



Volunteering with LB Hillingdon Council Theatres

This document provides important information for those applying to be a volunteer with the Council's Theatre Service, in the following three sections

- 1) Council Volunteer Policy
- 2) Council Data Protection Briefing
- 3) Council Sexual Harassment Prevention Duty

Section 1: Hillingdon Council Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Volunteering is a great way to share and develop your skills and experience and make a positive contribution to your local community. Hillingdon Council involve volunteers directly within the organisation to:

- Enhance the delivery of our services
- Make sure we are responsive to the needs of our users.
- Provide different skills and perspectives.
- Enable residents to gain experiences and skills

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers, the support and procedures in place for volunteers and two important briefings regarding Data Protection and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.

Principles

The Council recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to employees. We:

- Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the Council's services.
- Will not utilise volunteers to replace employees.
- Expect that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognise that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training where required for them to undertake their duties effectively.
- Recognise that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and consider any reasonable adjustments requested, to ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers will generally be from all sections of the community and will be in line with the Council's Equality in Employment policies.

The Council will make efforts to ensure that volunteering opportunities are generally made available but may also recruit in response to ad hoc enquiries if the skills and experience on offer are of benefit to the community.

People interested in becoming volunteers with the Council will be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person. They will be given information including general information about the Council and specific information on the volunteering duties in which they are interested.

All volunteers will be asked to complete a basic application form appropriate to the activities that they are applying for and to supply two character references. Where applicants are not placed in the service applied for, they will be provided with feedback and signposted to other volunteer involving organisations where possible.

Volunteers with the Council may encounter vulnerable people and/or be in a position of trust. They may therefore be asked to provide information about any criminal convictions via a self-disclosure form that is completed prior to starting to volunteer. Every volunteer role will undergo a risk assessment. For roles which involve a regulated activity with young people or vulnerable adults, volunteers will also be required to have a full DBS disclosure check.

This information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

Volunteers will receive a role description and volunteer agreement containing full information about their chosen area of work and a clear idea of their responsibilities and the volunteer's responsibilities to them. If required, volunteers will be given an identity/security pass. It is a volunteer's responsibility to ensure that this is kept safely and not given to anyone else except the person for whom it is intended.

Induction and Training

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken. If access to systems is required, then the volunteer will be given training on the system to be used. The volunteer will also need to undertake mandatory data protection, health and safety training; This will be arranged through learning and development. The volunteer will be required to always follow the Council's data protection policy. If any equipment is issued to the volunteer this will be recorded and signed for. At the end of any volunteering assignment, all equipment should be returned to the named contact officer.

Support

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person who will provide regular support. Support sessions will provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue about the development of the volunteering role and any advice and guidance as needed.

Records

Basic details will be held on volunteers. This will include the application form, references, placement details, emergency contacts, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with the Council's data protection policy.

Expenses

Whilst unpaid, a volunteer should not be out of pocket. The Council may provide expenses for volunteers under some circumstances, and this will usually be limited to food, drink, travel or any equipment they need to buy to undertake the role. If, for example it is agreed that a volunteer can claim mileage, then the amount will be notified to the volunteer and will be in line with HMRC car mileage rates. Receipts or other evidence will be required, and expenses should be submitted using an online AP02 form through the corporate payments team.

Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by the Council's insurance while carrying out agreed duties under the supervision of the Council.

Health and Safety

The Council will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety and welfare while volunteering, in accordance with their own Health and Safety policy. Volunteers will be expected to:

- take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their actions
- report accidents, incidents and any potential danger to a member of staff
- undertake health and safety training appropriate to their duties if asked to do so

Equal Opportunities

Volunteers and staff will work in accordance with the Council's equal opportunities policy and will pay due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

Resolving Concerns

The volunteer should discuss any concerns they may have with their named contact who will undertake to listen to them and make reasonable effort to resolve the problem. If the contact person is unable to resolve the problem they will refer the matter to Head of Service, with the permission of the volunteer. The Council reserves the right to

terminate a volunteering arrangement immediately and without notice if the conduct of a volunteer is called into question.

Endings

When a volunteering arrangement ends, a volunteer may be asked to provide feedback on their experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They may also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully with their contact officer or a member of the management team. Based on their voluntary work, volunteers will be able to request a reference if they have been volunteering regularly for a period of one year or more.

Social Media

No comments or stories should be given directly to the media. Volunteers are expected to ensure that the information and opinions shared on social media platforms do not bring the Council into disrepute, nor breach data protection, confidentiality or personal privacy. 15. Monitoring and Evaluation The council will monitor and evaluate its use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy.

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Section 2: Hillingdon Council Data Protection Briefing Note 2023

Data Protection Awareness

Hillingdon Council has a duty to protect data and treat information securely. Residents and staff expect the Council to act responsibly and to protect the personal information which it holds about them in accordance with its statutory duty and obligations.

The Council's overriding objective is to 'Put Residents First' and therefore as part of this, its residents need absolute assurance that all personal information which the Council keeps about them is stored safely, only accessed by people who need to access it, used safely and responsibly, and disposed of safely when it is no longer required. This also includes transporting data, either physically or electronically.

What is the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018?

- The Government introduced a new data protection standard and regime with effect from 25 May 2018.
- Individuals have now been given greater rights and more onerous requirements have been imposed on the Council in its capacity as a data controller in relation to the processing of individuals' personal data. Transparency, accountability and data minimisation lie at the heart of the new regime.
- There is a much stricter enforcement regime in place with regards to the mishandling, loss etc. of personal data.

What is personal data?

- Personal data is any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person who can be identified directly or indirectly. Examples of such data are individuals' names, addresses, dates of birth, reference numbers etc.
- The UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act cover all personal data that is processed automatically, held in a manual paper form and also held in an accessible online record.

Why does Data Protection matter?

Data protection matters because:

- The Council must abide by the laws that govern how information is processed and how information and communications technology is used.
- The residents in Hillingdon must be able to trust the Council to act appropriately and responsibly when gathering, holding and providing information and when using the Council's facilities.
- The Council needs to safeguard residents in relation to information which it holds about them from harm.
- The Council needs to protect its reputation as a responsible public body and to safeguard itself from legal liability and enforcement action.
- Partner organisations may decline to share data if they are concerned about our data security.

Personal Implications - for both staff, volunteers and residents

- For **staff** and **volunteers** who breach data protection legislation, they are liable to face disciplinary action including as the most punitive being dismissed by the Council from their employment.
- For **residents**, breaches could lead to distress, anxiety and possible personal loss if their personal details are compromised in any way. The Council's data protection policies and procedures reflect the requirements of the data protection regime and must be adhered to by all staff and volunteers.

Financial Implications

The Information Commissioner's Office is the UK's independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest. It has the power to issue fines up to £17.5m for breaches of data protection legislation.

What happens to information?

Information that the Council holds must be stored securely and can be accessed by authorised personnel, when required. Information is destroyed and disposed of following statutory and recommended minimum retention periods. The Council has introduced a Document Retention and Destruction Policy which has been on the Council's website since May 2018. It provides valuable guidance when officers are sorting out Council records for storage or destruction. However, it should be noted that this is in the process of being revised and updated.

You must:

- manage information appropriately

- report when the Council's data protection policies and procedures have not been followed
- keep confidential information secure
- not carry out illegal, libellous, immoral or offensive activities
- use your Council access and identity in a way which is consistent with your role
- follow their rules when using another organisation's network
- only access records or personal data where you have a legitimate business reason for doing so
- not disclose any personal data to any party unless you are authorised to do so.

Do you know how to handle information securely and appropriately?

Think about what can happen if information is lost, inappropriately disclosed or stolen, or if security is breached. What are the consequences and who does it affect?

You should:

- shred sensitive data according to policies
- only use encrypted Council provided mobile devices
- report lost equipment to ICT immediately

You should not:

- leave equipment, paperwork, or your ID badge in your vehicle unattended
- leave files or documents containing personal data unattended
- share any passwords or use colleagues' passwords to access Council systems
- send or receive personal data using personal email accounts
- store documents on your personal drive
- access Council Systems from overseas without HOS approval.

For further details on what you should and should not do, please see the Council's Golden Rules for Protecting Personal and Special Category Data which can be found on the Hillingdon website.

For more detailed information about the legal requirements imposed on the Council and the practical steps which need to be undertaken to comply with the data protection legislation, please see the Council's data protection policies and procedures which can be found on the Hillingdon website.

If you feel that you require further guidance on any of the aspects above, please contact the Council's Statutory Data Protection Officer, Glen Egan, at gegan@hillingsdon.gov.uk or the Information Governance Lawyer, Rukhsana Hussain at rhussain@hillingsdon.gov.uk

Section 3: **Sexual Harassment Prevention Duty Briefing Note**

Harassment arises when a worker / volunteer is subject to unwanted conduct that is related to a protected characteristic and has the purpose or the effect of:

- violating the worker / volunteer's dignity, or
- creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that worker / volunteer.

Conduct that has one of these effects can be harassment even if the effect was not intended. The word 'unwanted' means essentially the same as 'unwelcome' or 'uninvited'. Sexual harassment occurs when a worker / volunteer is subjected to unwanted conduct as defined above and which is of a sexual nature. The conduct need not be sexually motivated, only sexual in nature. Examples include:

- sexual comments or jokes
- displaying sexually graphic pictures, posters or photos
- suggestive looks, staring or leering
- propositions and sexual advances
- making promises in return for sexual favours
- sexual gestures
- intrusive questions about a person's private or sex life, or a person discussing their own sex life
- sexual posts or contact on social media
- spreading sexual rumours about a person
- sending sexually explicit emails or text messages
- unwelcome touching, hugging, massaging or kissing.

An individual can experience unwanted conduct from someone of the same or a different sex. Sexual interaction that is invited, mutual or consensual is not sexual harassment because it is not unwanted. However, sexual conduct that has been welcomed in the past can become unwanted. Sexual harassment of a worker / volunteer can be committed by:

- another worker / volunteer, including your manager
- an agent acting on behalf of the council, such as a contractor
- a third party, including residents
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If you experience sexual harassment or witness sexual harassment, tell your line manager, speak to your Union rep or speak to a HR Advisor.

By progressing an application to be a Council Theatre Volunteer, you are confirming you have understood all information in this document, but will ensure to seek further advice and guidance, if necessary, in undertaking your role.

Thank you for supporting LB Hillingdon's Community Theatres