



Evaluation of Glasgow's Volunteering Charter

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Executive summary

Glasgow's Volunteering Charter was launched in 2016 to support the delivery of Glasgow's Strategic Volunteering Framework. The Charter encourages organisations across the city to sign up to one of two pledges: to increase the number of volunteering roles within the organisation; or to increase the diversity of the volunteer workforce. This report offers learning from a process evaluation of the Charter undertaken by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health. The evaluation involved interviewing ten contacts from signatory organisations and a feedback session with eight members of staff responsible for designing and delivering the Charter.

Findings from this evaluation show that sign-up to the Charter resulted in positive organisational changes in relation to various aspects of volunteer recruitment, management and retention, such as routinely capturing data on volunteers and developing an action plan to support the delivery of agreed pledges. Some contacts described being able to raise the profile of volunteering and enhance their organisation's reputation as being volunteer friendly. These changes were, in the main, supported by helpful materials and a positive relationship with Volunteer Glasgow staff. Notwithstanding this, however, many organisations faced challenges in meeting the requirements of the Charter. In particular, large statutory organisations faced difficulties in getting buy-in from other members of staff and increasing their own volunteering opportunities, with some expressing the wish for the existing pledges to be changed to better reflect their own organisational needs.

Volunteer Glasgow staff were asked to reflect on the findings and consider how to maximise the positive impacts of the Charter. Ideas were put forward on how the Charter might be promoted to potential new signatory organisations and how to raise its profile more widely, how the support services may be improved and the possibility of creating a forum for organisations to share ideas. Recommendations are offered under the following headings:

- Further support for existing signatory organisations.
- Review of existing pledges.
- Promotion of the Charter.
- Learning and support.
- Future developments.

Despite ongoing challenges and the identification of some possible revisions, findings from this evaluation indicate that involvement in the Charter is predominantly an effective process for signatory organisations to achieve their pledges and contribute to the achievement of wider, shared Community Planning Partnership, Strategic Volunteer Framework and Legacy 2014 objectives. It should be noted that this small-scale process evaluation took place at an early stage of the Charter's development. A more robust evaluation, capturing feedback on the impact of involvement from more signatory organisations would be worth undertaking at a later date.

1. Introduction

Volunteering and health

Volunteering rates in Glasgow have been persistently lower than Scotland for the past ten years¹. Although taking many forms, good quality volunteering can have a protective impact on health, with positive effects found in relation to depression, life satisfaction and wellbeing². Past GCPH research has also found that volunteering can support health and wellbeing through enabling the development of skills for employment and getting on in life, for increasing participants' social networks and by providing people with a sense of purpose and structure³. In view of the positive impact that increased volunteering in Glasgow could have on health, different approaches have been taken to encourage participation throughout the city, including the creation of mass-volunteering programmes at mega-sporting events and the adoption of a Strategic Volunteer Framework (SVF) for the city in 2010⁴.

Glasgow's Volunteering Charter

The Volunteering Charter has been created by Volunteer Glasgow with support from the city's SVF governance group partners. The Charter was developed to help deliver the Community Planning Partnership's shared SVF objectives to:

- increase recognition of the contribution of volunteering to local and national priorities
- promote quality volunteer management practice to ensure positive volunteering experiences
- increase the number and type of opportunities in which volunteers can get involved
- increase the number of people volunteering.

Following the launch of the Charter in June 2016, 31 organisations were invited by Volunteer Glasgow to become phase 1 signatories. Through signing up, Charter organisations were asked to commit to one or both of the following pledges:

- **Pledge 1:** To create and expand appropriate opportunities for volunteering within the signatory organisation.
- **Pledge 2:** To ensure that opportunities are accessible to all sections of the community and that volunteers reflect the demographic profile of the city.

'Charter Mark' status is awarded by Volunteer Glasgow to a signatory organisation once a series of commitments have been met. This includes capturing baseline data on volunteering and developing an action plan to support the delivery of the agreed pledge(s).

About this study

In July 2017, the GCPH agreed to evaluate the implementation of the Charter. All existing signatories were invited by email to take part in a short semi-structured interview. The following research objectives were agreed with Volunteer Glasgow in advance:

- To explore the expectations, experiences, challenges and enabling factors in working towards achieving the Charter Mark.
- To describe how organisations had gone about meeting pledge 1 and/or pledge 2.
- To determine the efficacy and quality of the Charter support services.

Each organisational point of contact was emailed and invited to take part in an interview (either face-to-face or via telephone). Interviews (n=10) took place between August and October 2017, with representation from the public sector, third sector and partnership organisations. A topic guide was prepared and is included as Appendix 1. Those taking part identified their organisation as having reached the Charter Mark (n=5), as expecting to reach the Charter Mark in the future (n=4), or having stalled (n=1).

Following completion of the interviews, findings were fed back to staff from Volunteer Glasgow at a meeting in December 2017. Those in attendance were asked to reflect on the findings and comment on how they compared with their own experience of delivering the Charter. Suggestions were then made for how the Charter could be improved and where future resources should be focused to support its continued roll-out.

2. Key findings

Key findings are presented on the 'reasons for becoming a Charter signatory', 'what signing up involved', the 'pledges signed up for', the 'benefits of involvement', 'challenges faced', 'support from Volunteer Glasgow' and 'suggested next steps'.

Reason(s) for becoming a Charter signatory

Many interviewees stated that their organisation was a strategic partner to Volunteer Glasgow and had been involved in developing the Charter. As such, their main reason for becoming a Charter signatory was to support its implementation.

"Being part of the strategic volunteering group and a key player in the Charter's development, it was an agreed development with all strategic partners." (Org 9)

"We've been involved through the strategic volunteering partnership for a number of years, and we've been part of the strategic discussions of the governance group around development of the Charter." (Org 4)

In keeping with the idea of supporting the Charter's implementation, those working for large organisations said that they wanted to set a good example to other organisations.

"It would be remiss of us not to look at setting an example to others in terms of our own practice." (Org 5)

"We really have to go for these things, we're one of the partners and we have to be proactive and be seen to be doing and contributing. We're a key player". (Org 9)

Signing up for the Charter was also said to represent a public commitment to volunteering, which was important for an organisation's internal and external image.

"My role is to look for any opportunities to raise the profile of volunteering for everyone that works for [name of organisation], so having something like the Charter Mark really helps us raise the profile." (Org 1)

"We felt the natural progression, once it was free to go, was that we should make that public commitment to supporting that [the Charter], but also demonstrating our commitment to volunteering and volunteer development." (Org 4)

For one representative the main motive was to learn from other organisations that had signed up and already had experience of providing volunteering opportunities.

“We had limited experience and knowledge of volunteering as an organisation so we had deliberately gone out to identify who we thought could support us in the process.” (Org 7)

Finally, a representative from a third sector organisation commented that although not their primary motive for applying, they hoped that they could use their involvement as a lever for securing external funding.

“It gives us grounds for funding if it’s part of the Charter.” (Org 3)

What did signing up involve?

Signing up for the Charter was reported to have involved reviewing current practice, gathering baseline demographic data and creating an action plan to support the delivery of the pledge(s).

“The first thing we did was almost take an audit of what was happening within the [type of organisation], and that was the first time that that had been done.” (Org 6)

“It’s involved us establishing a volunteer steering group for the organisation, which we didn’t have before. It’s involved us getting a baseline of how many volunteers we actually have, because actually we didn’t know.” (Org 2)

“Through the agreement with the board that we would take forward the volunteering, we agreed a pilot stage where we would pilot the recruitment and management of volunteers, so the basis of the pilot was our action plan through Glasgow’s Volunteer Charter.” (Org 9)

“I’ve had to find out what our baseline is.” (Org 7)

Signing up to the pledges

Most organisations (n=8) agreed to increase the number of volunteers, half (n=5) agreed to increase the diversity of their volunteers and two developed their own pledges. For some organisations signing up was simply an extension of their existing practice.

“I found the process fairly straightforward to be honest, because we’d had initial meetings with Volunteer Glasgow and they were very good at giving you a clear steer and guidance as to what was expected.” (Org 5)

“Creating extra opportunities and involving volunteers in as many ways as possible was something that’s a natural fit for us anyway, it’s business as usual in many ways.” (Org 1)

“Rather than having massively shaped our practice it provides a formal commitment to what we were trying to achieve anyway.” (Org 4)

Representatives from large organisations, on the other hand, commented on the challenge of getting organisational buy-in and gathering baseline information.

“Much of the baseline information demographics and so on, that can be logistically a bit more difficult for particularly larger scale public sector organisations to be able to do.” (Org 4)

“The model that we want to use... a distributed model, so you don’t have one volunteer manager that manages them all. That’s the model that I’d like to use. However, it’s not what staff want, they want a volunteer manager to manage all of this.” (Org 9)

For some organisations the existing pledges were not felt to be achievable.

“We understand it, we’re committed to the ethos. It’s just harder for us to work out how to deliver that.” (Org 10)

“It’s a complex arena and the Charter is not sophisticated enough to be able to adequately reflect the role that our organisation has in volunteering.” (Org 2)

Benefits of signing up

Signing up to the Charter was felt to be helpful for creating space to review existing volunteer practice and be more strategic about volunteer recruitment.

“I think that process of stopping to formally review that and to account for that to an external body, if you like, was a useful process.” (Org 1)

“The thing it really made us do was it forced you to reflect and review your practice, and I think the process itself formalises that but also makes you set aside time to actually look at what you have been doing in terms of your practice.” (Org 6).

“What it did was really helped us to focus our approach and the Charter in particular, producing the action plan really did enable us to focus in on exactly what we were going to do and how we could achieve that.” (Org 7)

By signing up to pledge 1 (increasing the number of volunteering opportunities), one interviewee described being able to take a more flexible approach to volunteer recruitment and retention.

“I’ve achieved a lot of extra hours from people just by being more flexible for individuals who need that greater flexibility, which is nice to be able to do.” (Org 3)

This point of contact also commented that signing up for pledge 1 had helped them to establish a positive reputation as an organisation that supports volunteers.

“It’s increasing our number of volunteers, it’s making sure we’re known out there, I guess, as a good volunteering organisation.” (Org 3)

The recognition that came with reaching the Charter Mark through the award ceremony was also said to have helped raise the profile of volunteering within one large public sector organisation.

“The presentation of the award during volunteers’ week, that gave us the opportunity to involve the chairman, and he’s now been able to talk about that experience and raise the profile at board level.” (Org 5)

In keeping with their reason for signing up, one interviewee commented that signing up had provided opportunities to learn from others through participation in Glasgow's Strategic Volunteer Framework group.

"the opportunities we've had through being involved in this to meet other organisations and see what organisations of similar scale and size are doing around volunteering and how they're managing to roll it out wider... that's been really useful."
(Org 7)

Challenges

Several contextual factors influenced the ability of an organisation to fulfil the pledges that they had signed for and to reach the Charter Mark. Challenges were most common when the organisation was large, had a national remit or where the nature of their work made it difficult to identify suitable volunteering positions. In addition, some public sector organisations/partnership arrangements were more suited to influencing the volunteer practice of partner organisations, rather than identifying suitable roles within their own organisation (as currently required by Volunteer Glasgow). It was stated that the type of work that some organisations did was not suitable or appropriate for volunteers.

"We're fully committed to promoting volunteering to clients, and indeed to our own staff, but the stumbling block is getting folk into the business as volunteers." (Org 8)

"We're a funding organisation. So the volunteering opportunities that we create are through third parties." (Org 10)

Another key challenge was having the time and resources to support volunteers. For some, providing 'more opportunities' for volunteering could compromise their ability to give volunteers the support and attention that they needed.

"I suppose our challenge is being able to provide the level of support that all volunteers might need." (Org 1)

"It's all fine to say come along and volunteer, but I need to have the time with them to make sure they're okay. So, yes, there's just not enough time." (Org 3)

The recruitment of volunteers for one organisation was said to have been most successful through word of mouth rather than through advertised roles. Where they did try to recruit volunteers through the Volunteer Glasgow website, it was not as successful as hoped for.

“We didn’t really receive as much interest as we’d hoped from people external via the websites, like the Volunteer Glasgow website or whatever organisation through our adverts, so I think we need to revisit that. That was potentially one of the challenges, recruiting volunteers.” (Org 7)

Encouraging buy-in from senior staff and practitioners was also said to be time consuming and challenging, particularly when it involved promoting the organisational benefits of creating volunteering opportunities.

“One of the challenges for me has been trying to articulate to people the value benefits of volunteering.” (Org 6)

“I suppose going down the Charter route forces your organisation and it forces people involved to have to do stuff. So I feel it’s been a challenge for me, a huge challenge for me. I have had to try and influence people.” (Org 9)

Although interviewees demonstrated a good understanding of what volunteering should and should not involve, some felt that there was limited understanding across the whole organisation. It was also expressed by some that providing paid work would be the priority over volunteering.

“One of the challenges has been what people see as a definition of volunteering.” (Org 6)

“I think for us it’s about definitions, clarity of roles, impact and benefits, and the challenge of asking someone to do something when they could probably do it and get financial return.” (Org 6)

“Would you prioritise getting people volunteering opportunities above getting them jobs?” (Org 10)

The prioritisation of paid roles over volunteering positions, while understandable, could have implications for the successful delivery of pledge 1 (increasing volunteering).

Support from Volunteer Glasgow

Most interviewees described their relationship with Volunteer Glasgow as being positive and productive. While reaching the Charter Mark often involved 'getting on with it', most felt comfortable seeking advice when needed.

"If I had an issue I know I would go back to them, I find them very supportive." (Org 3)

"I always knew there was somebody there at the end of the phone if I needed to run something by somebody." (Org 1)

"There are clear support mechanisms. Should you need any advice or guidance on how to take things forward it's all there." (Org 6)

The support materials and workshops were described as being helpful and practical by most, although one interviewee felt that their organisation was already well enough equipped to meet the requirements of the Charter without using these services.

"It does seem to be nice and visual, and the Charter Mark's clear in terms of what it sets out to do." (Org 4)

"The material during the workshops was particularly useful, and the training we had... that was really useful just for framing volunteering." (Org 9)

"There were some things we didn't need to take advantage of, so we didn't really take part in the workshops." (Org 5)

Workshops delivered by Volunteer Glasgow were described as being beneficial when staff from a participating organisation were already committed to volunteering and had a role in volunteer recruitment. For one organisation, getting staff to attend a workshop was not feasible.

"We got offered a workshop, the potential to have a workshop, and we haven't really jumped at that because getting all the staff out for a workshop is a hell of a task for us." (Org 2)

Support from Volunteer Glasgow was described as being particularly helpful for developing an action plan and identifying how to gather baseline data on volunteers. For some, the support provided was said to be crucial in enabling their organisation to meet their pledge(s).

“Where Volunteer Glasgow were really useful and helped us a lot was in gathering the census data... So that allowed me to analyse my data and look at our volunteer stats.”
(Org 5)

“I think we definitely needed that support [to develop an action plan] to take us through the process.” (Org 10)

It was suggested that reaching the Charter Mark was not the end of the process, and that Volunteer Glasgow should continue to support and challenge signatory organisations beyond this point.

“There’s a danger of loss of momentum and certainly for us it seemed to be all about the process and achieving Charter Mark status, and it was nice to get recognition for that and there was an attempt to recognise that. But that was some time ago and since then I’ve had no real sense of any kind of urgency or anybody from Volunteer Glasgow getting back to me and saying what happens next.” (Org 5)

“Is it just a nice logo? Is somebody following up with us? I think that’s something that Volunteer Glasgow are very conscious of that though.” (Org 1)

Suggested next steps

Interviewees were asked to comment on what they would like to see happen next in terms of the Charter’s development. Raising its profile – both within the public and to employers – was felt to be important for its continued success and appeal. Some suggested that raising the profile could help it to become a meaningful brand and a well-recognised achievement for the participating organisation.

“If you can have something that becomes a bit of a brand then people going for volunteering opportunities recognise that, I do think that could be beneficial.” (Org 3)

“You need the Charter to raise awareness, to raise the game, to get more people involved. So it shouldn’t just be the same people that would have been doing it anyway.” (Org 10)

Another stated wish was for Volunteer Glasgow to be more flexible when asking organisations to sign up to a pledge. In particular it was felt that it should be possible to sign up to an alternative pledge when the current mandatory ones are not suitable. This, it was suggested, would better reflect the context in which many participating organisations are working in.

“I think maybe there just needs to be a wee bit more flexibility and thought, and maybe bend of what would work.” (Org 9)

“I think it’s important that they have that flexibility to say well, here are other pledges you can develop and put in.” (Org 10)

“What we need is something really quite different. And I don’t know whether they don’t have the flexibility about what they can offer, but a more flexible package of support is probably what we require.” (Org 2)

To enable learning to be shared, it was suggested that a forum or a peer support network could be established.

“You could have a peer support network set up where existing signatories support new signatories.” (Org 1)

“Perhaps it would just be sharing resources, the odd network event, but nothing too onerous, where people could share experiences of how they did it.” (Org 1)

“Going forward what would be helpful [would be] for opportunities for organisations that have signed up to the Charter Mark to swap practice and maybe talk about some of the challenges that we all face, particularly around some of the elements of inclusion and so on.” (Org 4)

The development of a Scottish Charter was also proposed on the basis that it could widen its impact and enable national organisations to meaningfully participate.

3. Feedback session with Volunteer Glasgow staff

Interview findings were presented to eight members of staff from Volunteer Glasgow involved in designing and implementing the Charter. The presentation given is provided as Appendix 2. A discussion then took place on the benefits of signing up, the challenges faced and how the Charter may be developed in the future. The summary below is based on the discussion that took place between members of staff in response to the findings presented to them. It should be noted that the confidentiality of the organisations involved was retained.

Benefits of signing up

Volunteer Glasgow staff commented that the feedback provided on the tangible benefits of signing up to the Charter was useful for promoting it to potential future signatories.

Comments were also made that it would enable improvements to be made and ideas to be developed to help raise the Charter's profile.

Collecting baseline data

Staff members reflected with a degree of surprise that most organisations did not already have a structure in place for collecting or analysing demographic information on volunteers. This was said to be common across small- and large-scale organisations, in both the public and third sector. In keeping with feedback from various organisations, staff highlighted the important contribution that the Charter had made in terms of getting organisations to routinely capture this information. This was described as an important first step for any organisation, even if they weren't then able to progress quickly to the Charter Mark.

Large organisations

Volunteer Glasgow staff acknowledged that signing up for the Charter required a considerable commitment of time and effort for large organisations. Where progress had been made within large organisations, it was stated that senior management had been supportive and there was an existing structure in place for collecting data. Where organisations had struggled to reach the Charter Mark, staff acknowledged that they would require more time and support to get there. It was also suggested that an organisational department – rather than the whole organisation – could be allowed to sign up for the Charter. It was agreed by Volunteer Glasgow staff that this was an option that could be considered if the integrity and robustness of the Charter was retained.

Creating volunteering roles

Where organisations had struggled to increase the number of volunteers, staff commented that there may be limited understanding of how to go about creating volunteering roles and a

degree of trepidation about getting it wrong. It was stressed that some large organisations needed help to create the conditions where volunteering could become a 'whole organisational' responsibility, rather than simply the role of an assigned contact. Meanwhile, the feedback from one organisation that recruiting volunteers through Volunteer Glasgow's website had not been successful was at odds with Volunteer Glasgow's own experience of volunteer recruitment. It was acknowledged that some volunteering roles were more suitable than others to be advertised on their website.

3.1 Future development of the Charter

Following discussion on the key issues identified by signatory organisations, staff were asked to comment on the future development of the Charter. This discussion built on feedback from interviewees on 'how they would like the Charter to be developed'.

Promotion of the Charter to potential new signatories

Volunteer Glasgow staff reflected on how best to promote the Charter to potential future signatories. It was recognised that the possibility of securing funding on the back of achieving the Charter Mark would be appealing to third sector organisations. This was not seen to be an issue if the organisation was fully committed to the pledge(s) that they had signed up for. It was not discussed whether this could be used as a way of promoting the Charter to third sector organisations. However, it was suggested that different tools and promotional resources would need to be developed to promote the Charter to different types of organisations. Several options were discussed in relation to how to promote volunteering or sign-up to the Charter, including:

- The development of a short web-based animation on volunteering.
- By asking existing signatory organisations to share 'how they did it' and promote the benefits of reaching the Charter Mark.
- By asking volunteers from signatory organisations to 'tell their story' at future network meetings or introductory workshops.
- Through promoting the benefits of volunteering to both organisations and potential volunteers.

Raising the public profile of the Charter

Raising the public profile of the Charter was felt to be fundamental to its future success. While this was thought to be needed in order to promote the Charter to new signatories, it was also felt that the Charter needed to be better recognised by the public (i.e. potential new

volunteers). The Glasgow Living Wage was highlighted as a meaningful organisational pledge that candidates recognised when seeking employment. It was suggested that the Volunteering Charter should strive to have a similar impact in relation to volunteering roles.

Flexibility

A discussion took place on whether or not greater flexibility needed to be built into the Charter where organisations had found it difficult to meet the existing pledges. It was proposed that an option to create an alternative pledge could be made available when larger organisations were promoting better practice or increased volunteering within other organisations. It was also stressed that caution should be exercised as any replacement pledge would need to be robust and measurable, and the participating organisation would need to be able to evidence any influence. It was expressed that the Charter should not be altered to suit a participating organisation.

Support services

The provision of support was described as an important aspect of Volunteer Glasgow's work, although streamlining these services was seen to be inevitable with further sign-up to the Charter. In light of the learning from the first round of Charter signatories, Volunteer Glasgow staff expressed that all organisations should attend a free, mandatory workshop to ensure that they are made aware of Volunteer Glasgow's dynamic model of volunteer management. For third sector organisations it was suggested that more support may be needed to formalise volunteering practice and measure it, whereas for public sector organisations, support on how to overcome the barriers of trying to influence practice across a large and diverse organisation was seen to be more appropriate.

Sharing learning

The possibility of developing a forum for Charter signatories to share ideas and support one another was put to the group. It was stated that attempts to link groups had been made previously, with the provision of Charter workshops having limited take-up. It was agreed that thought would need to be given to whether a forum would be public or private, online or offline, as well as what role Volunteer Glasgow would have in regulating it. Quarterly network meetings were proposed as a possible space for sharing learning between organisations. To enable organisations encountering similar challenges to share learning, it was suggested that some could be paired together. However, it was also stated that there was nothing to stop existing signatories from contacting one another for advice or support.

Follow-up

To meet the request from organisations for follow-up after achieving the Charter Mark, it was agreed that Volunteer Glasgow should set a date with organisations to assess progress after involvement. With the number of organisations signing up for the Charter increasing, it was stated that providing regular hands-on support beyond this point would be difficult.

Where to focus future effort and resources

Volunteer Glasgow staff discussed the merits of focusing further attention and resources on supporting large organisations that had not been able to reach the Charter Mark in the first phase. It was argued that potential new third sector signatories may already be fairly advanced in terms of their volunteer practice, whereas more impact may be possible if there was more of a focus on the city's major public sector organisations. A counter argument to this was that the impact of sign-up from third sector organisations could still be beneficial if it meant that more volunteer roles were being created and the volunteer workforce was diversified. It was agreed that existing Charter signatories needed to be reminded of their commitment to the Charter.

4. Discussion

Learning from this process evaluation indicates that the Volunteering Charter has positively shaped the practice of most participating organisations in relation to volunteer recruitment, retention and management. It is notable, however, that achieving the Charter Mark does not involve a one-size-fits-all approach. Although all organisations are expected to meet the same requirements of gathering baseline data, creating an action plan and fulfilling an agreed pledge, organisational context has a significant bearing on how this can be achieved. Interview findings and comments from Volunteer Glasgow staff suggest that assigned contacts from large organisations need to be able to devote a significant proportion of their time to meet the requirements of the Charter. To ensure that all participating organisations are able to benefit from Charter status and improve their own practice, it is important that they fully understand what is expected of them and are aware of the challenges involved. Where volunteering is not part of an organisation's 'core business' or where staff are not currently expected to recruit volunteers, supporting culture change across a whole organisation may involve organisational changes that are beyond the scope of Charter involvement. These organisations will require further support from Volunteer Glasgow if they are to reach the Charter Mark. This will invariably have an impact on the level of support that Volunteer Glasgow are able to provide to new signatories, necessitating that the support services are streamlined to meet an increased demand. Further consideration also needs to be given to how the Charter's public profile can be raised and signatories can effectively share learning. The Charter's future success can to some extent be defined by whether or not volunteers recognise and choose to volunteer for organisations that have achieved the Charter Mark. Despite ongoing challenges and the need for some minor revisions to the Charter, findings from this evaluation indicate that it is predominantly an effective process for signatory organisations to achieve their pledges and contribute to the achievement of wider, shared CPP, SVF and Legacy 2014 objectives.

5. Recommendations

Based on learning from this process evaluation, the following recommendations are proposed to support continued roll-out of the Charter.

Further support for existing signatory organisations

- Consideration is given to how existing signatories can be best supported or encouraged to reach the Charter Mark before further roll-out takes place.
- Support for public sector organisations focuses on overcoming the barriers involved in trying to increase volunteering across a large and complex organisation. The possibility of securing departmental sign-up may be considered as a possible route to achieving the full Charter Mark at a later date.

Reviewing existing pledges

- Due consideration is given to the inclusion of an alternative mandatory pledge where the existing pledges are not deemed to be fit-for-purpose for a participating organisation. If a replacement pledge cannot be agreed, then potential signatory organisations should be encouraged to consider whether or not signing up to the Charter is appropriate.
- SVF partners should be asked to approve the addition of a pledge for organisations where their role in volunteering is limited to funding other organisations to manage/develop volunteering.
- Any organisation permitted to sign up an alternative pledge should still be required to demonstrate a quantifiable impact in order to reach the Charter Mark.

Promotion of the Charter

- Consideration is given to the promotion of the Charter to potential new signatories. Possible ideas are the production of a short film, an animation or by using quotes from volunteers or Charter Mark organisations. An electronic resource could also be created to highlight the potential benefits of participation and the likely challenges involved. This resource may include information derived from learning generated through this evaluation.
- Volunteer Glasgow staff consider options for how to raise the public image of the Charter. This should include a reflection on what might encourage potential

volunteers to choose a Charter Mark organisation over one that has not achieved this standard.

Learning and support

- A forum (or similar) for sharing learning is created for participating organisations. The format of this may be determined following consultation with existing and potential future Charter signatories. An agenda item could be included on 'sharing learning' at future quarterly network meetings.
- Volunteer Glasgow set a date for follow-up with organisations that have achieved the Charter Mark.
- All future signatory organisations should be required to attend a mandatory free workshop to expose them to learning on volunteer management. Workshops may be supported by signatory organisations that have already reached the Charter Mark to share their experience and learning.
- Consideration is given to how the support services can be streamlined without compromising the Charter's positive impact.

Future developments

- The Charter is rolled out and offered to all relevant organisations subject to a number of suggested amendments and the capacity of Volunteer Glasgow support services.
- Partners across Scotland give due consideration to the Charter model as an appropriate programme for achieving objectives similar to Glasgow's SVF.
- Evaluation of the impact of the Charter is undertaken in the future when sufficient numbers of signatory organisations have made progress against their action plan targets.

6. Caveats and limitations

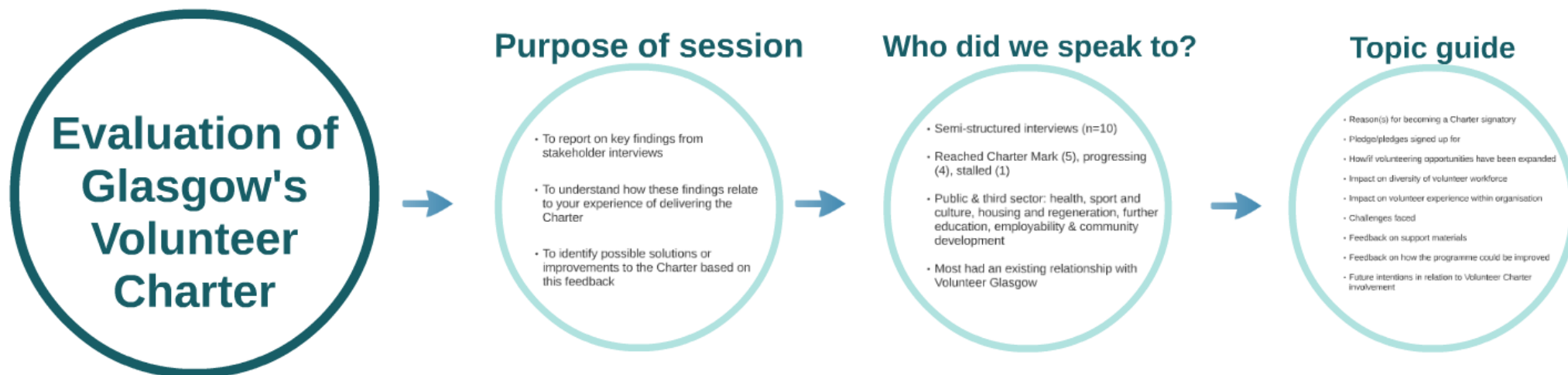
The following factors should be considered when interpreting the findings from this evaluation.

- This process evaluation captured learning after one year of the Charter's roll-out. Findings therefore relate primarily to the process of delivering the Charter rather than the outcomes of its implementation.
- Participating organisations were most likely to have achieved the Charter Mark or be working towards achieving it. This had implications for gathering useful information on the challenges of reaching the Charter Mark.
- Most organisations had an existing relationship with Volunteer Glasgow, a well-established volunteer policy and an existing understanding of how to deliver good quality volunteering. It may have been beneficial to have gathered feedback from more organisations with limited experience of providing volunteering roles.

Appendix 1: Interview topic guide

- Reason(s) for becoming a Charter signatory
- Pledge(s) signed up for
- How/if volunteering opportunities have been expanded
- Impact on diversity of the volunteer workforce
- Challenges faced in implementing requirements of the Charter
 - Organisational scale and structure, wider buy-in and influence, capacity and time.
- Impact on volunteer experience within organisation.
- Feedback on the support materials provided by Volunteer Glasgow
- Overall impact of Volunteer Charter on organisation
 - What has changed as a result
- Feedback on how the programme could be improved.
- Future intentions in relation to Volunteer Charter involvement.

Appendix 2: Presentation of findings.



Findings

Reason(s) for signing up

- Already a strategic partner
- To set an example to other organisations
- To make a public commitment
- Raise profile of volunteering (internally and externally)
- Formalise process and be strategic about volunteer recruitment
- Need support on 'how to do it'
- To support funding bids

Implementation

Signing up to the pledges

- Most (n=8) agreed to **increase number** of volunteers, half (n=5) agreed to **increase diversity** of volunteers and two developed their **own pledges**.

What has signing up involved?

- Reflecting on existing practice and gathering baseline information
- Identifying volunteering roles
- Encouraging buy-in from people across the organisation

How challenging has this been?

Easy

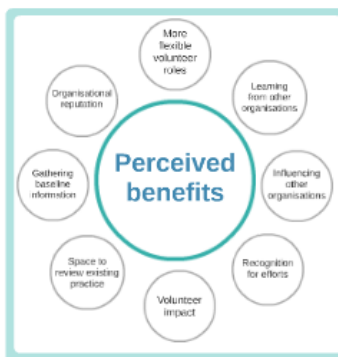
"It's really just an extension of what we already do."

Challenging

"It's created a lot more work."

Not currently possible

"We understand it, we're committed to the ethos. It's just harder for us to work out how to deliver it."



Support from Volunteer Glasgow

Relationship with Volunteer Glasgow	"There's clear support mechanisms. Should you need any advice or guidance on how to take things forward it's all there." "Volunteer Glasgow were very good at giving you a clear steer and guidance as to what was expected as we go through the process." "There's not a lot of guidance coming from Volunteer Glasgow."
Network of support	"The most useful thing for me has just been attending and being involved in that network 'Volunteer Glasgow' has."
Support materials	"It does seem to be nice and visual, and the charter mark's clear in terms of what it sets out to do." "The material during the workshops was particularly useful, and the training we had...that was really useful just for framing volunteering."
Level of support needed	"I think we definitely needed that support to take us through the process." "There were some things we didn't need to take advantage of, so we didn't really take part in the workshops."
Follow up	"I've had no real sense of any kind of urgency and anybody from Volunteer Glasgow getting back to me and saying what happens next." "Is somebody following up with us? I think that's something that Volunteer Glasgow are very conscious of that though."

What should happen next?

Public profile of Charter

- How can this be raised to give the Charter more credibility?

Forum for sharing learning and ideas

- What might this look like and how could VG contribute?

Flexibility and understanding of organisational context

- How can the Charter be adapted to ensure that all organisations can benefit?

Creation of a Scottish Charter

- Is this feasible and what impact would it have on the Charter for Glasgow?

References

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