

REPORT NO 834/97

**ANGUS COUNCIL****SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE .....19 AUGUST 1997****GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF  
VOLUNTEERS****REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK****ABSTRACT**

This report informs committee of the production of departmental Guidelines and Procedures for the Involvement of Volunteers. It discusses the context of volunteering and outlines the scope of volunteering within the department. The report outlines the contents of the Guidelines and Procedures and seeks Committees approval for their implementation. A Copy of the Guidelines and Procedures is available in the Councillors Lounge.

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:-

- i) notes the content of this report;
  - ii) notes the content of the "Guidelines and Procedures for the Involvement of Volunteers";
- and
- iii) approves the "Guidelines and Procedures for the Involvement of Volunteers" for use in the Social Work Department.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

There has been an increasing recognition of volunteering in recent years. This has included the launch by the previous government of the 'Make a Difference' initiative. This is an outline volunteering strategy for the UK which contains 81 recommendations for government, local authorities, business and the voluntary sector.

The strategy has four main objectives:-

- to increase the number of volunteers especially among young people, older people and those traditionally underrepresented in volunteering
- to increase opportunities for volunteering
- to strengthen the national and local infrastructure for volunteering
- to develop the promotion of volunteering especially in the media

This strategy for volunteering has been endorsed by the current government which has included a perspective in proposals for Millennium Volunteers and Welfare to Work.

The Voluntary Issues Co-ordinating Unit of the Scottish Office issued a circular (15/95) entitled 'Guidance on Volunteering'. This circular recognises the role of the new local authorities in relation to volunteering. It states that local authorities have an important role with regard to volunteering through purchasing services from voluntary organisations, the funding of volunteer involving groups and through its ability to promote opportunities for volunteering as part of community life. The circular also encourages good practice in involving volunteers through training and support and by extending good practice in organisations in which the local authority has an interest.

### **3. VOLUNTEERING IN THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT**

At its establishment Angus Council Social Work Department had an already developed structure for volunteering which has subsequently been further developed. Currently there is one part-time Voluntary Services Officer and one full-time Clerical Assistant in the Voluntary Services Section. In the latest full-year for which there are statistics (Jan 1996 - Dec 1996) there were 177 volunteers on the departments register. Of this number 129 were active during the year. 142 requests for a voluntary worker within the department were matched during this period. A number of volunteers were directed to voluntary organisations in Angus where their requirements for voluntary work could be met.

This is a substantial contribution to the work of the Social Work Department. Recent research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation ('The Economic Equation of Volunteering' 1997) suggests that for every pound invested in volunteering there is a return of between £2 and £8. However, the equation is not purely a financial one. The

involvement of volunteers represents a commitment and contribution by the people of Angus to the delivery of social work in their community. This commitment leads to involvement and participation, a sense of ownership and a greater understanding of social work. This reflects the Councils key themes of maximising the use of available resources to meet local needs, and of improving the quality of life in Angus and contributes to the development of quality services.

#### **4. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS**

Good practice is the key to the effective involvement of volunteers, This leads to the best results for volunteers, service users and the department as a whole. Good practice has already been established through the development and implementation of departmental standards. The Guidelines and Procedures are a step towards the implementation of these standards.

The Guidelines and Procedures cover the following:-

- Policy and Procedures - they bring together relevant policy and procedures on involving volunteers from sources within and outwith the department
- Guidelines for Staff - guidelines in the recruitment, matching, training and support of volunteers; guidance on financial, insurance and benefits issues
- Forms and Letters - a complete set of specimen forms and letters used for the administration of volunteers
- Guidelines for Volunteers - copies of basic induction packs issued to volunteers and volunteer drivers.

It is proposed that the Guidelines and Procedures be issued to all teams and units to ensure that all staff have access to guidance on best practice. The Guidelines will be updated and amended as appropriate to new legislation, guidance, research and established best practice.

The Guidance and Procedures will also be used as a template for good practice in volunteer involving organisations supported or funded by the department.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications arising out of this report are contained within the Department's revenue budget.

## 6. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Director of Law and Administration and Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

W B Robertson  
Director of Social Work

Note: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing this report.