**Police Support Volunteers – Useful Information**

**Police Support Volunteers**
Police Support Volunteers  are citizen volunteers who give their time freely to perform tasks which complement the duties performed by police officers and staff.

**Why does South Wales Police need Police Support Volunteers?**
Police Support Volunteers are now part of the police culture and are highly valued not only for the direct support they provide but for the key links to the community. They are vetted and undertake many varied tasks depending upon the needs and constraints of each individual Police force.

Police Support Volunteers are an integral part of South Wales Police. The underlying principle of the partnership is that Volunteers complement and support employee roles in all areas of Police work.

**Can anyone become a Police Support Volunteer?**
All applicants will be subject to a vetting procedure. This will involve appropriate security clearance and the taking up of two references.

Applications will not be accepted if there is a significant possibility of any conflict of interest, for the applicant or for others, between their obligations as a Police Support Volunteer and their effectiveness in their professional life or another volunteering role.

Applicants who are foreign nationals must be able to prove that they have ‘current and valid permission to reside and work in the UK’, which includes voluntary service. Proof must be obtained before applicants can be accepted. There is also a 3 year UK residency rule applied to all applicants.

**Are there any age restrictions in becoming a Police Support Volunteer?**
The minimum age requirement for becoming a Police Support Volunteer is 16 and applicants under the age of 18 are required to submit the written consent of the parent or guardian. There will be no maximum age limit however current recruitment requirements state that applicants must be in good health to be able to perform the role of the Police Support Volunteer.

**What is the application process for Police Support Volunteers?**
We are very fortunate in South Wales in that there is a very high demand from our public to participate in our volunteer scheme. As such there are sometimes limited opportunities in certain geographical areas of the force. The standard application process can be quite lengthy and there is a need for a stringent scrutiny of all applicants.

**Stage 1** – Will either be an introduction through a Police Officer, Police Staff or other volunteers, or by registering an expression of interest to advertised volunteer roles on this website or our social media sites.

**Stage 2** – Will be the completion of a simple questionnaire which will determine your initial suitability for the scheme, and to determine if opportunities exist in your geographical area.

**Stage 3** – Will normally be an invite to a volunteer evening in your local Police Station, where you will receive an introduction to the scheme and it is at this point that you will be asked to provide proof of your identification. At the end of this evening those attendees that wish to continue the application process will be supplied with an application pack to complete and return within 7 days.

**Stage 4** – The returned application pack (if acceptable) is then passed through our recruitment and vetting departments.

**Stage 5** – Following a successful application you will be contacted by your local volunteer coordinator who will arrange a starting date in any assigned volunteer role. Certain volunteers are recruited for specific roles and these are normally advertised.

No contract of employment is created. However, a Volunteer will be required to sign a Volunteer Agreement setting out the basis of the partnership. Either partner may cancel the partnership at any time, signifying the termination of the Police Support Volunteer’s role. South Wales Police is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

**Do Police Support Volunteers have to sign the Official Secrets Act?**
Yes. All Police Support Volunteers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality and are required to sign forms agreeing to the principles of Data Protection and the Official Secrets Act. Once signed, a copy will be given to the Volunteer and the originals retained in the personal file. A Police Support Volunteer is a representative of South Wales Police. Conduct of the highest standard is expected at all times to ensure employee and public confidence is maintained and Volunteers must also ensure that activities undertaken in their private lives do not affect the integrity of South Wales Police or compromise the Police Support Volunteer role.

**Is there training provided?**
All Police Support Volunteers will receive induction training on joining the organisation. For Police Support Volunteers the induction will cover diversity issues and other general information. Co-ordination of the induction training will be the responsibility of the Volunteers Co-ordinator. Further training requirements will be identified and will be dependent on the role conducted.

**How many hours can a Police Support Volunteer sign up for?**
This will form part of the agreement between the Police Support Volunteer and the Volunteer Co-ordinator. It is anticipated that any volunteer role would require a minimum average attendance of 3 hrs per week.(12 hrs per month)

**Do Police Support Volunteers get paid for any expenses?**
A Police Support Volunteer is someone who, through personal choice, commits time and energy to perform a task at the direction and on behalf of the organisation. They agree to do this without expectation of compensation or financial reward, except for the payment of predetermined out of pocket expenses.

**Are Police Support Volunteers required to wear uniform ?**
Volunteers will be provided with corporate South Wales Police identification and if identified as necessary uniform & equipment commensurate with the role to be performed. They must wear their identification at all times and uniform/equipment if provided when performing service. They must wear/use any protective clothing/equipment necessary for their role.

**What is the role of the Police Support Volunteer?**
There are many and varied role opportunities for Police Support Volunteers within South Wales Police and some examples of roles already in place are:
•    Police Student Volunteer
•    Force Museum Volunteer
•    PACT Volunteer
•    Database Maintenance Volunteer
•    Crime Prevention Volunteer
•    Victim Contact Volunteer
•    Newsletter and Leaflet Production / Delivery Volunteer
•    Neighbourhood Volunteers
•    Pub Watch Volunteer

*“In accordance with Home Office guidance and the Association of Chief Police Officers’ National Vetting Policy, candidates are reminded that they must have been continually resident in the UK for the three year period immediately before an application is made. This is to satisfy the requirement to vet all applicants in an equitable manner and the UK Police service does not currently have any means of facilitating vetting checks overseas, to the extent required of those who have been resident in the UK. Applicants who cannot be vetted, cannot be appointed.”*