**Volunteer Management Policy**

**Reference Number:** Section 9 No. 5  
**Responsible Department:** Strategy & Development  
**Related Policy/Procedure:** Working with Vulnerable People Policy, Code of Conduct for Employees, WHS Induction and Training Procedure

**Date of Adoption:** 24 September 2013  
**Current Review Date:** 24 July 2018  
**Minute Reference:** 28 August 2018 Page 2018/320  
**Version Number:** Amendment No. 2  

**Next Review Date:** July 2020  
**Review Frequency:** Biennially

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1. **Purpose**

   1.1 The intent of this policy is to provide a framework for the relationship between Council and its volunteers. The Light Regional Council (‘Council’) values and recognises the importance of volunteers within its Community. Volunteering is important as it promotes civic participation and encourages people to actively shape, contribute to and make a difference in their local community whilst fostering community pride and helping to showcase the Light Region.

   Volunteering forges a strong bond between the Council and its Community by encouraging community participation, promoting access to resources and information, supporting social interaction, responding to key areas of need, capitalising on a variety of skills and experience and increasing participation in established Council services and events.

   Council is committed to utilising and valuing the skills, time and energy of volunteers effectively which is supported through the provision of a comprehensive Volunteer Management Framework in accordance with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (Volunteering Australia, 2015).

2. **Scope**

   The policy is applicable to all Council’s paid employees and registered volunteers involved in the planning and delivery of Council’s volunteer program.

3. **Policy Aim**

   3.1 This policy aims to:

      3.1.1 Provide a clear definition to the role of a volunteer.

      3.1.2 Provide clarity as to the purpose of volunteering with Council.

      3.1.3 Formalise the principles that inform the management of volunteers and the relationship between Council’s paid employees and volunteers.

      3.1.4 Outline the rights and responsibilities of both Council’s paid employees and volunteers.
4. Definitions

4.1 Volunteer

A ‘volunteer’ is an individual who is at least 16 years of age, who has *willingly given their time for the common good and without financial gain* freely and without coercion and registered with and has received approval from the Council to undertake tasks and/or activities within a range of programs and services across departments:

- That benefit the Council, the volunteer and the local community;
- In designated volunteer positions only; and that
- Complement but do not replace the services or roles provided by paid employees.

The following persons, for the purpose of this policy, are not considered to be volunteers:

- People undertaking work placement and work experience programs;
- Work for the Dole participants;
- Section 41 Committee members;
- Elected Members of Council; and
- Persons receiving payment (other than approved reimbursement of any incidental expenses incurred while undertaking volunteer duties).

4.2 Paid Employment

Paid employment relates to the contractual relationship between an employer and employee, where the employee receives remuneration for work done.

4.3 Community Development Officer

The Community Development Officer is the paid Council employee responsible for the overall engagement and support of volunteers within the organisation.

4.4 Supervisor

A supervisor is the paid Council employee that a volunteer reports to when volunteering within a particular department of Council. The supervisor is responsible for planning, organising, coordinating and day-to-day supervision of volunteers within their departmental program(s).

4.5 Volunteer Leave

Under Clause 23 of the Light Regional Council and Officers Enterprise Agreement 2015, Council’s paid employees are entitled to one full day of volunteer leave paid at normal time, or normal time in lieu, for an approved volunteer role.

5. Legislative framework and other references

5.1 The policy is to be read and implemented in conjunction with the following relevant documents:

a) Volunteers Protection Act 2001
b) Local Government Act 1999
c) Disability Discrimination Act 1992
d) Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
e) Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
f) Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)
g) Children’s Protection Act 1993
h) Children’s Protection Regulations 2010
i) Privacy Act 1998
j) Light Regional Council Strategic Plan 2016-2020
k) Barossa, Light and Lower Northern Region Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015
l) National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015
6. **Policy Statement**

Council will provide a Volunteer Program which is accessible to community members to support their participation in community life.

6.1 **Principles of policy**

The principles underlying this policy are:

6.1.1 **Community Participation:** Council recognises that all people have a right to volunteer, and where mutually beneficial and appropriate, will provide opportunities for members of the community to participate as volunteers in a broad range of Council programs and activities, to enhance and extend Council activities.

6.1.2 **Inclusiveness:** Council welcomes volunteer participation across age-groups, abilities and culture. Council will ensure its programs and activities meet individual needs, are welcoming of diversity and value the strengths and abilities of all community members.

6.1.3 **Strong Volunteer Management Framework:** Volunteers of Council will be managed in a structured, organised and professional manner in accordance with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (2015).

6.1.4 **Partnerships:** Council will strive to promote partnerships between government, community groups, businesses and individuals to support volunteers.

6.1.5 **Sustainability:** Council will strive to sustain the volunteer community by providing access to appropriate resources, support, advice, information and training.

6.1.6 **Recognition:** Council commits to recognise the efforts and successes of volunteers and those who support them in a consistent manner.

6.1.7 **Respectful Behaviours:** Council paid employees and volunteers will respect the roles, skills and contributions of each other, and strive to work together towards the achievement of organisational goals. Council paid employees and volunteers will support the decisions and direction of Council. Volunteers will, at all times, be a good ambassador for Council in the broader community and will present a good opinion and stance on the operations of Council. Council paid employees and volunteers will relate in an open, honest and transparent manner with one another and with clients and the broader community.

7. **Application of Policy**

**Rights and Responsibilities**

7.1 **Responsibilities of Council to meet volunteers’ rights**

Council is required to:

- Provide volunteers with a clearly written job or task description;
- Ensure volunteers receive an appropriate induction, orientation to the worksite, and ongoing training;
- Ensure volunteers are given tasks that are matched with their skills;
- Provide volunteers with appropriate resources and any necessary Personal Protective Equipment to undertake their duties as required;
- Ensure a safe work environment in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2012. Volunteers will have the same legal protection as paid employees in terms of Work Health and Safety and Equal Employment Opportunity;
- Provide ongoing support and direction from appropriate staff;
- Treat volunteers with respect and as a valued member of the team;
- Ensure volunteers have any complaints of grievances heard by an appropriate Supervisor and are aware of the grievance procedure. Any grievance, complaint or concern raised by a volunteer will be dealt with in a sensitive and timely manner;
Consult, value and welcome ideas and suggestions from volunteers for improvement of the program with which they work, as part of a continuous improvement process of Council’s volunteer program;

Develop and maintain strong communication links with volunteers and relevant bodies including: Volunteering Barossa and Light, Northern Volunteering SA Inc., Volunteering SA&NT Inc., Volunteering Australia, the Office for Volunteers and the Local Government Association;

To provide appropriate insurance cover for volunteers whilst they are undertaking approved activities with the appropriate supervision and control by the Council (n.b. volunteers aged 90 and over will be notified that they are not covered by Personal Accident Insurance under the Council’s current cover arrangements); and

To provide volunteers with reimbursement for any reasonable out of pocket expenses if prior approval has been granted by the appropriate Manager or Supervisor.

7.2 **Volunteers responsibilities and obligations to Council**

Volunteers will be required to:

- Provide a satisfactory criminal history screening (National Police Certificate or DCSI check) prior to the commencement of their voluntary role and undergo any other screening requirements as deemed necessary for a particular volunteer role;
- Inform Council if there are any changes to their criminal history after they have provided a criminal history screening and during their time of engagement as a Volunteer of Council;
- Declare any gifts received while undertaking their volunteer role in Council’s Gift Register.
- Fulfil the duties as specified in their volunteer role or task description in accordance with the relevant policies and legislative requirements;
- Follow reasonable instructions from the relevant Manager or Supervisor in the workplace and adhere to Council’s systems with regard to Workplace Health and Safety, and report any unsafe working conditions or potential hazards to their Manager/Program Supervisor;
- Notify their Manager/Supervisor immediately, if they sustain a work-related injury, a third party sustains a work-related injury, or damage has occurred to either Council’s or a third party’s property;
- Inform their Supervisor if they are unable to attend their volunteer task at any time, undertake set duties, unable to volunteer at a scheduled time or if they need to leave the position permanently. Unsatisfactory work and/or inappropriate behaviour may result in termination of the volunteer’s registration;
- Notify their Program Supervisor of any health issues that may arise that may affect their ability to undertake their volunteer role in a safe manner;
- Understand and acknowledge the requirements of the Council Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and guidelines;
- Participate in the appropriate induction and ongoing training provided;
- Operate under the direction and supervision of Council staff to achieve the objectives required;
- Maintain confidentiality regarding any sensitive Council information they are exposed to in the course of their volunteer duties;

7.3 **Council’s rights to reject or terminate a volunteer placement**

Council has a right to both refuse a volunteer placement or to end a placement if:

- There is a perceived risk to the health, safety or welfare of paid employees, volunteers or members of the public, or disrespectful behaviour shown towards Council’s property and equipment;
- The volunteer does not support and comply with Council’s policies and procedures, including Code of Conduct for Volunteers;
• Appropriate volunteer duties are not available or are no longer available at Council;
• The volunteer does not adhere to their role statement;
• The volunteer does not cooperate with any appropriate request for personal information, which may include name, address, emergency contacts, signing for personal information, or provision of current criminal history screening; and
• The volunteer does not agree to undertake any training or professional development that is deemed a requirement for a particular volunteer role.

7.4 Industrial Boundaries and Action

In accordance with Council’s Working with Vulnerable People Policy, all volunteers over the age of eighteen (18) years in a Prescribed Position (involved in the provision of aged care services, or services to children or other vulnerable people), or that are reasonably expected to come into contact with vulnerable people in their volunteer role (such as the frail, aged, people with a disability and children under the age of 18) are required provide current approved criminal history screening (Department of Communities and Social Inclusion – DCSI check) documentation prior to commencing in the role.

Volunteers in a Prescribed Position must undergo an approved criminal history screening not less than once every three-year period.

Individuals interested in volunteering will be assessed for suitability on a case-by-case basis via a risk assessment (comprising a review of any previous criminal history together with an assessment of individual compatibility with the volunteer duties to be undertaken).

When a person commences a volunteer role with the Light Regional Council a 3-month probation period is applicable, during which time either the volunteer or Council can cease the volunteering relationship.

Council shall ensure that volunteer positions do not constitute a threat to job security or replace the activities of paid staff.

8. Associated Documents

8.1 Volunteer Application Form: Required to be completed by all prospective volunteers wishing to commence a volunteer role with the Council.

8.2 Volunteer Letter of Engagement: An acceptance letter listing all the formalities and conditions surrounding the volunteer role.

8.3 Volunteer Position Description: An example of a position description that can be tailored to different volunteer roles within the Council.

8.4 Volunteer Induction Checklist: An internal list to be completed by Council staff at the commencement of a volunteer’s role, covering all aspects of volunteering for Council.

8.5 Volunteer Media Consent Form: A form to be completed by all volunteers who agree for Council to use their image or comments within various media used to recruit and retain volunteers, and to acknowledge volunteer efforts.

9. Policy Review and Re-evaluation

The policy will be reviewed in line with Council’s Policy Framework or earlier in the event of major changes to legislation or related policies/procedures or if deemed necessary by the Chief Executive Officer or delegate.

10. Access to the Policy

This policy is available on Council’s website: www.light.sa.gov.au

Hard copies can be provided at Council’s office at 93 Main Street, Kapunda SA 5373.
11. **Further Information**

For further information about the Volunteering Policy please contact:

General Manager, Strategy and Development
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12. **History of Policy Amendment**

