

Version No:	2
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Date of Equality Impact Assessment	
Date approved by HWWB Board	
Author	Jo Karasinski
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Staff Training delivered	
<p>The policy on the HWWB website is the only policy that is updated. Please note that it is the individual HWWB staff, board member or volunteer to ensure that they are reading the most current version of this policy. This can be done by checking the version number shown above against the version number of the policy filed here: www.healthwatchwestberks.org.uk</p> <p>If required this policy can be supplied in different formats Tel: 01635 886 210 or email: contact@healthwatchwestberks.org.uk</p> <p><u>All personal data collected in relation to this policy will be held in accordance with Data Protection Legislation.</u></p>	

Responsibilities

1 HWWB Board

Have overall responsibility for volunteers within HWWB

2 HWWB Chief Officer (CO)

HWWB Board have delegated to the HWWB CO the responsibility for developing policies and procedures for volunteering at HWWB and to ensure these are implemented effectively.

3 HWWB Staff and volunteers

All HWWB staff and volunteers are required to read and implement the volunteer policies and procedures.

Volunteer - Exit Strategy

1. Introduction

There are two main routes by which volunteers will cease to volunteer at Healthwatch West Berkshire (HWWB)

1.1 When the relationship between HWWB and the volunteer cannot continue

Volunteer exit is not always voluntary; there are times when volunteers need to be dismissed. HWWB has put this policy in place to identify the reasons why a volunteer's involvement with HWWB might be terminated in order to protect the rights of HWWB and the volunteers themselves.

The reasons for dismissal and the procedures that we will follow are clearly laid out in Section 3 below. Volunteers are made aware of this policy as soon as they agree to volunteer for HWWB as part of their induction. Termination may happen at any stage during the volunteer relationship however HWWB will apply broad good practice principles regardless of when this happens.

1.2 On the voluntary resignation of a volunteer

The majority of volunteer exits however will occur when a volunteer chooses to cease volunteering for HWWB. Volunteer England identify that one way to achieve this and to keep volunteers for longer is to find out why they leave. As part of our commitment to improving and developing our volunteer programme. HWWB uses exit questionnaires and interviews to monitor and discuss a volunteer's reasons for withdrawing. These help us identify whether there is anything in the recruitment or induction process that could be improved, whether there are problems with volunteers engaging with the organisation or the support they receive. As people leaving the organisation are likely to be more candid than they would otherwise be this can be a rich source of information.

2. Purpose

- To provide guidance on the issues associated with releasing volunteers when the relationship between them and HWWB cannot continue.

- to describe the procedure HWWB has in place when a volunteer resigns to gain the volunteer's perspective on his/her time and work at HWWB and how this feedback will be utilised to look at ways (where applicable) of improving HWWB's policies and practices.

3. Guidance when the relationship can no longer continue

Enabling a volunteer to see that it is not appropriate for them to do, or continue to do, voluntary work within a particular setting is a procedure which needs to be carried out tactfully and with sensitivity.

HWWB has set out the procedure below to describe how it will deal with this in line with best practice.

3.1 How is the decision made?

There can be several reasons for volunteers being asked to leave, or not being accepted to volunteer at HWWB.

These may include:

- not meeting the criteria as set out in role descriptions
- inappropriate behaviour (e.g. violence, disruptive behaviour etc.)
- continued absence or unreliability
- refusing to attend mandatory training required for their volunteer role
- refusing to give suitable references, disclose past convictions etc
- certain convictions (e.g. they are barred from working with a particular client group.)
- knowingly giving false information
- expressing views and attitudes, which are racist, homophobic, sexist etc.
- refusing to accept and adopt the 'ethos' of the organisation.
- self-selection (or deselecting), for whatever reason(s), by the volunteer themselves.

HWWB will endeavour to involve the individual volunteer in the decision making process as much as possible, whatever the reason for not continuing to work with them.

3.2 Measures HWWB will use to address the situation?

- **Talking** - sometimes simply going through role description with an individual in detail can be enough to help them identify that they may not be suitable for that role. It is important to be clear and honest with an individual why it is thought that they are unsuitable for a particular role. The volunteer may feel rejected so it's important to help them understand why the role isn't for them.
- **Training** - this may enable someone to develop in order to become more skilled and knowledgeable, and thus more suitable, to do the job. Equally it can help people understand that they are not suited to a role - or equally let HWWB understand that an individual is not suited to a role.
- **Offering alternatives** - attempts should, where appropriate, be made to offer volunteers alternative opportunities. If no alternative roles can be found then efforts will be made to signpost the volunteer to the Volunteer Centre which has information on a much wider range of opportunities.

3.3 Other issues which need to be considered

- **Complaints procedures** - volunteers should have access to the organisation's 'Complaints Procedure' if they wish to make a complaint about this exit process
- **Sensitive handling** - the person responsible for asking a volunteer to leave should do so in a straightforward but sensitive manner. The reasons may well be 'clear cut' but a volunteer still needs to understand them and also have something positive to take with them. Often this can be onward referral to the Volunteer Centre for additional support.
- **Sharing information** - there may be instances where HWWB obtains information about a volunteer which they feel needs to be shared with others. For example, there may have been a complaint made against a volunteer by a client. When this has been investigated, substantiated and the volunteer asked to leave, it may be appropriate to share this information with certain other organisations, despite the issues raised regarding confidentiality and prejudice. The situation will entail careful consideration however, if it is felt there is a possibility of placing an already vulnerable person at potentially even greater risk, then the reasons for disclosing this information will be justified.
- **When a volunteer is asked to leave after misconduct** - some of the key things to remember will be the same as above, but **HWWB will ensure that the problem solving procedure outlined in the HWWB Problem Solving Policy has been followed quickly and effectively.**
- **Protection of HWWB reputation** - It is important that the volunteer feels they have had a fair hearing and knows they can have representation throughout the **process**. An unhappy ex-volunteer can damage HWWB reputation by damaging remarks to friends, colleagues and even in some cases, through the local press. Being clear and fair can help avoid this kind of negative publicity.

4. Procedure when a Volunteer Resigns

Where possible the volunteer should put their resignation in writing including information about the intended last day of volunteering

4.1 Initial action by the volunteer lead:

- ensure that relevant people within HWWB are informed.
- agree with the volunteer final arrangements to pay any outstanding expenses
- email an explanatory letter (See Appendix 1 - exit letter template) and volunteer exit questionnaire to the volunteer immediately (See Appendix 2 - Volunteer Exit Form)
- when exit questionnaire is returned arrange exit interview with volunteer lead or other appropriate officer

4.2 Exit Interview

- discuss replies on exit questionnaire and discuss any issues identified, add any further information to the form
- ask volunteer to read and sign the completed form to confirm that the record truly reflects the discussion at the exit interview.

4.3 After the interview

- a copy of the questionnaire and/or exit interview form is sent to the CO for information and overview of whether a further meeting with the volunteer is required owing to the nature of issues raised
- where applicable, the CO may make recommendations to the HWWB Board for possible changes in volunteer policies/procedures/role descriptions as a result.
- volunteer lead changes status of the volunteer to 'Withdrawn' on volunteer database and a note is made of the reason for the resignation.
- The completed exit questionnaire is scanned is scanned onto the volunteers electronic record.
- thank-you letter from the CO is sent to the volunteer.

Appendix 1

Exit letter from CO - template

Dear

Thank you for letting us know that you are resigning from volunteering at Healthwatch West Berkshire.

I would like to express the thanks of the HWWB Board, myself and the staff team for the time you have given to volunteering with us over the past (enter number of years/months here). In that time you have been involved in (enter overview of volunteer tasks undertaken here e.g. health visitor surveys, GP surgery visits)

We hope that you will keep in touch with us and we will ensure you continue to receive our newsletters and communications to keep you informed of what Healthwatch West Berkshire is undertaking.

If your circumstances change in the future and you wish to recommence volunteering please get in touch with any of the team. (leave out if not appropriate e.g. moving away)

Yours sincerely

Andrew Sharp

Chief Officer, Healthwatch West Berkshire

Appendix 2

Volunteer Exit Interview Form

Thank you for volunteering with Healthwatch West Berkshire. The aim of this form is to see what you thought about your overall volunteering here. We would also appreciate any comments or suggestions (good or bad) that you have about your experience and also about what changes (if any) you think would be a good idea.

Volunteer Name	
Volunteer Role	
How long and how often have you volunteered with HWWB?	
What role(s) did you volunteer in?	

Where numbers are given please rate each aspects on the scale where **1 = excellent/very well** and **5 = very poor/not at all**

	😊		😐		😞
	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rate your induction and introduction?					

	😊		😐		😞
	1	2	3	4	5
How useful was the Volunteer Handbook?					

	😊		😐		😞
	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rate your induction and introduction?					

	😊		😐		😞
	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rate the volunteer training you received?					

	😊		☹️		☹️
	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rate your overall volunteering experience?					

	😊		☹️		☹️
	1	2	3	4	5
How well did you volunteering meet your expectations?					

Reasons for Resignation: Please tick one or more from the list below.

- Working conditions
- Job commitments
- Relocation
- Position Description
- Illness
- Disliked the work
- Personality clash
- Inconvenient hours
- Work not interesting
- Workload

Please provide any further information you may wish us to know about your reason(s) for ending your volunteer role at HWWB

If you would like to provide further feedback on any of the ratings questions above or the questions below please do so on a separate piece of paper and attach it to this form

What has been your favourite thing about volunteering here/what did you enjoy the most?

Are there any ways in which you think we should change the role you have been doing or the ways that we work with volunteers?

Were you satisfied with how you were supported in your volunteer role at HWWB? If you answered no or have any suggestions as to how our volunteer support arrangements can be improved please tell us below

Would you recommend volunteering at Healthwatch West Berkshire?

Finally, are there any other comments that you would like to make about your experiences with us as a HWWB Volunteer?

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. The results from this will help us evaluate how we work with volunteers and what changes we can make to improve the overall experience.

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Screening determines whether the policy has any relevance for equality, i.e. is there any impact on one or more of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief Including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

1 Name of policy/procedure being assessed:	Volunteers Exit Strategy
2. Is this a new or existing policy/procedure?	New
3. What is the function of the policy/procedure?	To set out HWWB approach to effectively manage and learn from volunteers who withdraw or are asked to leave their volunteering role at HWWB. Improving the volunteer programme and policies are required.
4. What is it trying to achieve and why?	To ensure a consistent, best practice approach to volunteer management
5. Who is intended to benefit and how?	Volunteers via a consistent and best practice approach HWWB staff with responsibility for volunteer management via clear guidance and procedures HWWB reputation as an organisation
6. Is there any potential for differential impact (negative or positive) on any of the protected characteristics	No
7. Is there any possibility of discriminating unlawfully, directly or indirectly, against people from any protected characteristic?	No
8. Could there be an effect on relations between certain groups?	No
9. Does the policy explicitly involve or focus on a particular equalities group i.e. because they have particular needs?	Only so far as accessibility issues must always be considered.
If the answers are no from 6-9 then there is no need to proceed to a full equality impact assessment and this form should be signed off as appropriate.	
If Yes then a full impact assessment must be completed.	
Signed - Signature: Jo Karasinski Name: JO KARASINSKI Position: Development Officer Date: 22/12/15	