Volunteering Policy

Scope

This policy applies to staff, volunteers, services and service users of services provided *directly* by the charity known as **The Voluntary Network.**

Introduction

The aim of **The Voluntary Network** is to provide Community Transport, Befriending Services and other Community Projects.

At **The Voluntary Network**, volunteers are a major resource and make a vital contribution to our aim. We intend to encourage, develop, support and properly organise volunteer involvement in our work. In doing so we recognise that the roles of volunteers will complement and not replace the roles of paid staff.

The time, energy and skills offered by volunteers benefit our work and help us to achieve our aim. Volunteering also brings benefits to volunteers themselves and their client group.

A volunteer is a person who undertakes voluntary activity on our behalf or on behalf of member organisations. It is undertaken by choice, and it is unpaid.

The Voluntary Network believes that our relationship with our volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment and our volunteers have both rights and responsibilities. We hope that volunteers will enjoy their involvement and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives.

The Voluntary Network purpose in adopting this policy is to:

- Highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers.
- Recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers and **The Voluntary Network**
- Clarify the roles of volunteers and address the relation between volunteers, those who engage them and those who receive their services
- Help to ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers
- Acknowledge the current areas of volunteer involvement.

Statement of Principles of Good Practice
In involving volunteers, we will be guided by the Volunteering Code of Practice.

Recruitment and Selection

- **The Voluntary Network** Equal Opportunities Policy will be adhered to when recruiting and selecting volunteers.
- To ensure that all volunteering opportunities are widely accessible written task descriptions will define time commitment, necessary skills and actual duties and will be promoted appropriately.
- Volunteers will be required to complete a volunteers' application form, references taken up and applications processed in a timely manner, matching volunteers to posts as well as possible.

Support for Volunteers

- **The Voluntary Network** will provide an induction period and review session for volunteers to assess the progress of their placements and to resolve any problems at an early stage.

- We will provide funding for the payment of volunteers' expenses. Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to claim.

- **The Voluntary Network** has included volunteers within its insurance arrangements including employment and public liability.

- Volunteers will be given information on other legislation or policies which may affect them e.g., Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities. In these respects, volunteers will be treated in the same way as paid staff for liability purposes.

- All volunteers will be offered access to support and supervision on a regular basis.

- All volunteers will be offered access to appropriate training to enable them to develop their capabilities and competence appropriate to their volunteering role.

- Volunteers will be encouraged to provide each other with mutual support.

- Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's complaints, grievances and disciplinary procedures, and of who to contact if they have a grievance about any aspect of their work.

Management Committee Volunteers (Trustees)

To support its committee, **The Voluntary Network** will provide:

- An induction on the role and responsibilities of the Committee and the work of the organisation
- Training where required
- Opportunities to meet with staff members of their choice
- Written information and reports in good time on matters related to the governance to the organisation, the organisation's constitution and relevant areas of legislation.

Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers

In engaging volunteers, we recognise the rights of volunteers to:

- Know what is expected of them and to be given clear information and induction.
- Be free from discrimination, safe, insured, supported and supervised, trained, reimbursed out of pocket expenses and shown appreciation.
- Know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong.
- Ask for a reference for future employment further volunteering opportunities.
- Withdraw from voluntary work.

We expect that volunteers will:

- Carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of **The Voluntary Network**
- Work within agreed guidelines and remits.
- Be reliable.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Attend training and support sessions where agreed.

Relationship with Paid Staff

- The roles of volunteers and paid staff will be complementary and mutually supportive.
- Appropriate training, support and resources will be provided for all those who work alongside volunteers and for those who have a managerial role in relation to volunteers.
- Volunteers will also be given clear information about the roles undertaken by paid staff and their value to **The Voluntary Network.**

Reviewing the Policy and Procedures

The Voluntary Network will monitor and review this policy and procedures on volunteers every two years and will nominate a member of the Management Committee and a senior paid staff member to undertake this monitoring and review role.

Responsibility. Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of the policy and procedures lies with the Management Committee and, on the day-to-day basis, with the senior paid staff.

Date: August 2026