

# Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 19 June 2018

## Code of Practice on the Use of Volunteers at Festivals and Events

Item number	8.2
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All
Council Commitments	<a href="#">46</a>

### Executive Summary

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A motion by Councillor Staniforth to the Culture and Communities Committee on [30 January 2018](#) called for a code of best practice on the use of volunteers at events to be proposed within one Committee cycle. An update report was provided to this Committee on [20 March 2018](#).

Officers within the Culture service have developed a Code of Conduct with Festivals Edinburgh and the 11 major Festivals to ensure that a consistent code of practice can be proposed across all events and Festivals. It brings together existing volunteering policies from across the Festivals and aligns them with good practice guidelines from Volunteer Edinburgh and Volunteer Scotland.

This report provides a Code of Conduct on the Use of Volunteers at Festivals and Events.

## Code of Practice on the Use of Volunteers at Festivals and Events

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
  - 1.1.1 approves the Code of Conduct; and
  - 1.1.2 refers this report to City of Edinburgh Council to approve the Code of Conduct as policy for inclusion, where relevant, within procurement exercises.

### 2. Background

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- 2.1 Volunteering at Festivals and Events offers a number of benefits to participants, attendees and event organisers. Major events and Festivals often run volunteer programmes that allow participants to get involved in major events to meet new people, build new skills (either for personal or career development), take on new challenges, or to give back to their local community or area.
- 2.2 Festivals Edinburgh also piloted a [Festival City Volunteers](#) programme during the summer Festivals. A presentation to the [12 September 2017](#) meeting of Culture and Communities Committee highlighted the success of this initiative. The initiative is being repeated for summer 2018.
- 2.3 Separate to this, media reports highlighted the need for a consistent set of guidelines on the use of volunteers at events to provide assurance that both volunteers and Festivals and events benefit from the experience and that no paid roles are replaced by volunteers.
- 2.4 A motion by Councillor Staniforth to the Culture and Communities Committee on 30 January 2018 called for a code of best practice on the use of volunteers at events.

### 3. Main report

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- 3.1 Volunteering has become a key element of most major festivals and events, recognising the important role that volunteers provide in welcoming and assisting event attendees and event organisers.

- 3.2 While volunteering is undertaken on a non-contractual basis, it is important that volunteers are treated fairly and benefit from the experience. In order to protect the volunteer and the organisation, a code of practice has been developed to clearly define what is expected of organisations who use volunteers, how the volunteers should be treated, what benefits should be available and to ensure that volunteer roles are not used to replace paid employment, including paid staff involved in industrial disputes.
- 3.3 Officers in the Culture service worked with Festivals Edinburgh to deliver a code of practice that can be applied across all festivals and events.
- 3.4 A number of existing policies from across the Festivals were reviewed to develop one consistent code of practice that can be applied to all Festivals and Events.
- 3.5 This code was assessed against existing guidelines from Volunteer Edinburgh and Volunteer Scotland to ensure that they were aligned.
- 3.6 The code of conduct is comprised of 10 points (see Appendix 1). These are:
  - 3.6.1 Volunteers should give of their time freely, and not through compulsion;
  - 3.6.2 Volunteers are unpaid roles but volunteers should receive reasonable out of pocket expenses;
  - 3.6.3 Volunteer roles should be genuinely additional roles, and not replace paid positions, nor the positions of any paid staff involved in an industrial dispute;
  - 3.6.4 Volunteering roles should benefit the individual volunteer as well as the organisation involved;
  - 3.6.5 Volunteers should be clear about their roles and responsibilities and be provided with a role description outlining key elements of the role;
  - 3.6.6 Volunteers should have access to appropriate training and development and an appropriately trained named contact to provide the necessary support for their role;
  - 3.6.7 Volunteers should have opportunities to contribute to volunteering policies and procedures through feedback;
  - 3.6.8 Volunteers should have access to a mechanism to deal with any grievances that they may have;
  - 3.6.9 Organisations should take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure volunteers' health, safety and welfare while volunteering; and
  - 3.6.10 Organisations should endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

- 3.7 The motion from Councillor Staniforth specifically requested that guidelines on the use of volunteers are applied to the Council's procurement contracts. Updated advice from the Council's Commercial and Procurement Service states that a question on the use of volunteers at Festivals and Events can be included within the evaluation process as part of a question on staffing structures. For example:
- "Please provide details of your staffing structure for delivering this project. Where you intend to offer opportunities for volunteering, the Council has a policy on the use of volunteers at Festivals and Events and your response should demonstrate how you will adhere to this policy."
- 3.8 In this way, bidders' commitment to the Council's policy on the use of volunteers can be demonstrated and scored as part of the overall procurement process.
- 3.9 In response to concerns raised over the use of volunteers at Edinburgh's Hogmanay, the organisers have commissioned specific research on the use and experience of volunteers at the 2017/18 festival. This data is included in the Edinburgh's Christmas and Edinburgh's Hogmanay Key Performance Indicators report to this Committee.

#### **4. Measures of success**

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- 4.1 The success of the code of practice will be measured through its adoption as Council policy and across any of the 11 major Festivals that involve volunteers.
- 4.2 The code of practice contributes to the delivery of the following Culture Plan objectives:
- 4.2.1 Support greater partnership working in the cultural and creative sectors and maximise resources available to help them thrive all year round; and
- 4.2.2 Ensure that everyone has access to world class cultural provision.

#### **5. Financial impact**

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- 5.1 There is no direct financial impact associated with this report.

#### **6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 There are no risk, policy, compliance or governance impacts arising from this report.

#### **7. Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 The outcome of this report and the code of practice on the use of volunteers will ensure that volunteers are treated equally and without exploitation or discrimination where this exists. The report itself has a positive equalities impact.

## 8. Sustainability impact

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- 8.1 The impacts of this report have been considered in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties and the outcomes are summarised as follows: the proposals in this report will have no significant impact on carbon emissions; be neutral in relation to climate change and will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh through the promotion of the city nationally and internationally, positive economic impact and contributions to the quality of life and well-being of residents.

## 9. Consultation and engagement

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- 9.1 The Council has engaged with the relevant partners, Trades Unions and Festivals bodies to develop the code of practice.

## 10. Background reading/external references

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- 10.1 [Volunteer Scotland Volunteering Charter](#)  
10.2 [Volunteer Edinburgh Good Practice Guide](#)

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## 11. Appendices

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Appendix 1 – Code of Conduct on the use of Volunteers at Festivals and Events

## **Appendix 1**

### **Code of Conduct on the use of Volunteers at Festivals and Events:**

1. Volunteers should give of their time freely, and not through compulsion.
2. Volunteers are unpaid roles but volunteers should receive reasonable out of pocket expenses.
3. Volunteer roles should be genuinely additional roles, and not replace paid positions.
4. Volunteering roles should benefit the individual volunteer as well as the organisation involved.
5. Volunteers should be clear about their roles and responsibilities, and be provided with a role description outlining key elements of the role.
6. Volunteers should have access to appropriate training and development, and an appropriately trained named contact to provide the necessary support for their role.
7. Volunteers should have opportunities to contribute to volunteering policies and procedures through feedback.
8. Volunteers should have access to a mechanism to deal with any grievances that they may have.
9. Organisations should take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure volunteers' health, safety and welfare while volunteering.
10. Organisations should endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.