

Children, Environment and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Monday 13 th March 2017
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Supporting volunteering across the city
Report of:	Julia Corkey, Director of Policy, Performance & Communications
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Environment, Sports and Community
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for All – Civic leadership
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Volunteering is vital to voluntary and community groups, helps to strengthen neighbourhoods and the city's community, and improves the wellbeing of the individuals who participate. The crucial contribution that volunteers make has been recognised and encouraged through City for All, which this year commits the council to 'encourage 2,400 people to volunteer over the next 12 months, bringing their enthusiasm and talent to make Westminster a true City for All'.
- 1.2. Volunteering is difficult to measure and there is not consistent information that allows easy comparison across areas. However, a national survey commissioned by the Department for Culture Media and Sport in 2010/11 to 2012/13 found that 24% of residents in Westminster said that they had done some form of 'voluntary work over the last 12 months', which was in line with the then national average at the time.¹

¹ Source: Taking Part survey, Department for Culture, Media and Sports

- 1.3. Better quality and more up to date information is available from our 2016 City Survey which found that a third of residents (37%) say they are interested in doing something to help improve their community or neighbourhood. This interest is across all age groups, peaking at 45% among those aged 45-54, and only falling back for those 75 and over (15%). There is a wide range of different things that residents who are interested in doing something for their community or neighbourhood would like to do. The top ideas are: 13% would help organise a local event, 13% would be interested in joining a tenants/residents' group, 12% would donate money to a local group/activity, 13% would help keep the local area tidy, 11% would help out in a library, 11% would take part in a sponsored event for a local group or activity, and 11% would get more involved in local decision making.
- 1.4. Our approach to supporting volunteering has been developed in response to this and we commission four programmes corporately that aim to make it as easy possible for people to volunteer, whatever their interest. All volunteering opportunities across the city are available on-line through our dedicated Team Westminster website – <https://do-it.westminster.gov.uk/>. The website is supported by personalised support for volunteers which is provided by One Westminster.
- 1.5. This report provides an overview of the four services that we commission and the social and economic contribution made by volunteers to the city and its community.
- 1.6. The report also outlines the developing framework for the council's new social value strategy to further develop volunteering and the ways people can contribute to, and take pride in, the place they live, work or visit.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1. The committee is invited to:
 - a) Note the performance of the services commissioned to support volunteering
 - b) Consider what more we could do to support staff to volunteer in Westminster
 - c) Consider the role of volunteering in delivering economic and social benefits for the city
 - d) Consider and give views on the opportunities to use the new social value strategy to support more volunteering across the city

3. Services commissioned by the council to support volunteering

- 3.1. There are currently four commissioned services focused on enhancing and increasing volunteering opportunities.

Team Westminster Flagship Volunteering (provided by Groundwork)	
Contract period: 1st August 2015 for three years with the option to extend for up to 2 years	Overall target number of volunteers: Year 1: 430 Year 2: 420 Year 3: 430
Annual contract value: £109,948 per year	
<p>Overview Team Westminster Flagship Volunteering service creates volunteering opportunities across the following three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Westminster Ambassadors who volunteer to support high profile events such as the Westminster Mile, London Marathon and film premiers; • Team Westminster Active who volunteer to support sports and activities, such as developing skills in coaching or refereeing); and • Team Westminster Social Action who volunteer to support one-off activities to help local good causes, such as transforming a local park or organising a street party. 	
<p>Performance</p> <p>Over the past year the service has supported 332 people to volunteer. Although this is short of the target for Year 1, there were unpredicted transitional delays which affected the mobilisation of the contract. Action has been taken and performance is closer to the levels we would now expect. Key highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of events supported by ambassadors has increased from 80% in Quarter 3 to 94% by year end. • Westminster Active volunteers recruited (placed) rose to 74% from 40%. • For Social Action, nine out of the target number of 10 events have now been organised. 	

Team Westminster Volunteer Outreach and Development (provided by One Westminster)	
Contract period: 1st November 2015 for three years with the option to extend for up to 2 years	Overall target number of volunteers: Year 1: 1500 Year 2: 2000 Year 3: 2500
Annual contract value:	

Year 1: 79,296.00 Year 2: 80,485.44 Year 3: 81,692.73	
Overview <p>Team Westminster Volunteer Outreach provides targeted outreach to increase volunteering amongst those that are hard to reach (including homeless, unemployed, over 65, 16-25 in education, those recovering from substance abuse).</p>	
Performance <p>Over the past year, One Westminster has exceeded its target, helping 1,644 people to volunteer. There has been very strong performance in a number of areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The target to create opportunities for supporting unemployed people has been exceeded by 50% • The target to create opportunities supporting Heritage (children and young people) has been exceeded by 45% <p>However, there remain a number of areas for improvement, particularly in reaching some of the harder to reach groups. We are supporting the provider to address this and One Westminster has since established key partnerships with organisations such as Turning Point to make sure that they are reaching vulnerable older people and people who are recovering from substance misuse.</p>	

Time Credits (provided by Spice Innovations)	
Contract period: 1st April 2015 for three years with the option to extend for up to 2 years	Annual contract value: £65,975
	Target number of time credits earned for the year: Year 1: 5,000 hours Year 2: 15,000 hours Year 3: 30,000 hours
Overview <p>Westminster Time Credits is a 'community currency' completely based on time. For every hour someone gives in voluntary service to the community, they earn a Time Credit, which can then be spent on an hour's worth of activity such as at a swimming pool, taking a course, going to the cinema or visiting an attraction.</p>	
Performance <p>Over the past year, Spice has created 4931 hours of volunteering.</p> <p>Spice has exceeded a number of targets around engaging individuals and businesses.</p>	

- Spice exceeded its target for individuals engaging with time credits by 74%
- Spice exceeded its target for local corporate spend partners by 63%

- 3.2. **Question:** the committee is invited to note the performance of the services commissioned to support volunteering.
- 3.3. In addition to the above services, the council also pays an annual subscription of £8,000 to Time and Talents, a social enterprise that supports the placement of skilled employee volunteers within the local community, where their knowledge and experience are used by those in need. The council supports this through its policy that entitles staff up to 16 hours per year paid leave to volunteer in Westminster.
- 3.4. An average of 120 staff per year take-up volunteering opportunities organised by Time and Talents in Westminster. A key reason that this number is not higher is that a significant number of staff volunteer outside of Westminster, often closer to where they live. Nonetheless, we believe that this service could still offer better value for money and we are taking a number of actions to increase the uptake of staff volunteering across the city. We have launched an internal campaign to promote volunteering and its benefits, held volunteering showcases and drop-in sessions for staff to find out more about opportunities, and publicised volunteering opportunities via the staff e-newsletter, WestWords. In the year ahead, we plan to build on this by launching a staff volunteering pack that will be included in the induction for new starters and encouraging more staff teams to include volunteering as part of their staff development programmes, supported by the new People Strategy.
- 3.5. **Question:** the committee is invited to consider what more we could do to support staff to volunteer in Westminster.

4. **Benefits of volunteering**

- 4.1. There is a strong body of evidence that supports the social and economic value of volunteering.
- 4.2. There are two main ways of measuring the economic value of volunteers: simple calculation of economic value and the, more sophisticated, Volunteer Investment and Value Audit (known as VIVA).
- 4.3. The simple economic value is calculated by multiplying the number of volunteers by the average number of hours volunteered by the average hourly wage. The current average hourly wage in Westminster is £20.20². Assuming that over the past year residents have contributed over 6,000 hours of volunteering we could estimate that approximately £120,000 of in kind support has been given to local good causes across the city.

² Earnings by place of residence, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157259/report.aspx> [accessed 28 February 2017]

- 4.4. VIVA is more accurate and involves looking at the type of work done by volunteers and estimating the going wage rate for that work, as well as the costs of involving volunteers, such as management time. This produces a ratio showing how much value is generated from each pound invested in volunteering. We do not currently collect enough data to complete a full analysis of all volunteering across Westminster but research by the Institute for Volunteering Research using this approach has found that volunteering typically returns between £2 and £8 for each pound invested.
- 4.5. In addition to the economic benefits, volunteering can play an important role in changing lives for the better. We have a growing body of evidence that suggests that volunteers not only create direct social benefits but that volunteering also provides an important route to greater independence and wellbeing.
- A number of former rough sleepers are now volunteering at the Connection at St Martins in the rough sleepers day centre earning Time Credits by welcoming new clients to the centre, showing them round and taking their details, and looking after the computer drop in. Speaking of their experience, one former rough sleeper and volunteer said: "I love volunteering and helping people less fortunate. Too many people are sleeping rough, it's upsetting. Something has got to be done about it. The day centre really helped me when I needed it so I wanted to give something back. Using Time Credits to come to Lord's [cricket ground] is fantastic and the atmosphere is cracking. I would definitely come back here and look forward to doing other things with Time Credits and bringing friends along. Time Credits help me get out for the day and meet people from other groups and societies".
 - Maria was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis at the age of 22, a disease in which the immune system attacks the nerves. In Maria's case it severely affects her walking ability and to add to this she was diagnosed five years later with diabetes type 2. Maria was a key founding member of the new Team Westminster Volunteer drop-in, where her expertise, thoughtfulness and all round people skills continue to help registered volunteers into successful volunteering placements. Maria has also been a key volunteer on the outreach volunteer programme, focusing on hard to reach groups as well as a key member of the Kick-it (Stop smoking services-outreach) in Westminster, where she has helped provide close support to help more than 10 people successfully quit smoking. Maria won the Inspired Award for Westminster Community Awards in 2016 and was also shortlisted for the Team London Volunteer Centre Award in October 2016.
- 4.6. **Question:** the committee is invited to consider the role of volunteering in delivering economic and social benefits for the city

5. Social value

- 5.1. The City Survey in 2015 reported that only 49% of residents believe the council is doing enough to make sure businesses act responsibly. This increased to 65% in 2016.
- 5.2. As part of the City for All programme for 2017/18, the council will launch a new approach to social value. This will include:
 - Recognising and rewarding the positive contribution businesses already make to the city through the launch of the new Westminster Lion Awards.
 - Encouraging organisations who are already involved to align their CSR agendas with the needs we have identified within the city and focus their efforts locally.
 - Supporting all businesses (especially SMEs) to get involved in corporate social responsibility through the creation of a responsible small business network
 - Supporting the city's voluntary and community sector to ensure they are involved in directing resources to relevant project and initiatives that deliver on our priority areas.
 - Direct businesses to organisations that support the council's strategic partners in delivering better outcomes around specific challenges such as Young Westminster Foundation, Sir Simon Milton Foundation and Marylebone Low Emission Neighbourhood.
- 5.3. In addition, the council will also lead by example with a target to ensure the majority of all contracts procured by the council include the delivery of social value at no extra cost.
- 5.4. **Question:** the committee is invited to consider and give views on the opportunities to use the new social value strategy to support more volunteering across the city

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the
Background Papers please contact Report Author x8024
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