KING ISLAND COUNCIL

Policy

COUNCIL VOLUNTEER POLICY

Responsible Officer: GENERAL MANAGER

Date: 19 November 2024

Review Date: 19 November 2027

1. Purpose

The King Island Council aims to enhance community wellbeing by encouraging, appreciating, and celebrating volunteering. This policy provides clear guidance and structure for the Council's interactions with volunteers, ensuring a well-defined relationship that benefits both the volunteers and the community.

2. Background

The King Island Council recognises the vital role that volunteers play in enhancing community wellbeing and supporting the Council's mission. Volunteers contribute their time, skills, and energy to a wide range of activities and projects, helping to create a vibrant, resilient, and connected King Island community.

In developing this Volunteer Policy, the Council aims to provide a clear framework that outlines the rights and responsibilities of volunteers, as well as the Council's commitment to supporting and recognising their contributions. This policy is designed to ensure that all volunteer activities are conducted in a safe, respectful, and effective manner, benefiting both the volunteers and the community.

The policy aligns with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, which provide best practice guidelines for volunteer management. By adhering to these standards, the Council ensures that its volunteer programs are inclusive, well-organised, and supportive of volunteers' needs and aspirations.

The policy also addresses the unique challenges and opportunities associated with volunteering during emergency management incidents on King Island. It recognises the critical role that volunteers play in responding to emergencies and provides specific guidelines to ensure their safety and effectiveness in these situations.

Overall, this Volunteer Policy reflects the Council's commitment to fostering a positive and productive relationship with volunteers, enhancing community wellbeing, and building a stronger, more resilient King Island.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all volunteers involved in Council activities and projects including emergency management.

3.2 It helps the Council adhere to the National Standards for best practices in

volunteer management.

Definition of a Volunteer

1.1 A volunteer is someone who engages in activities voluntarily, without monetary compensation, benefiting both the community and the Council.

1.2 These activities complement but do not replace the services provided by paid staff.

1.3 The policy also includes individuals undertaking work experience and those participating in a Special Committee of the Council or a working group with the Council.

1.4 Emergency Management: A volunteer is also someone who assists voluntarily during an emergency management incident on King Island that has the potential to overwhelm existing emergency resources or run for a prolonged period requiring fatigue management rostering.

4. Policy

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

4.1 Volunteers have the right to:

4.1.1 **A Safe Working Environment**: Volunteers are entitled to a safe and healthy working environment. This includes protection from physical harm, access to necessary safety equipment, and adherence to health and safety regulations. The Council is responsible for ensuring that all volunteer activities are conducted in a manner that prioritises the safety and well-being of volunteers.

4.1.2 **Respect and Dignity**: Volunteers should be treated with respect and dignity by all Council staff, other volunteers, and members of the community. This means being valued for their contributions, having their opinions heard, and being free from any form of harassment, discrimination, or bullying.

1.5 **Clear Communication:** Volunteers have the right to receive clear, accurate, and timely information regarding their roles, responsibilities, and the Council's policies and procedures. This includes being informed about any changes that may affect their volunteer work and having access to a designated point of contact for any questions or concerns.

4.1.3 **Support and Supervision**: Volunteers are entitled to adequate support and supervision to perform their roles effectively. This includes having access to a supervisor or coordinator/manager who can provide guidance, answer questions, and help as needed.

4.1.4 **Training and Development**: Volunteers have the right to access training and

development opportunities that enhance their skills and knowledge. This includes initial orientation and ongoing training relevant to their roles, ensuring they are well-prepared and confident in their tasks.

4.1.5 **Recognition:** Volunteers should be recognised and appreciated for their contributions to the Council and the community. This can include formal recognition programs, certificates of appreciation, public acknowledgment, and other forms of gratitude that highlight the value of their work.

4.1.6 **Feedback and Grievance Procedures:** Volunteers have the right to provide feedback on their experiences and to access grievance procedures if they have concerns or issues. This includes having a clear process for raising concerns, receiving a fair and timely response, and being protected from any form of retaliation.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities in an Emergency Management incident:

4.2 During an emergency, volunteers have the right to:

4.2.1 **Safety and Protection:** Volunteers are entitled to a safe working environment, even in emergency situations. This includes access to necessary safety equipment, training on emergency procedures, and measures to protect their physical and mental well-being.

4.2.2 **Clear Communication:** Volunteers should receive timely and accurate information about the emergency, their roles, and any changes to procedures. This includes regular updates and a clear chain of command.

4.2.3 **Support and Supervision:** Volunteers should have access to adequate support and supervision, including a designated emergency coordinator who can provide guidance and assistance.

4.2.4 **Respect and Dignity:** Volunteers must be treated with respect and dignity, recognising the stress and challenges they may face during emergencies.

4.2.5 **Training and Preparation:** Volunteers have the right to receive training specific to emergency response, including safety protocols, first aid, and other relevant skills.

4.2.6 **Recognition:** Volunteers' contributions during emergencies should be acknowledged and appreciated, both during and after the incident.

4.3 During an emergency, volunteers are expected to:

4.3.1 **Adhere to Safety Protocols:** Volunteers must follow all safety protocols and procedures to ensure their own safety and the safety of others.

4.3.2 **Commitment and Reliability:** Volunteers should commit to their roles and responsibilities, ensuring they are reliable and available as needed during the emergency.

4.3.3 **Professional Conduct:** Volunteers are expected to maintain professional

conduct, even under stressful conditions, and to work collaboratively with command personnel and other volunteers and emergency personnel.

4.3.4 **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Volunteers should be prepared to adapt to changing situations and roles as the emergency evolves.

4.3.5 **Continuous Learning:** Volunteers are encouraged to participate in ongoing training and debriefing sessions to improve their skills and preparedness for future emergencies on King Island.

4.3.6 **Reporting and Accountability:** Volunteers should report their activities and any issues or concerns to their designated supervisor or assigned emergency coordinator.

General Council Volunteer Responsibilities

4.4 Volunteers are expected to:

4.4.1 **Adhere to Council Policies and Procedures:** Volunteers must comply with all relevant Council policies and procedures, including those related to health and safety, confidentiality, working with children and young people and conduct. This ensures that all activities are carried out in a safe, ethical, and consistent manner.

4.4.2 **Commitment:** Volunteers should commit to their agreed-upon roles and responsibilities. This includes being punctual, reliable, and notifying their supervisor if they are unable to fulfil their duties or need to make changes to their schedule.

4.4.3 **Professional Conduct:** Volunteers are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional manner. This includes respecting the rights and privacy of others, maintaining confidentiality, and avoiding any behaviour that could harm the reputation of the Council or the community.

4.4.4 **Teamwork:** Volunteers should work collaboratively with Council staff and other volunteers to achieve common goals. This involves effective communication, mutual respect, and a willingness to support and assist others.

4.4.5 **Continuous Improvement:** Volunteers are encouraged to seek feedback and participate in training and development opportunities to improve their performance. This helps ensure that they are well-prepared and confident in their roles.

4.4.6 **Representation:** Volunteers should represent the Council positively and uphold its values and mission in all their activities. This includes being an ambassador for the Council and promoting its programs and initiatives.

4.4.7 **Reporting and Accountability:** Volunteers are responsible for accurately reporting their activities and any issues or concerns to their designated

supervisor. This helps maintain transparency and allows for timely resolution of any problems.

Council's Responsibilities to Volunteers

4.5 Insurance Coverage for Volunteers

4.5.1 The King Island Council is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of its volunteers. To this end, the Council provides appropriate insurance coverage for all volunteers engaged in Council activities and projects. This coverage includes:

4.5.1.1 **Public Liability Insurance:** Protects volunteers against claims of personal injury or property damage arising from their volunteer activities.

4.5.1.2 **Personal Accident Insurance:** Provides coverage for volunteers in the event of accidental injury, disability, or death while performing their volunteer duties.

4.5.1.3 **Professional Indemnity Insurance:** Covers volunteers against claims of negligence or errors and omissions during their volunteer work.

4.5.1.4 The Council ensures that all volunteers are informed about the insurance coverage available to them and the procedures for making a claim. Volunteers are encouraged to report any incidents or accidents immediately to their supervisor to ensure timely and appropriate action.

4.5.1.5 To ensure the Council's insurance policy remains valid, the following actions must be taken:

4.5.1.5.1 The Council have some role in the selection of the volunteer to carry out the work and have the power to dismiss the volunteer and direct that person to leave the 'work site', in similar circumstances where it could direct any other employee to do so.

4.5.1.5.2 The Council must specify the tasks volunteers are required to perform (the approved duties) and where to be performed.

4.5.1.5.3 The Council must have the authority to control/direct the manner in which the volunteer performs the work.

4.5.1.5.4 It can be said that the person was serving the Council, not merely the interests of the Council or only serving the 'persons' own interest.

4.5.1.5.5 The person must be seen to be working for and on behalf of the Council and not just for themselves or any other entity, group or organisation.

4.6 Recruitment and Selection

4.6.1 The King Island Council is committed to a fair and inclusive process for recruiting and selecting volunteers. This process ensures that all individuals have equal opportunities to contribute to the community and that the

Council benefits from a diverse range of skills and perspectives.

4.7 Volunteer Remuneration

4.7.1 Council volunteers typically do not receive direct remuneration for their services. Volunteers, including those participating in advisory committees or community projects, usually offer their time and expertise without payment. However, Council will consider reimbursing volunteers for specific-out-of-pocket expenses with receipts incurred during their activities when related to the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (*TAS) for equipment needed to ensure their safety while engaged in council-related activities.

4.8 RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- King Island Council Volunteer Procedure.

AMENDMENT

Council retains the sole discretion to vary, terminate or replace this Policy from time to time. Council will consult before amendments are made and will notify and train those the amendments apply to.

4. Legislation, Terminology and References

Applicable legislation:

All laws in connection with the Volunteer Policy including but not limited to:

- *Local Government Act 1993* (TAS)
- *Emergency Management Act 2006* (TAS)
- *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023* (TAS)
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (TAS)

Definitions	
Term	**Meaning**
Council	King Island Council

Councillor	An elected member of Council known as a Councillor or Alderman or otherwise meeting the definition of a 'councillor' as defined under section 3 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (TAS)
Employee	A person who carries out work for Council as an employee of Council.
General Manager	The general manager of Council as appointed under section 61 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (TAS).
Manager/Supervisor	A person at the Workplace who is appointed to a position that has management/supervisory responsibilities for others or their appropriately nominated or authorised delegate.
Other Persons at the Workplace	A person, other than a Councillor, who carries out work in any capacity for Council, including work as: (a) a contractor or subcontractor. (b) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor. (c) an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work at Council. (d) an apprentice or trainee. (e) a student gaining work experience; or (f) a volunteer.
Policy	Volunteer Policy
Workplace	A place where work is carried out for Council.

POLICY VERSION AND REVISION INFORMATION

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1.0	19.11.2024	242/24	Deputy General Manager