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GROUP VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Scope:

This Policy covers volunteering events in Orbit and all members of staff that take part, as well as independent volunteering.

All members of staff involved in volunteering must read and agree to this policy. Staff involved in the volunteering must read and agree to this policy in conjunction with the [Volunteering Terms and Conditions](#).

1. INTRODUCTION

As a responsible business Orbit wants to encourage and support our people who either wish to become or who are already involved in volunteering, and to recognise the contribution that they make.

This policy is in line with Orbit's belief that:

- Everyone has something to offer their community
- We can improve the quality of our customers' lives
- We are helping to create thriving and empowered communities
- Volunteering helps individual and personal growth.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Orbit wants to encourage all our people to undertake volunteering, recognising the benefits for individuals to volunteer. For this reason our people are allowed to take up to 1 day paid volunteering leave that is in line with our mission. Orbit's people are also able to propose worthy projects that they support.

3. TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING

Orbit acknowledges the important role of Volunteering for individuals and communities. To reflect this Orbit recognises that volunteering can be:

- **Team Challenges:**
One off practical tasks completed by a group of employees typically involves, but not limited to, decorating, painting, or gardening.
- **Individual volunteering:**
Employees are able to give regular time, perhaps for one or two hours per week or month. Activities could include mentoring, sports administration or helping at a youth club, or befriending an older person.
- **Skills based volunteering:**

A wide range of skills is required by voluntary and community organisations to help maintain and develop more effective services. Skills based volunteering could include financial or legal services, business planning, marketing or IT support.

- Board/Trustee Membership:
Improve the governance of a voluntary organisation by becoming a trustee or member of the board.

4. **BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING**

Benefits to Orbit include:

- Improved staff morale and enhanced work performance
- Different and exciting training and development opportunities
- Improved services via new insights gained into another aspect of the voluntary sector

Benefits to Orbit's people include:

- Developing professional and personal skills
- Working in a completely new environment
- Meeting and working with new people from other organisations
- Contributing to an issue that they care about and support
- Leading projects
- Different and exciting training and development opportunities
- Gaining recognition from Orbit and enhancing career prospects.
- Team Building opportunities, build one team ethos and work cross functionally

Benefits to the organisation receiving the volunteering:

- Access to high quality volunteers with varied skills
- Better services for vulnerable and deprived groups
- New talent and energy.

5. **CRITERIA**

5.1 **Orbit Projects**

5.1.1 Our people are able to put forward worthy causes via the completion of a form on www.orbit.org.uk/volunteer and clicking 'Submit Your Idea' button.

5.1.2 The criteria for submissions are:

- <1 day of effort
- Costs less than 5K (this is not an actual budget, this will be up to the volunteering group to find required funding either through local budgets or community investment funds and donations of time and materials from local contractors and/or suppliers)
- Will benefit Orbit residents and/or the wider community

5.1.3 [Orbit Volunteering Terms and Conditions](#) contain further details of how to submit a project and how to volunteer.

5.2 **Community Investment Projects**

Our people along with our customers and suppliers are able to volunteer for Community Investment projects. All the volunteer opportunities are available on our website, www.orbit.org.uk/volunteer.

5.3 **Independent volunteering**

Orbit staff can use their 1 day paid volunteering leave to volunteer on an external project with their manager's authorisation. It must align with our mission or/and be part of their

personal development. If the external project requires more than 1 day staff can seek annual leave or unpaid leave with their manager's approval. Orbit will seek to support staff ambitions subject to the requirement of the business.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

As an organisation, we believe that equality matters. That staff, customers and partners should be treated as individuals and with fairness and respect. We believe that diversity of people their skills, experiences and abilities is a strength that helps us as an organisation achieve best the we can.

We will ensure that these principles are applied fairly and consistently to all our staff, customers and partners by ensuring that:

- We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion / faith, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or any other grounds set out in our [Group Equality and Diversity policy](#).
- Our services are relevant, responsive, accessible and sensitive to the needs of our existing and future staff, customers and partners.
- We comply with all the legal requirements in particular the Equality Act (2010) and Human Rights Act (1998) and to go beyond these legal requirements. With regard to the Human Rights Act we are particularly mindful of role Housing Associations have to play in respecting Article 6 Right to a fair trial; Article 8 Right to respect for private life, family life and the home Article 14 Prohibition of discrimination.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

We have conducted an EIA please click [here](#)

9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

We will only share information as outlined in our [Data Protection Policy](#).

10. MONITORING & ACCOUNTABILITY

- 10.1 The Executive Team will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented in full.
- 10.2 The Director Of Academy & Organisational Development will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and recommend policy changes to improve service delivery.

11. REVIEW

The Director Of Academy & Organisational Development will ensure we carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years from the date of this policy.