

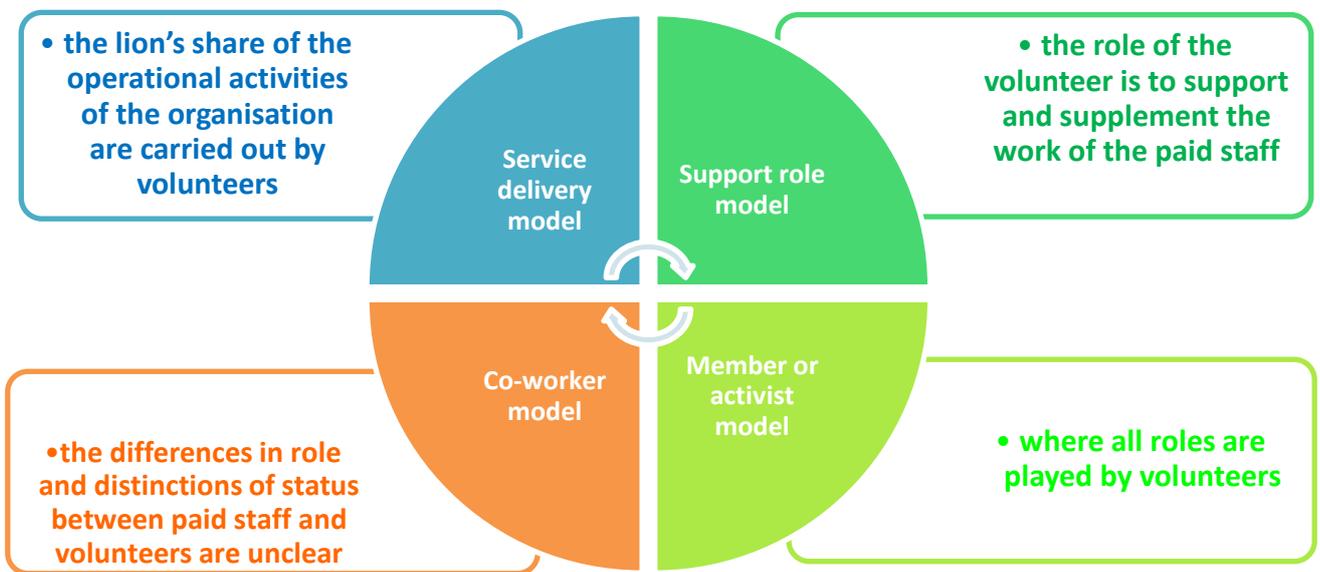
Good Volunteer Management Practice

Guidance Overview & Checklist

FOUR DISTINCTIVE KINDS OF VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT IN SMALL VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS¹

Many local services are delivered in their entirety by volunteers whereas other services have the resources to involve paid personnel. Being able to do this depends on many factors and a brief summary of the four key types of Volunteer Involving Organisation (VIO) is given below.

An analysis of the different roles played by volunteers in organisations led to the identification of four distinctive kinds of volunteer involvement in small voluntary organisations. These are:



1 **Service delivery model** - characterised by unambiguous organisational arrangements and a clear distinction between the roles of volunteers and paid staff. Volunteers are recruited to carry out predetermined and specified tasks, such as providing support to the victims of crime or mediating in disputes between neighbours. The role of paid staff in bodies of this kind is essentially one of recruiting, training, deploying and supporting the work of these front-line workers.

2 **Support role model** - While the service delivery model is based on an assumption that it is appropriate for the operational activities of the agency to be undertaken by volunteers, the support role model is found in organisations where this responsibility has been given to paid staff. In order to maximise the time that staff can spend on these activities, volunteers are recruited to play a variety of support roles. They may, for example, act as receptionists, secretaries, administrators or bookkeepers.

3 **Member/activist model** - at first sight appears to be less complex than the others because it lacks one of the four organisational elements: the paid staff. It is the phenomenon defined by Billis (1993) as an association, a group of people who have come together to pursue a common goal, have drawn a boundary around themselves by distinguishing between members and non-members, and have adopted a set of rules by which their affairs are regulated. The goals are pursued and the operational activities are conducted by the members themselves, and not delegated to a separate group of staff, paid or unpaid. Thus, all the organisational roles are undertaken by the members acting in a voluntary capacity.

4 **Co-worker model** - has something in common with the support role model in that the work of the organisation's staff needs to be supplemented by the efforts of volunteers if the total activities of the agency are to be covered. The difference, however, is that the division of labour is less straightforward and the distinctions of role and of status are blurred. Tasks and responsibilities are allocated through a process of discussion and negotiation which takes full account of the knowledge and skills of each individual in the team - paid staff and volunteers alike - and of the amounts of time they are able to commit to them. 'Co-worker' volunteers share some of the characteristics of member activists.

¹ <http://www.ivr.org.uk/component/ivr/one-size-does-not-fit-all>