p> <p>Equality and Diversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Community Cohesion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Council Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Delegated Executive Function available for Call In <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report <input type="checkbox"/></p>

### 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 outlines the citywide programme of activities that have already been proposed through consultation with Executive Members, Directorates, Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (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

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 through the programme of Area Committee events identified in paragraphs 16 - 28 of this report.

- (iii) Approve the Area Committee participation in the programme as identified in this report.
- (iv) Investigate sponsoring and encouraging additional activities with other partners, the VCFS sector and others.

### **Purpose of This Report**

1. 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.

### **Background Information**

2. **Volunteering is important** because it 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.
3. 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.
4. **Defining volunteering.** 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”.
5. 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”.
6. 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)”.

7. Our current commitment to volunteering lies within the Leeds Strategic Plan the improvement priority:
 

“ An increased number of local people engaged in activities to meet community needs and improve the quality of life for local residents”
8. 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%.
9. The Active Citizenship Sub-group of the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector High Level Partnership Group, chaired by a member of the VCFS, is stimulating activity and closely following progress in achieving this particular improvement priority.

### **Main Issues**

10. **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.
11. **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.
12. **To steer 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".

13. 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.
14. **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.
15. **A programme of activities** is being developed through the above groups and channels, Council officers and Voluntary Action-Leeds working together. 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 programme
  - 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.

### **The Area Committee programme**

16. A large number of volunteer opportunities already exist in the Inner East area and are regularly taken up. Examples of opportunities for volunteering include , becoming a school governor, joining a Good Neighbour Scheme, ALMO panels, friends of parks and / or other green spaces, helping to run a community centre, running a luncheon club, drama or other arts group, sports club, social event, youth

club, scout or guide group, community clean-up and organising fundraising events, as well as sitting on management committees of voluntary organisations.

17. A large number of people do already volunteer and in doing so make a valuable contribution to the success and wellbeing of the communities in the Inner East area. A number of professional voluntary groups rely largely on volunteer work force. However, more volunteers are always needed, and the Year of the Volunteer presents an ideal opportunity help all the local groups in the area recruit more volunteers.
18. The Area Committee Well Being fund already supports a lot of volunteer activity throughout the area. Councillors also support projects using MICE monies, as does the Ward Based Initiative Fund. In the past, Members have always agreed an amount of money from the Wellbeing revenue budget to support community engagement. It is suggested that in the financial year 2010/11 the same pot of money is used to underpin the Year of Volunteering activity.
19. The Year of the Volunteer will be an opportunity to raise the profile of the existing volunteers and recognise the valuable contribution made by all those individuals who give up their time freely for the benefit of their community.
20. The community engagements planned for Spring will include information about the type of opportunities available. Local groups from the voluntary, community and faith sectors will be invited to get involved and market their activities to show what volunteering opportunities they can offer.
21. Promotional material at community engagement events will be used to show what has already been achieved through the projects and organisations that have received well being funding.
22. Specific use of small grants will be promoted to allow organisations to produce promotional materials to encourage volunteering and to organise events aimed at encouraging volunteering.
23. A "Volunteer Thank You Event" will be organised in the winter 2010 to dovetail with the city wide celebrations. This will aim to acknowledge all the hard work put in by the local people through their voluntary effort.
24. The current contract with Leeds Ahead to deliver assistance to local voluntary and community sector organisations will be evaluated and if proved successful, it can be extended into 2010/11.
25. A new volunteer base is about to be opened in Park Place, with the involvement of Volunteer Action Leeds. Information on volunteering opportunities and support to organisations will be available from there.
26. Volunteering forms a substantial part of the Back to Nature Bid, currently in its second phase of application. If successful, it will deliver a massive volunteering opportunity to improve and develop the Wyke Beck green area and to encourage people to use the facilities.

27. The Area Management Team will continue to work with voluntary sector and encourage and support the development of additional schemes through small grants and commissioning.
28. Work will continue to support the gala and events' committees in Inner East Leeds.
29. Area Management Teams will have a lead responsibility for the programme in March 2010. Appendix 2 presents possible options for volunteering in Inner East Leeds.

### **Implications For Council Policy And Governance**

30. 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 and the Harmonious Communities section of the Area Committee Area Delivery Plan.
31. Governance and reporting arrangements are broadly outlined in the report in paragraph 12.

### **Legal and Resource Implications**

32. 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. Steve Crocker, the current area manager for West and North West Leeds will be leading the City Council input into the programme in 2010, including part of the time put in on a volunteer basis. He will work closely with Natasha Mort and Richard Jackson from Voluntary Action Leeds to deliver the programme for the City.
33. 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.
34. The Area Committees, Council Directorates, VCFS organisations and all participating partners are being encouraged to explore ways to minimise additional costs for promoting and running the programme by incorporating and expanding appropriate work programmes.

### **Conclusions**

35. 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.

36. A successful Year of Volunteering will require active leadership and contributions by all key stakeholders in the city, and that is what the area committee is now being asked to consider.

### **Recommendations**

37. Members are asked to:
- (v) Endorse and support the proposal, mission and aims for 2010 being the Year of Volunteering in Leeds.
  - (vi) Support the development of 2010 Year of Volunteering through the programme of Area Committee events identified in paragraphs 16 - 29 of this report
  - (vii) Approve the Area Committee participation in the programme as identified in this report (Appendix 2)
  - (viii) Investigate sponsoring and encouraging additional activities with other partners, the VCFS sector and others.
  - (ix) Create a time limited working group, one person per ward, to oversee the inner east programme for the 2010 Year of Volunteering.

### **Background Papers**

Executive Board Report, October 16<sup>th</sup>, Year of Volunteering in Leeds

## Appendix 1

### OUTLINE CALENDAR

### 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering

Month	Theme	Promotional and Celebration Events
January	2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of the year of volunteering</li> <li>• Launch of the Leeds Compact Volunteering Standards and Toolkit and the Volunteer Management Training Programme</li> <li>• Formal opening of the Volunteer Centre</li> <li>• Launch of the Volunteer Centre community outreach initiative</li> </ul>
February	Volunteering for Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leeds University Student Volunteering Week to include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- programme of student volunteering activities</li> <li>- event at Riley Smith Hall Showcasing Student Volunteering Activity – open to all citizens with potential for invited audience event</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
March	Volunteering in every neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of the Area Based Volunteering Celebration programme 2010 that will take place throughout the year ( see note 1 below)</li> </ul>
April	Volunteering across the Generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leeds Intergenerational Festival (Adult Services) incorporating a focus on the role of volunteers in supporting intergenerational activity</li> <li>• Corporate Social Responsibility Awards Event</li> <li>• University of Leeds Volunteering Awards</li> </ul>
May	Volunteering for Literacy and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books at Home Volunteer Celebration Event</li> <li>• Possible: Civic Reception for Governors in Leeds Schools (4000) – supported by Governors Support Service</li> <li>• Possible: School support and Mentors promotion and celebration event</li> </ul>
June	Valuing Volunteering in Leeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Volunteering Week Programme of celebration and promotional activities, including: Volunteering Opportunities Market Place; Corporate Volunteering Celebration Event</li> <li>• Youth Volunteering Events (Children’s Services)</li> <li>• Launch of the Leeds Volunteering Kitemark</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LCC Volunteer Managers Network Celebration Event</li> <li>• Youth Offending Service Celebration Event</li> </ul>
<b>July</b>	<b>Volunteering for Leisure</b> Sport, Arts, Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get Creative – Young People and Arts Accreditation Event</li> <li>• Sport Volunteering</li> <li>• Visit to Leeds between July &amp; Oct. re application for Football World Cup</li> </ul>
<b>August</b>	<b>Volunteering and Environment, Parks and Wildlife</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and City Pride Awards event</li> </ul>
<b>September</b>	<b>Volunteering for a Safer Leeds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible: Re-launch of Neighbourhood Watch schemes</li> <li>• Possible: Celebrating Community Crime Fighters</li> <li>• Leeds University /Union Student Volunteer Recruitment Programme</li> </ul>
<b>October</b>	<b>Volunteering for ALL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older Peoples Volunteering Promotion and Celebration Programme of Activities- organised by the Older People's Forum</li> <li>• Volunteering with and for Children and Young People – a programme of promotion and celebration activities coordinated by IYSS/Vinvolve</li> <li>• Big V Bus – 2 day Student and Young Citizens Volunteering Taster Event and Film made by Young People about the value of Volunteering</li> <li>• West Yorkshire Youth Justice Awards Event – including Awards for Volunteers involved in Youth Justice initiatives, including Leeds based services</li> <li>• Celebrating the role of volunteering in Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Leeds</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>November</b>	<b>Children and Young People's Volunteering Month</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compact Volunteering Kitemark Awards</li> <li>• Children and Young People's Volunteering Month – coordination of programme of events by IYSS/ Vinvolve etc</li> <li>• Leeds University Volunteering and Community Week</li> </ul>

<b>December</b>	<b>Celebrating Volunteering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic Volunteer Celebration and Awards Ceremony</li> <li>• Youth Offending Service Volunteer Thank you Dinner and Dance at Royal Armouries</li> </ul>
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**Note 1.**

Throughout the Year there will be a wide range of ongoing volunteering activity and targeted and time limited volunteering projects taking place. The time limited/ targeted projects will be captured on the Year of Volunteering website calendar. The on-going volunteering opportunities are accessible through the V base volunteering database.

**Note 2.**

Local programmes developed by Area Committees could include:

- a market place style event showcasing volunteering opportunities
- a volunteer award and thank you event that would feed into city-wide awards
- an Area Team volunteering project
- any Town or District centre events
- badging of existing activity e.g. local arts festivals, literature festivals with a volunteer theme.
- Area Committee member involvement in the year.

## Appendix 2

### OUTLINE CALENDAR FOR INNER EAST LEEDS - 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering

Project	Description	Timescale
<b>Small Grants Scheme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It is suggested that a proportion of Wellbeing Funds allocated in 2010 - 11 is branded as a <b>grant to support volunteering in Inner East</b>. Criteria may include promotion of projects that have big impact on voluntary groups. e.g. training (First Aid, Risk Assessment, Food Hygiene, Health and Safety), recruitment and retention of volunteers, promotion leaflets, own celebration events, trips out to celebrate their work.</li> </ul>	January 2010 – March 2011
<b>Supporting Volunteers Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consultation / engagement events should provide a significant opportunity to promote voluntary activity, networking and development, resulting in:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Increasing membership</li> <li>❖ Retention of volunteers through training, fund raising, providing exciting activities</li> <li>❖ Groups showcase their work</li> <li>❖ Some catering and refreshments provided.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	February, March 2010  June, July, August 2010
<b>Providing Volunteering Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Support to groups using volunteers, such as Good Neighbour Schemes, ALMO panels, friends of parks and / or other green spaces, residents' groups.</li> <li>➤ Further development of community centres user groups and gala organising committees.</li> <li>➤ Explore a possibility of a contract with Leeds Ahead to provide professional assistance to voluntary groups and volunteering opportunities in the inner East area for Leeds businesses.</li> </ul>	Ongoing - 2010
<b>Promote Environmental Volunteering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Support to community clean-ups</li> <li>➤ Development of the Back to Nature Bid incl. volunteering opportunities in Wykebeck Valley</li> </ul>	March - October 2010 January 2010
<b>Volunteer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Specific use of small grants will be promoted</li> </ul>	March –

<b>Information</b>	<p>to allow organisations to produce promotional materials to encourage volunteering and to organise events aimed at encouraging volunteering.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A new volunteer base is about to be opened in Park Place, with the involvement of Volunteer Action Leeds. Information on volunteering opportunities and support to organisations will be available from there.</li> </ul>	April 2010
<b>Engagement of Local Voluntary Sector in the Year of Volunteering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explore with local voluntary groups their own involvement in the year's activities.</li> </ul>	September 2010
<b>Galas and Festivals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promote Year of Volunteering through local galas and festivals.</li> </ul>	Summer 2010
<b>Volunteer Thank You Event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Year of the Volunteer will be an opportunity to raise the profile of the existing volunteers and recognise the valuable contribution made by all those individuals who give up their time freely for the benefit of their community.</li> <li>➤ A "Volunteer Thank You Event" will be organised. This will aim to acknowledge all the hard work put in by the local people through their voluntary effort.</li> </ul>	Autumn / Winter 2010-11