
Volunteers' Week 2018 Planning / Working Group Meeting

13 March 2018, Macc, Manchester City Centre

Facilitated by: Jack Puller, Active Communities Manager, Macc

Notes and actions

Rationale:

“[Volunteers' Week](#) (VW) is an annual event which takes place at the start of June. It celebrates the contribution made by millions of volunteers across the UK. It's run by NCVO in partnership with Volunteer Development Scotland, Volunteer Now (Northern Ireland) and Wales Council for Voluntary Action.”

Volunteer Centre Manchester (VCM; which is managed by Macc) marks Volunteers' Week annually with events and activities in the city: issuing certificates, delivering training, marketing campaigns, volunteering fairs etc.

Similar activities are planned for 2018. The VW Planning / Working Group will support the planning, development and delivery of the volunteers centre's VW programme (hopefully annually).

The volunteer centre is also keen to “bring in” some perspective, insight and representation from people who actively support volunteering, volunteer or give their time in Manchester; by inviting them to join it's Volunteers' Week 2018 Planning / Working Group.

Volunteer Centre Manchester provides information, support and training to Manchester residents who want to volunteer, and supports Manchester-based organisations who want to recruit volunteers, need help and advice to develop new roles, introduce/update policies and procedures or have a training need.

Macc is the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector support organisation for the city of Manchester.

Services and activities such as capacity building, the Voluntary Sector Assembly and Volunteer Centre Manchester are available through Macc's service website: Manchester Community Central, www.manchestercommunitycentral.org.

5 people attended the VW 2018 Planning / Working Group for March 2018 -- Actions are highlighted with an asterisk (*).

Welcome and Introductions

Jack invited those in attendance to introduce themselves.

In the event that more people join the next Planning / Working Group, everybody will be asked to share something about what they already do for VW, or comment on their past experiences of it.

Notes and Actions from the last meeting...

Everybody in attendance was invited to refer to the Notes and Actions from the last meeting.

Actions included:

****Jack to provide updates from the National VW Working Group at future Planning / Working Group meetings.***

For Volunteers' Week this year, Volunteer Centre Manchester has been invited to participate and contribute to the National Volunteers' Week Working Group; which is coordinated by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).

Jack took this opportunity to share an update from the most recent teleconference meeting:

- It is likely that the theme for Volunteers' Week 2018 will focus on inclusivity; with the strapline for the celebration being either "volunteering for everyone" or "volunteering for all"
- A new preliminary [Volunteers' Week](#) website has launched, with a full website and release of a resource pack to follow shortly
- #volunteersweek will be upheld as the main means of tagging content on social media for Volunteers' Week 2018; other social media platforms are also being explored for activity during this year's VW

****Jack to circulate the flyer for the volunteering fair.***

Jack shared a printed 'working version' of the flyer with the group; which can also be accessed at:

<https://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org/sites/manchestercommunitycentral.co.uk/files/RSHOW%20POSTER%20VW%2017%20%28City%20Centre%29.pdf>, and shared how this had been circulated to those that attended the previous meeting.

A point was raised about the flyer:

- "Is describing the event as a 'Volunteering Fair' an accurate reflection of what will be on offer on the day of the event; will it also include other participation opportunities that are not necessarily 'traditional volunteering'?"

Jack noted this so that it could be raised as part of the "**Ideas and development for VW 2018**" portion of the meeting.

Things that are already in place...

Jack shared that a request has been sent to the Civic and Ceremonial Office at Manchester City Council to enquire as to the possibility of securing the endorsement of Reward and Recognition Certificates from the volunteer centre by the incoming Lord Mayor of Manchester.

****Jack to provide an update on the progress of securing the endorsement of the Reward and Recognition certificates at the next Planning / Working Group meeting.***

Jack shared how the Greater Manchester network of volunteer centres plans to collaborate during VW (including Manchester), and that this will likely be on joint approaches to marketing and communications; such as [guest blogs](#).

****Jack to provide an update on the progress of any collaboration between volunteer centres during VW at the next Planning / Working Group meeting.***

Jack mentioned how he has heard from a number of people that are interested in participating in the VW Planning / Working Group meetings. Most are keen to contribute remotely or talk about what they are doing for VW, and Jack has offered to bring any items that are raised here to future meetings.

****Jack to circulate Notes and Actions to people that participate in the Planning / Working remotely, and to bring any items that are raised to future Planning / Working Group meetings.***

Ideas and development for VW 2018...

Jack referred back to the point that was raised about the flyer for the Volunteering Fair, and encouraged those in attendance to share ideas and development opportunities as part of an 'Ideas Generator' discussion:

Linking to / embedding the theme of inclusivity

Jack described how the Football World Cup gets underway shortly after VW 2018, and suggested that this could be the basis of an approach to VW and linking it to inclusivity; as having numerous countries and nations participating – “Could our activity for VW be something of an ‘opening ceremony’?...”.

It was suggested that this might be a good ‘hook’, and that other themes or components could be explored to maximize participation and link to the inclusivity theme of VW 2018. Other suggestions from the Planning / Working Meeting included:

- Autism-friendly approaches: The National Football Museum has recently adopted autism-friendly approaches across the site, **these are supported and promoted by people that volunteer at the museum**
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers: The volunteer centre often encounters the misconception that refugees and asylum seekers are prohibited from volunteering. **Involving refugee and asylum seekers volunteers brings in unique skills and experiences, improves engagement with refugee communities, increases and enhances awareness of other cultures.**
- “Voluntary activities, formal civic roles and small acts of neighbourliness can all contribute significantly to wellbeing and social connections in later life”. **The Greater Manchester Older People’s Network informs and influences Greater Manchester strategies that affect older people.**

*Items that are highlighted in **PURPLE** were discussed at the Planning / Working Meeting, and represent ideas that could be adopted into the volunteer centre’s VW programme.*

Volunteering Fair

In addition to the update that was shared by Jack, other suggestions from the Planning / Working Meeting about the volunteering fair included:

- Improving the spread of volunteer-involving organisations in attendance. The volunteering fair always attracts a good number of stallholders from different charities and good causes that want to promote their volunteering opportunities. It was suggested to invite representatives from other participation opportunities including timebanking, microvolunteering, influencing and campaigning organisations, local giving and good neighbours groups.
- Workshops, Taster Activities and Musical Performances; potentially provided by stallholders in attendance or other partner and provider organisations.

- Showcasing and capturing stories about volunteering; using resources such as the [ivolunteer message card](#) and filming talking head / vox pop clips with people that volunteer or give their time in Manchester.
- Award and Recognition / Certificate Giving ceremony during the volunteering fair.

Reward and Recognition Certificates

In addition to the update that was shared by Jack, other suggestions from the Planning / Working Meeting about the issuing of Reward and Recognition certificates included:

- Open nominations for certificates shortly after the close of nominations for the [Spirit of Manchester Awards 2018](#).
- Produce a guidance document / toolkit that details how a volunteer-involving organisation in receipt of the certificates can distribute them to their volunteers; members of Macc staff could be invited to present certificates at events and activities during VW.
- Establish a Volunteering Ambassadors / Champions programme for VW that could deliver talks about their experiences or present Reward and Recognition Certificates; the volunteer centre matching these to volunteer-involving organisations that are observing VW.

An event or activity on an evening during VW 2018:

The idea of an event or activity to take place on an evening during VW was raised and discussed. Suggestions for this included:

- How it should take place during the evening of **Friday 1 June**
- Hosting a special **VW [Manchester Volunteer Meet Up](#)**; and at a Manchester City Centre – based venue such as the National Football Museum
- A **Quiz Night** as part of the special VW Manchester Volunteer Meet Up; inviting Volunteering Ambassadors / Champions to attend as team captains

****Jack to investigate these suggestions further, and assign those that are most feasible to the volunteer centre team to incorporate them into the volunteering fair.***

AOB and Networking

No other points we're raised at this time.

Jack said that time for AOB and Networking will be afforded at the start and end of future Planning / Action Group meetings.

The next VW Planning / Action Group will be taking place on:

Friday 13 April 2018

Venue: Meeting Room, Macc, Swan Buildings 20 Swan Street, Manchester, M4 5JW

Start: 10:00

Finish: 12:00

Jack closes the meeting.

Details of future Volunteers' Week Planning / Working Group can be found via the Manchester Community Central website: www.manchestercommunitycentral.org, Facebook: /VCMOfficial and Twitter: @VolunteeringMcr.

For further information, you can also call 0161 830 4770, or email info@volunteercentremanchester.co.uk with the Subject: Volunteers' Week Planning / Working Group.
