RYHALL PARISH COUNCIL

VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Approved and Adopted at the Meeting of the Parish Council on September 16th 2019
Last Reviewed 20 May 2024

Volunteer Policy
This policy sets out the broad principles for volunteering for Ryhall Parish Council. This policy will be adopted by full council. The policy will be reviewed every 2 years to ensure that it remains up-to-date and relevant to the volunteering needs of our organisation.

Our Commitment
Ryhall Parish Council acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many different ways, and that volunteering can benefit users of our services, paid staff, other volunteers and the wider community. We value the contributions made by volunteers and we are committed to involving volunteers in appropriate roles, and in ways which are supportive of the volunteers and beneficial to our organisation.
We see volunteers as people who, unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy, skills and experience to benefit our organisation and the wider community. We also acknowledge the unique contribution that volunteers make and the importance of a mutually beneficial relationship where the volunteer also gets something from the volunteering role as well.

Our Values
Ryhall Parish Council is committed to volunteering and we will:
 not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff. Their role will complement the role of paid staff, and be beneficial to the organisation
 ensure volunteers have a defined place in the structure of the organisation;
 recognise that the volunteer role is a 'gift relationship' – no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their volunteering role. Likewise our organisation is not compelled to provide regular work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer;
 acknowledge mutual support and reliability – our expectations of volunteers and volunteers' expectations of our organisation;
 acknowledge and value the individual skills, knowledge and experience that each volunteer brings to our organisation.

Coordination of Volunteering
All volunteers will have a nominated councillor or the clerk to offer guidance and advice to help the volunteer carry out their role effectively. The Clerk is responsible for the overall management and welfare of volunteer

Recruitment
Our organisation is committed to equal opportunities and seeks to recruit volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds that reflects the makeup of the local community . Volunteering opportunities will be widely promoted in ways that makes them accessible to all members of the community. Each potential volunteer may be asked to complete a short application form and be invited for an informal interview meeting, Depending on the role a volunteer may be asked for two references that identify their suitability and done in a way that recognises equal opportunity and confidentiality, working within the council's data protection rule

Volunteers will have a clear and concise volunteer role and responsibilities description, including safety advice, which will be reviewed as appropriate. The role description will outline the volunteering tasks and will be discussed with the volunteer and the Clerk, and will vary according to the task(s) being volunteered for, the role and responsibilities will be explained to all volunteers at the beginning of each session.
Volunteers will be briefed about the different tasks to be undertaken and will be given the necessary information and equipment to enable them to carry them out efficiently. A risk assessment will be

carried out for each new volunteering activity i.e.litter picks This will provide the basis for decisions about what information a volunteer needs and the appropriate induction/recruitment process.

Support and Supervision
The Clerk will be the main point of contact for volunteers to seek guidance and support and to address any concerns.
Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with our organisation's wider staff by being invited to parish council meetings/ sub committee meetings.
Formal recognition of the contribution of our volunteers will be made in various formats including newsletters, annual reports, articles in newspapers and a 'thank you letter'.

Expenses
Ryhall Parish Council recognises that the reimbursement of expenses in travelling to training .Our volunteers are able to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure. What can be reclaimed from our organisation and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses. We have a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses which is the same for volunteers and paid staff and approved by the Inland Revenue. It is the responsibility of the clerk or designated Councillor above to make volunteers aware of the procedure for the reimbursement of expenses.

Insurance
Our liability insurance policies include the activities of volunteers and liability towards them, as long as adequate risk assessment is in place and the names of the volunteers are recorded. We do not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage. It is the responsibility of the volunteers to inform their motor insurance company that they are using their car in the act of volunteering.

Problem-solving
Ryhall Parish Council aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively, and consistently. The Clerk is responsible for handling volunteer complaints or conduct and any complaints should be referred to her/him. In the event of a complaint all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible and attempts will be made to try to solve any problems informally at the earliest possible stag**e.** If this is not possible then our formal complaints policy and procedures will be referred to**.** We will support the volunteer during the complaints process. If volunteers wish to make a complaint about their treatment by us they should speak to their designated supervisor. If it is about their supervisor they should speak to the Chairman.

Rights and Responsibilities
Ryhall Parish Council recognises the rights of volunteers to:
 Know what is and is not expected of them
 Have adequate support in their volunteering role
 Know what to do if anything goes wrong
 Be free from discrimination
 Have safe conditions for carrying out their volunteering activities
 Be insured
 Receive relevant out of pocket expenses
 Receive an induction programme and training opportunities where possible.

We expect volunteers to:
 Be reliable and honest and Respect confidentiality
 Comply with our policies and procedures
 Make the most of training and support opportunities
 Carry out their volunteering tasks as agreed and in a way that reflects our values and aims
 Respect the work of our organisation and not bring it into disrepute.