



## **Volunteering Policy**

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## Volunteering Policy

It is the policy of Hickton Group to provide its employees the opportunity to become 'employee volunteers' through 'Hickton Group Employee Volunteering Scheme'.

By offering the opportunity to staff to undertake employee volunteering, Hickton Group will help employees develop their skills in a way where their experiences could be a real asset to both their individual development and the company.

The company has a long history of supporting the communities in which we operate. For Hickton Group, being involved with the local community is something that is a natural element of our day to day working life. Whether it is working in local charitable organisations or institutions or engaging with our customers and supply chain, where opportunities arise, employees are encouraged to get involved in supporting their community, whether it is on an individual basis or as part of a larger team.

## Introduction

- Hickton Group recognises the value of volunteering as an activity which allows its employees to the communities in which we operate and encourage stronger community relationships and contributes positively to the profile of the company and it's employees wellbeing.
- The company acknowledges that many staff already volunteer and that this is a valuable equivalent to their paid employment.
- The company recognises that by volunteering in the community, staff will be establishing valuable links with organisations in local communities and projecting a mutually positive relationship.

## Benefits to staff

- Volunteering is viewed as a positive activity, which contributes to an individual's development programme and should be recorded on personal development plans where appropriate.
- Volunteering can help improve staff motivation, develop skills such as communication, problem solving, change management, innovation and management and leadership skills.
- Volunteering can help staff to develop skills that may not necessarily be possible in their role in the workplace e.g. project management.
- For some staff, the skills developed through volunteering may be relevant and adaptable to their work knowledge and skill framework.
- Volunteering can also be considered as a means of team development by undertaking group tasks.

## Benefits to the company

- Community engagement can introduce the company to new business contacts or provide opportunities to strengthen relationships.
- Offering volunteering opportunities to Hickton Group's employees gives them the chance to work with leaders in the communities.
- Improves public image with customers, potential recruits and local communities as they will see Hickton Group as socially responsible and constructive.
- Increase employees' commitment and motivation. Employee volunteering can be used to strengthen team spirit and company loyalty.
- Enhance the skills of Hickton Group's employees. Employees may get the opportunity to develop and practice a wider range of skills than they do in their paid work – especially teamwork, leadership, decision-making and communication which in turn will improve the quality of their paid work.
- Employee volunteering can give access to local networks and alliances, perceptions and problems, which can inform management decisions and help innovation.

## Examples of volunteering activities

- Education – primary schools through literacy and numeracy programmes, secondary schools and colleges through offering work experience placement opportunities.
- Environmental – through supporting local community organisations with litter picks and maintaining important greenspaces and parks. This will be done in collaboration with Friends of Elescar Park.
- Mental Health – looking at supporting mental health community organisations and how develop relationships that would be mutually beneficial.
- Providing pro-bono technical advice from each business to suit the expertise (Hickton Consultants Ltd and BRCS (Building Control) Ltd which form Hickton Group.
- Community volunteering opportunities with charity organisations.

Donations of work wear, food parcels and toiletries

Supporting to help prepare and serve food at local shelters

Supporting local animal shelters

If you are unsure as to what constitutes as a volunteering activity please contact your Community Ambassador (Kathy Clarke (Head of Marketing)).

## Eligibility

The Hickton Group Employee Volunteering Scheme is open to all permanent employees. Temporary Hickton Group employees will be able to request to become a volunteer however time allowed will be given at line manager's discretion.

## Time allowed

Hickton Group will grant up to 50 hours in total per annum pro-bono technical advice to be undertaken during normal working hours. Office administration time to be absorbed during the working week and any voluntary activity to be undertaken in employees own time.

Time away within a team should be staggered and specifically agreed well in advance by your line manager.

The total annual hours will relate to the current year and cannot be carried over from previous years or into the following year.

## Application process

Voluntary work must be for a recognised voluntary or community group or agency, including charitable organisations. Staff may be asked to provide evidence of their involvement.

Time away from work MUST be agreed with line managers with reasonable notice.

The voluntary role should not be in conflict with work e.g. acting as a treasurer for a charity for which you also manage as a contract.

Any volunteering activity should not bring Hickton Group into disrepute.

All volunteering hours and any in-kind support should be collated and reported to your Community Ambassador (name).

All employee volunteers will be expected to complete an evaluation form for each activity.

## Supplementary information

### Disclosure Barring Service ("DBS") checks

There may be certain volunteering activities where it will be necessary for employees to complete a DBS check in accordance with DBS protocol. Anyone working with children and vulnerable adults in either public, private or voluntary sector now must comply with government guidelines relating to DBS checks.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The company will be monitoring, recording and evaluating all community related initiatives where possible. Volunteers will be asked on completion of their volunteering activity to complete an evaluation form (held by your local Community Ambassador (Kathy Clarke)).

## Time recording

All volunteering activities carried out in work time must be recorded in line with the Hickton Group Social Responsibility Internal Guidance document, which is held by your local Community Ambassador (Kathy Clarke).

**Compliance with this policy is mandatory.**

Signed: 

Tony Mobbs

Managing Director

Date: Friday, 12 July 2019