

General Purposes Committee

10 June 2026

Part 1 - Public

Matters Taken Under Delegated Powers



Cabinet Member	Not Applicable
Responsible Officer	Adrian Stanfield, Director Central Services & Deputy Chief Executive
Report Author	Mathew Brooks, Head of HR & Development

Adoption of a New Volunteers Policy and changes to the Recruitment and Selection Policy

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks Members' consideration and approval of a new Volunteers Policy and revisions to the Recruitment and Selection Policy, addressing an internal audit recommendation and aligning recruitment practice with the Workforce Development Strategy.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 The aim of adopting the new policy and updating the Recruitment and Selection Policy is to ensure that the Council continues to provide a supportive and inclusive working environment for all.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Recommend adoption of the Volunteers Policy.
- 3.2 Recommend approval of the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy.

4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 An internal audit review of the Council's Volunteer Management processes identified that there is currently no overarching corporate policy governing the management of volunteers across the Council.
- 4.2 Adopting a formal policy is beneficial to ensure that there is a clear and consistent approach across the Council. If the current members of staff who are responsible for the oversight of the volunteers leave, or the role of the volunteers be extended

into other areas of the Council's operations, then any new members of staff may not manage these responsibilities as effectively. An overarching policy ensures that essential aspects are addressed, and standards and management of the volunteers remains high.

- 4.3 The audit concluded that a corporate policy would provide a consistent framework, ensuring that essential standards and processes are maintained across all services.
- 4.4 In response, officers across the Council worked collaboratively to develop a draft Volunteers Policy (**Annex 1**).
- 4.5 In addition, a comprehensive review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy (**Annex 2**) has been undertaken to ensure full alignment with the Council's Workforce Development Strategy 2025–2028 and to reflect evolving organisational priorities.
- 4.6 This includes responding to changing labour market conditions, supporting workforce planning and development, and ensuring the Council is well positioned to manage structural change associated with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
- 4.7 The revisions provide greater flexibility within a clear governance framework to support recruitment, retention and organisational resilience, while maintaining the Council's commitment to fair, transparent and merit-based selection processes.

5 Proposal

5.1 Adoption of a Volunteers Policy

- 5.2 The proposed Volunteers Policy establishes a consistent corporate framework for the management of volunteers across the Council.
- 5.3 The policy recognises the important contribution that volunteers make in supporting service delivery and enhancing community outcomes.
- 5.4 The policy sets out a clear structure for:
- Identifying and approving volunteering opportunities
 - Recruitment and selection of volunteers
 - Induction, training and supervision arrangements
 - Health and safety and risk management
 - Safeguarding and DBS requirements
 - Confidentiality and data protection

- Ongoing support and management arrangements

5.5 It also clarifies the status of volunteers, ensuring there is no contractual relationship, while providing appropriate protection, support and oversight.

5.6 The policy introduces consistent expectations across all directorates and ensures that volunteer activity is appropriately governed, monitored and supported.

5.7 **Changes to the Recruitment and Selection Policy**

5.8 In line with the Council's Workforce Development Strategy 2025–2028, which places a strong emphasis on recruitment, retention and employee development, the updated Recruitment and Selection Policy maintains the Council's core principle of fair, open and merit-based recruitment, while introducing greater flexibility in defined circumstances.

5.9 The key change allows, in exceptional and objectively justified cases, for roles to be advertised on an internal-only basis, subject to Management Team approval.

5.10 Examples where internal-only recruitment may be appropriate include:

- Redeployment and workforce stability considerations
- Roles requiring significant organisational knowledge
- Supporting internal development, succession planning and retention
- Addressing hard-to-fill posts or skills shortages
- Secondments, acting-up opportunities and temporary roles

5.11 The policy makes clear that:

- Internal-only recruitment must always be objectively justified
- Decisions are subject to appropriate governance and approval
- Selection processes remain fair, transparent and merit-based

5.12 The approach also supports workforce resilience and development, particularly in the context of LGR, by enabling targeted internal opportunities while continuing to create external vacancies through backfilling.

5.13 In addition, the revised policy strengthens the Council's approach to selection by clarifying that, except in exceptional and agreed circumstances, all final stage interviews must be conducted in person. This ensures robust assessment of candidates and supports a consistent, high-quality recruitment process.

6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

6.1 There are no direct financial implications. Improved volunteer coordination and workforce planning support value for money.

7 Risk Assessment

7.1 Without a Volunteers Policy, there is a risk of inconsistent practice and reputational damage.

7.2 The revised recruitment approach is controlled and low risk, supported by governance and equalities compliance.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 Both policies align with employment law and the Equality Act 2010, ensuring fair, transparent and non-discriminatory practices.

9 Consultation and Communications

9.1 Both policies have been developed in consultation with services, Management Team and shared with UNISON and the Council's Joint Employee Consultative Committee for their feedback.

10 Implementation

10.1 Policies will be implemented following approval, supported by guidance and communication to managers and staff.

11 Cross Cutting Issues

11.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

11.1.1 A moderate source of emissions is likely to be maintained at current levels or increased.

11.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

11.2 Equalities and Diversity

11.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

11.3 Other If Relevant

- Human Resources
- Business Continuity / Resilience
- Health and Safety

- Healthy Lifestyles

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 – Volunteers Policy Annex 2 – Recruitment and Selection Policy