

Introduction

The Council is committed to enhancing the range and quality of services offered to the community, by accepting the use of and celebrating voluntary assistance to support the delivery of Council programs and services.

This provides a benefit to both the community and the volunteers, by offering a legitimate and meaningful way in which volunteers can participate in the activities of the Council within the community.

Purpose

This policy demonstrates that the Shire of Capel will utilise the services of volunteers to complement and enhance the services provided to the community while fulfilling safety, management and duty of care obligations.

Volunteering gives people the opportunity to become involved with other members of the community, enhancing their sense of belonging, civic responsibility and developing new friends.

Policy statement

Volunteering is a voluntary act of an individual or group freely giving time and labour for community services. The opportunity to volunteer:

- Increases community connectivity and social inclusion for wider social groups.
- Can provide self-interest, self-validation, pride, power, gaining a sense of purpose, feeling good about volunteering and enjoying the role.
- Provides a platform for altruistic motivations – caring, helping, offering, giving something back, social consciousness.

Examples of volunteering include participating as a community representative on a Council Committee, undertaking cleanup work after an event or festival, manning a checkpoint for an event, planting trees, clearing and maintaining land reserves and the like.

The following policy statements direct Shire Officers in the management of community volunteers:

1. Volunteering opportunities should provide benefits to both the volunteer and the Council through enhanced services offered to the community.
2. Volunteers are recognised as valued team members and their contribution should be recognised in the service area.
3. Where volunteers are utilised for any Council activity or service, the processes and requirements of the Volunteer Procedure Manual must be complied with.

These include:

- Completion of a Volunteer Agreement application form, inclusive of a Statement of Volunteers Rights and Responsibilities.
 - Provision of a clear set of responsibilities or tasks to the volunteer.
 - Completion of the Volunteer Checklist, where the volunteer must be provided with Orientation and Induction, inclusive of any occupational health and safety obligations.
 - In specific circumstances volunteers will be required to provide a Police Clearance and/or undertake a Criminal Records Check or Working with Children Check if dealing with financial or sensitive matters, or there is contact with children or other vulnerable people.
 - Maintenance of a Volunteer Register.
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4. A Shire Officer or designated authorised Council representative must supervise all volunteers and associated activities.
 5. All volunteers must complete the 'Volunteer Agreement' application form and return it to the Officer responsible before commencing volunteer work. This application may be completed en-bloc for group registrations.
 6. All volunteers must acknowledge that they will abide by the Shire of Capel's Code of Conduct whilst volunteering.
 7. Volunteers are not expected to incur out-of-pocket expenses whilst assisting the Council. In the instance where out-of-pocket expenses have been incurred through the completion of their volunteering duty, there is an internal process to follow in reviewing and reimbursing out-of-pocket expenses.
 8. Volunteers need to accept the direction of the responsible Shire Officer or designated authorised Council representative, and adhere to the relevant Council policies, procedures and Code of Conduct.
 9. The Shire of Capel will maintain insurance cover for volunteers on projects approved by and under the auspice of the Council, subject to the above requirements having been met.
 10. Volunteering does not replace paid positions. Volunteering is not a prerequisite to paid work.
 11. The Shire will recognise the entire volunteer community by hosting annual volunteer recognition events such as 'Outstanding Volunteers' Breakfast' in December, 'National Volunteer Week' in May and through the annual awards ceremony on Australia Day.
 12. For the recognition of individual volunteers, the Shire will commit \$5,000.00 per year through the draft annual budget to manage a process whereby members of the community can nominate a volunteer to receive a one-off honorarium payment up to the value of \$500 in recognition of their services to the Shire. Chosen recipients of the honorarium payment will be announced at the 'Outstanding Volunteers' Breakfast' in December.
 13. The Council and Shire Officers reserves the right to decline, defer or cease utilising volunteer services where circumstances make it difficult to provide adequate supervision, training or support, ceasing of certain services, or the working relationship with the volunteer has deteriorated and is unresolvable.

Application

This Policy applies to all individual and volunteer groups within the Shire of Capel.

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