

Volunteering in Argyll and Bute – update

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the CPP Management Committee with an overview of the development to date of a strategic approach to the support and development of a volunteering strategy and plan in Argyll and Bute. The report proposes to update the 2020 local volunteering framework and develop a new local plan learning from work during the pandemic and making adaptations to address challenges arising from the cost-of-living crisis.

2.0 Recommendations

The CPP Management Committee are asked to:

Note that a local Strategic Volunteering Framework was presented to CPP in March 2020¹ which arose out of the 2019 CLD inspection and the Scottish Government's Volunteering for All 2019 national framework².

To note the publication of Scotland's volunteering action plan³ and the request to CPPs to develop local strategies and plans supported by the TSI and the local authority.

To agree that the 2020 local framework be updated in the light of new circumstances and to produce a new local plan which will support the priorities of the new LOIP.

To note interim measures taken by the TSI and CPP members to support volunteering.

3.0 Background and context

Scotland's Volunteering Action Plan, published in 2022, has four specific end goals. These are:-

Increase volunteering participation by focusing on non-volunteers and lapsed volunteers, and especially those who'll gain most benefit.

Widen access to volunteering by understanding and reducing the barriers to participation and supporting community-based, 'place-making' activities.

Listen to volunteers by ensuring that the volunteer 'voice' is heard and that volunteers help make the decisions that affect them.

Provide great experiences whereby volunteers feel supported, valued and recognised for their contribution.

Volunteering by its very nature is particularly difficult to map partly because a great deal of volunteering is informal in nature and as such is difficult to capture, measure and evaluate. However, there are clear themes demonstrating that the pandemic resulted in a massive increase in informal volunteering⁴ but that these volunteers have been hard to keep hold of as they returned to work post-pandemic. There is also concern within the third sector about the potential for job substitution as public sector cuts begin to take effect across the UK.

The implications for volunteering of the cost-of-living crisis are important to acknowledge particularly in terms of encouraging new volunteers from a wider range of backgrounds and experiences.

4.0 Detail

4.1 Volunteering conference 9th December 2022, Volunteering survey and health check

A volunteer conference was held in December 2022 and was attended by over 55 Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs), local partners and stakeholders with presentations from Volunteer Scotland and a volunteering provider with expertise in supporting volunteers through trauma.

Key findings from the volunteer survey are below:-

- Many VIOs are struggling to recruit to volunteering roles

- Volunteers are fatigued

- There was support for a single volunteering system to take the administrative burden out of managing and onboarding volunteers

- There was some support for exploring a local/regional incentive scheme similar to the bluelight scheme for health and social care workers

4.2 A local volunteering strategy and plan

Scotland's National Volunteer Framework 2019-

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/volunteering-national-framework/>

Scotland's Volunteering Action Plan 2022 –

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-volunteering-action-plan/#:~:text=Scotland's%20volunteering%20action%20plan%20aims,and%20its%20impact%20on%20society.>