

Appendix 3. Interview and discussion guide

ENGAGING WITH VOLUNTEERS – RESEARCH for FCW

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The FCW Corporate Programme area 6 'Woodlands based Learning and Sector Skills', which has been approved by the FCW Management Board, includes outputs related to volunteering. These are organised under "Action 6: Consider, develop and refine our approach to volunteering opportunities on the AGWE, and of the CPD opportunities of staff volunteering for others"

Understanding that volunteering has many benefits for participants, FCW have recognised that their approach to volunteers and volunteering needs to be refined. This is an important issue now that the Coalition government has identified the 'Big Society' as an important area of policy development and engagement with volunteers is one way for public agencies to meet the Big Society challenge. FCW's plans over the next 18 months are to:

- Analyse our current opportunities for volunteering, where and how these operate and any barriers to offering further opportunities - 2010
- Examine and understand the legal and statutory obligations FCW may have towards volunteers of different types, and any legal or statutory obligations volunteers may have towards FCW - 2010
- Acting on the results of the above, review and revise the current 'volunteering' guidance document (and other ongoing work) including guidance on governance and protocol in working with volunteers - 2011
- Publish, disseminate and implement these new guidelines - 2011
- Provide support for operational staff in the use of the revised 'volunteering' documents - 2011 onwards

This piece of research aims to provide FCW with evidence and information to support this process. The specific objectives are to:

Provide FCW with an understanding of the current opportunities for volunteering, where and how these operate and any barriers to offering further opportunities.

This relies on talking to operational staff to find out what they are already doing with volunteers, and what they think the possibilities and barriers to using volunteers are.

Discussion Guide

Section 1. Characterising volunteering

Can you describe the activities that happen in this District which you consider to be ‘volunteering’?

Suggest free list and write up on flipchart – could ask participants to add ranking once list is complete to show which are most common forms of volunteering to triangulate with next question

Do you think there are there important benefits for FCW engaging with volunteers?

Section 2. The extent of volunteering

Can you provide a list of the main volunteering opportunities in this District that are currently being undertaken (or have been undertaken in the last 2 years)?

Cross check the list against the forms of volunteering already described in previous question

Ensure detail re kind of volunteering, location (on or off PFE) key stakeholders and how organised is collected

How much of this is conducted on the AGWE?

Are there any key organisations or stakeholders involved in organising and managing these opportunities with FCW – or on behalf of FCW?

Roughly how many volunteers are involved?

What?	Who involved in organising or running scheme/opps?	Where?	How many volunteers involved?
e.g. College/University work experience placements	Kim Burnham and Education team Bangor Uni. Glynllifon College.	Llanrwst office – across District AGWE	4-6 per annum

Section 3. Current practice engaging with volunteers

How do you come into contact with potential volunteers?

How do you select which volunteers to engage with?

Are there any specific risks engaging with volunteers that you know you need to consider?

What kind of support and training do you provide volunteers with?

What kind of support and training have **you** been provided with regarding your interaction with volunteers?

Where does this support and guidance come from?

What is particularly useful?

What kind of support and guidance is missing?

Are there times/examples when working with volunteers doesn't work out?

How do you deal with volunteers who don't meet the required standard?

Section 4. Barriers and challenges

What do you think are the main barriers against working with volunteers?

Suggest free listing these and then adding into a matrix and conduct a quick scoring (or ranking) exercise

Section 5. Opportunities and future working

Where do you think the main opportunities lie for engaging with volunteers?

How do you see opportunities for volunteering developing in the future?

What advice would you give those developing the FCW volunteering policy?

Section 6. Endings

Can you suggest other people in the FC, or contacts from other organisations we could talk to about this research?

Organisation	Name/contact

Would anybody here be willing to be contacted again for a more detailed interview in connection with this study?

Name	Role

