



## Poole Forum Volunteer Policy

Poole Forum is a self advocacy organisation and registered charity for people with learning disabilities. Poole Forum staff and volunteers help to support its members to have a voice, to express their opinions and to make their own decisions. Volunteers are asked to give their experience, knowledge and skills, free of charge, to help the organisation achieve its service objectives and to bring some benefit to the local community.

This document explains how volunteers will be appointed, managed and supervised by Poole Forum.

Poole Forum will ensure that:-

- Volunteers will not be asked to do anything which would result in the loss of an existing employee's post; any tasks which within the past two years were done by paid staff or the work of paid staff during an industrial dispute.

### Recruitment of Volunteers

- All prospective volunteers will be required to complete a volunteering application form and to provide two referees.
- Volunteers will be invited to meet with an agreed member of staff to discuss the proposed role, requirements and mutual suitability.
- Following the meeting, Poole Forum will make a final decision and will advise the individual of that decision within one week.
- Prior to volunteering the individual must successfully pass a DBS check.
- Prior to commencing volunteering the volunteer will receive an induction and introduction to the staff and members.
- All volunteering placements will be for a initial 4 week trial period to ensure mutual suitability.

### Equal Opportunities

- Volunteering will be open to all individuals, including service users, irrespective of race, gender, religion or belief, disability, sexuality, pregnancy or maternity, age, marital or civil partnership status provided they can fulfil the requirements of the relevant role description.
- Volunteers will be required to uphold Poole Forums Equal Opportunities policy.

## **Problem Solving Procedures**

We would hope that most problems can be resolved informally. Volunteers are not subject to Poole Forum's disciplinary procedures but the following steps will apply.

- Should a volunteer experience a problem that cannot be resolved informally they should use the complaints procedure.
- The Manager or Trustees will investigate the problem within 14 days, and their decision shall be final.
- Where necessary the role and placement of a volunteer may be ceased by the Manager at one weeks' notice.
- Where behaviour equivalent to gross misconduct has occurred a volunteer will be asked to leave immediately.
- In all cases the volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision taken.

## **Taking time-out or leaving a volunteer role**

- Where a volunteer wishes to take holiday or is unable to volunteer because of illness, Poole Forum would appreciate as much notice as possible.
- Where an individual wishes to stop volunteering Poole Forum would appreciate a months' notice, where circumstances allow.

## **Health & Safety, Insurance & Safeguarding**

Volunteers should adhere to Poole Forums Health & Safety Procedures and its Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy at all times and will be covered by the organisation's public liability insurance.

## **Claiming expenses**

Volunteers will be reimbursed, pre-agreed out of pocket expenses using the expense claim procedures.

## **Support and Supervision**

The volunteer will have access to regular two-way reviews regarding the volunteering role and their progress.

## **Review**

It will be the responsibility of the Manager to regularly review the Volunteer Policy.