



Volunteer Manager's Network Meeting – October 2014

Peer Review Model

Following the development of the Volunteer Charter for Trafford, Thrive has been researching the potential for a peer review model based on what happens elsewhere and how this can be implemented across organisations.

As discussed in the last meeting at a national level there is the revised 'Investing in Volunteers' Standard comprises nine indicators which are designed to cover all the aspects of volunteer management. **The nine indicators** are available at <http://iiv.investinginvolunteers.org.uk/about/the-nine-indicators> and align with the Volunteer Charter that has been developed by Thrive Trafford.

- **Indicator 1** – There is an expressed commitment to the involvement of volunteers, and recognition throughout the organisation that volunteering is a two-way process which benefits volunteers and the organisation.
- **Indicator 2** – The organisation commits appropriate resources to working with all volunteers, such as money, management, staff time and materials.
- **Indicator 3** – The organisation is open to involving volunteers who reflect the diversity of the local community and actively seeks to do this in accordance with its stated aims.
- **Indicator 4** – The organisation develops appropriate roles for volunteers in line with its aims and objectives, which are of value to the volunteers.
- **Indicator 5** – The organisation is committed to ensuring that, as far as possible, volunteers are protected from physical, financial and emotional harm arising from volunteering.
- **Indicator 6** – The organisation is committed to using fair, efficient and consistent recruitment procedures for all potential volunteers.
- **Indicator 7** – Clear procedures are put into action for introducing new volunteers to their role, the organisation, its work, policies, practices and relevant personnel.
- **Indicator 8** – The organisation takes account of the varying support and supervision needs of volunteers.
- **Indicator 9** – The whole organisation is aware of the need to give volunteers recognition.

The Investing in Volunteers process – <http://iiv.investinginvolunteers.org.uk/about/the-investing-in-volunteers-process>

Investing in Volunteers has been designed to be a rigorous process to ensure that volunteers receive the best possible management support and every organisation receives maximum benefit from volunteers' contribution. The standard is based on the four areas of volunteer management:

- **Planning for volunteer involvement**
- **Recruiting volunteers**
- **Selecting and matching volunteers**
- **Supporting and retaining volunteers**

These four areas have been divided into nine indicators and 46 practices, which have been devised by extensive consultation and pilot work with volunteer-involving organisations.

History of the Investing in Volunteers Standard

In 1995 the Wandsworth Volunteer Bureau in South London was concerned that they had no way of knowing whether volunteers they sent to other organisations received a good standard of management. With quality standards becoming more common it was felt to be appropriate for the development of a Standard, Investing in Volunteers, which would relate specifically to the management of volunteers.

To take the idea forward the three neighbouring London boroughs of Croydon, Sutton and Merton joined with Wandsworth to form the Wandle Valley Partnership, and by 1998 funding was raised to run a three year pilot to develop the Standard. The idea for the Standard was based on the four areas of volunteer management: Planning for volunteer involvement; recruiting volunteers; selecting and matching volunteers; and supporting and retaining volunteers.

The pilot was a success with 60 organisations being awarded the Standard, and an independent report recommended that the Standard be rolled out across the UK. In 2003 guardianship of the Investing in Volunteers Standard passed to the UK Volunteering Forum, and funding was raised from GUS Charitable Trust, the Home Office and the Department of Health to launch the Standard in the UK. The four organisations which are managing this process are:

- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
- Volunteer Now (managing Northern Ireland and Rep. of Ireland)
- Volunteer Development Scotland
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action.

The Investing in Volunteers (IiV) process has been broken down into six steps, detailed below.

1. Getting started

About an introduction to the standard and the interpretation of the indicators. At this stage organisations develop a timetable or action plan for working through the Investing in Volunteers programme.

2. Self-Assessment

There is a Self-Assessment Checklist to benchmark where the organisation currently is in relation to the standard. Once completed it is reviewed alongside three pieces of written material evidence and checked to see if the organisation has interpreted the standards appropriately and identified relevant / current evidence. An assessment is undertaken through an interview during a visit to the organisation. The organisation is given feedback about any gaps and where support or training might be needed.

3. Development

The feedback received helps the organisation to establish a development plan involving appropriate people in the organisation. It is the organisation's responsibility to check that all their policies and procedures meet good practice standards. The organisation works on any identified gaps within the plan.

4. Assessment Visit(s)

Once the plan has been worked through the organisation arranges an assessment visit to check on the activities undertaken. This stage includes submitting a list of key stakeholders who may be interviewed using templates provided. The Assessor's purpose at the assessment visit is: to gather sufficient information so a judgement can be made as to whether the practices in the

organisation meet the liV standard. The assessment includes reviewing evidence and interviewing volunteers to see if:

- The organisation has met the standard
- The organisation has met the standard subject to certain conditions being fulfilled in an agreed timeframe (usually 3 months)
- The organisation has not met the standard.

5. Local and national quality assurance

After the assessment visit, a report is submitted to the quality assurance process for verification. A Lead Assessor in each country will consider the report and ensure that all quality assurance requirements are met. The report then goes to the national Quality Assurance Panel which considers reports from all countries. If the standards are not met the organisation confirms any gaps, what needs to be done and when the organisation can apply for re- assessment.

6. Achievement of the Award

The organisation is contacted regarding the outcome of the Quality Assurance Panel and provided with information on use of the logos, how to publicise the award and the organisation will be given a certificate and plaque to display for three years.

Peer Review Options for Trafford

Option 1 – Online and Evidence Based Review

Organisations interested in receiving the Volunteering Charter Mark need to register on the Thrive website their details, and complete an online form which evidences standards on the Charter Mark. Once the organisation has registered and has provided evidence for the Charter Mark Standards, a volunteer peer reviewer will look at the evidence on the completed form. The reviewer will then visit the organisation who they believe has met the standard from the online form and ask to see three examples of evidence as identified from the online form. Once the evidence has been provided and checked the organisation will then be assessed to see whether it can display the Volunteering Charter. If successful the organisation can be advertised on the Thrive website as having the Charter Mark, and any future volunteering opportunities can be advertised through the website.

Those that do not meet the standards can be given training and advice on what they can do to help improve their volunteering standards, ideally from an organisation that has already passed the Volunteering Charter Mark, and other partners, i.e. Manager's maybe referred to Trafford College for training.

Option 2 – One-to-One Review

Organisations that wish to obtain the Volunteering Charter Mark will have a peer review assessment completed on-site by a volunteer from another organisation on a one-to-one/ interview basis. This will include interviewing the volunteering manager/co-ordinator, where questions will be asked and evidence will need to be provided on the day of the interview for each quality standard.

Organisations wanting to be assessed for the Charter Mark would need to provide volunteers to be trained in peer review for other organisations and sign up on the Thrive website.

Discussion

1. Please discuss the implications from each option for a voluntary organisation
2. How long should an organisation have the Charter Mark for?
3. Which option should be taken forward?
4. Do any of the organisations here want to be involved in piloting this approach?