

**COFNOD O BENDERFYNIAD WEDI'I DDIRPRWYO GAN SWYDDOG  
RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION**

Penderfyniad Allweddol | Key Decision ✓

**PWNC | SUBJECT:** Bereavement Fees & Charges for War Veterans and Service Men & Women


**DIBEN YR ADRODDIAD | PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

The purpose of the report is to implement a reduction in bereavement fees and charges for war veterans and service men and women following the pilot exercise during 2018/19.

**PENDERFYNIAD WEDI'I DDIRPRWYO | DELEGATED DECISION:**

A 25% reduction is applied to all Council bereavement fees incurred by the families of deceased war veterans and service men and women resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The policy in respect of eligibility, residence, proof of service and discretionary considerations and application previously recommended to the Cabinet by the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017 will continue to apply.

	<p>PAUL MEE</p>	<p>8.5.19</p>
<p>Llofnod y Prif Swyddog Chief Officer Signature</p>	<p>Enw (priflythrennau) Name (Print Name)</p>	<p>Dyddiad Date</p>

**Mae'r penderfyniad yn cael ei wneud yn unol ag Adran 15 o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol 2000 (Swyddogaethau'r Corff Gweithredol) ac yn y cylch gorchwyl sy wedi'i nodi yn Adran 5 o Ran 3 o Gyfansoddiad y Cyngor.**

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

YMGYNGHORI | CONSULTATION



08/05/2019

LLOFNOD YR AELOD YMGYNGHOROL O'R CABINET  
CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE

DYDDIAD | DATE

LLOFNOD SWYDDOG YMGYNGHOROL  
CONSULTEE OFFICER SIGNATURE

DYDDIAD | DATE

**RHEOLAU'R WEITHDREFN GALW-I-MEWN | CALL IN PROCEDURE RULES.**

**A YW'R PENDERFYNIAD YN UN BRYD A HEB FOD YN DESTUN PROSES GALW-I-MEWN GAN Y PWYLLGOR TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU?:**

**IS THE DECISION DEEMED URGENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**

**YDY | YES**

**NAC YDY | NO**

**Rheswm dros fod yn fater brys | Reason for Urgency:**

***Os yw'n cael ei ystyried yn fater brys - Ilofnod y Maer/Dirprwy Faer/Pennaeth y Gwasanaeth Cyflogedig yn cadarnhau cytundeb fod y penderfyniad arfaethedig yn rhesymol yn yr holl amgylchiadau iddo gael ei drin fel mater brys, yn unol â rheol gweithdrefn trosolwg a chraffu 17.2:***

***If deemed urgent - signature of Mayor or Deputy Mayor or Head of Paid Service confirming agreement that the proposed decision is reasonable in all the circumstances for it being treated as a matter of urgency, in accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rule 17.2:***

.....  
**(Maer | Mayor)**

.....  
**(Dyddiad | Date)**

**DS - Os yw hwn yn benderfyniad sy'n cael ei ail-ystyried yna does dim modd galw'r penderfyniad i mewn a bydd y penderfyniad yn dod i rym o'r dyddiad mae'r penderfyniad wedi'i lofnodi.**

**NB - If this is a reconsidered decision then the decision Cannot be Called In and the decision will take effect from the date the decision is signed.**

**AT DDEFNYDD Y SWYDDFA YN UNIG | FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

AT DDEFNYDD Y SWYDDFA YN UNIG | FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

DYDDIADAU CYHOEDDI A GWEITHREDU | PUBLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATES

CYHOEDDI | PUBLICATION

Cyhoeddi ar Wefan y Cyngor | Publication on the Councils Website:- 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019

DYDDIAD | DATE

GWEITHREDU'R PENDERFYNIAD | IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

**Nodwch:** Fydd y penderfyniad hwn ddim yn dod i rym nac yn cael ei weithredu'n llawn nes cyn pen 3 diwrnod gwaith ar ôl ei gyhoeddi. Nod hyn yw ei alluogi i gael ei "Alw i Mewn" yn unol â Rheol 17.1, Rheolau Gweithdrefn Trosolwg a Chraffu.

**Note:** This decision will not come into force and may not be implemented until the expiry of 3 clear working days after its publication to enable it to be the subject to the Call-In Procedure in Rule 17.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

Yn amodol ar y drefn "Galw i Mewn", caiff y penderfyniad ei roi ar waith ar / Subject to Call In the implementation date will be

14<sup>th</sup> May 2019  
DYDDIAD / DATE

WEDI'I GYMERADWYO I'W GYHOEDDI: ✓ | APPROVED FOR PUBLICATION: ✓

**Rhagor o wybodaeth | Further Information:**

Cyfadran   Directorate:	Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Enw'r Person Cyswilt   Contact Name:	David Batten
Swydd   Designation:	Head of Leisure, Parks, Countryside & Bereavement Services
Rhif Ffôn   Telephone Number:	01443 562202

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**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**KEY DELEGATED DECISION**

**29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2019**

**BEREAVEMENT FEES & CHARGES FOR WAR VETERANS AND SERVICE  
MEN & WOMEN**

**REPORT TO ACCOMPANY A DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH,  
PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**Author: David Batten, Head of Leisure, Parks, Countryside & Bereavement**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to implement a reduction in bereavement fees and charges for war veterans and service men and women following the pilot exercise during 2018/19.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 A 25% reduction is applied to all Council bereavement fees incurred by the families of deceased war veterans and service men and women resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, the policy in respect of eligibility, residence, proof of service and discretionary considerations and application previously recommended to the Cabinet by the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017, will continue to apply.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The twelve month pilot of reduced bereavement fees and charges for families of war veterans and service men and women in 2018/19 has resulted in 58 families of deceased veterans benefitting from a reduction in their funeral costs. The policy has been well received by both families and funeral directors and following consideration of the operational and financial implications, it is recommended that the policy be permanently applied.

**4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the issue of bereavement fees for armed forces veterans (at the meetings on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017) following a notice of motion to Council in November 2016. The committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the Council undertake a 12 month pilot whereby all bereavement fees incurred by the families of deceased

veterans resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf be subject to a 25% reduction in recognition of the commitment to their Country and the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. This would apply to all veterans who have served their minimum period of service/enlistment or seen active duty.

- 4.2 The Cabinet considered this recommendation at the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018 when setting the Council Fees and Charges Policy and agreed to the 12 month pilot. This was implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.
- 4.3 During the 12 month pilot, 58 families of deceased veterans have accessed the fee reduction. The 25% reduction was applied to all fees and charges so the benefit to the families varies depending on the type and number of services required but for many families the saving has been in excess of £400 on the funeral costs. The policy has been well received by the families concerned and recognised by local funeral directors as a positive measure introduced by the Council.
- 4.4 As the pilot progressed during 2018/19, the numbers of applications for the discount gradually increased with greater awareness amongst funeral directors and families. It is, therefore, likely that more families will benefit from this reduction in 2019/20 should the policy be extended.
- 4.5 In relation to the verification of service, the Council has required reasonable evidence of service in the armed forces or reserve forces. This may include the following:-
- service discharge papers;
  - armed forces pension entitlement;
  - service number;
  - or other evidence that the Council considered reasonable proof of service.

## **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council was one of the first Local Authorities in Wales to establish an Armed Forces Covenant. This is a voluntary statement of mutual support between the civilian community of Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Armed Forces Community. The pledge recognises the dual respect between the Council, its partner agencies, its communities and our Armed Forces personnel (serving and retired) and their families.
- 5.2 In May 2011, the Ministry of Defence published "The Armed Forces Covenant: Today and Tomorrow" which sets out "an enduring covenant between the people of the UK, Her Majesty's Government and all those who serve or have served in the armed forces of the Crown and their families". This was followed in November 2011 by the Welsh Government's publication of its "Package of Support for the Armed Forces community in Wales", which sets out what is being undertaken in the devolved areas of responsibility.
- 5.3 As part of the Armed Forces Covenant, in June 2011 the UK Government launched the Community Covenant Scheme, which encouraged public service providers, the private sector and the voluntary and community sectors to offer targeted support for

their local armed forces community. The proposals set out in this report are consistent with this commitment and with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## 6. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

- 6.1 A consultation exercise with a number of relevant agencies that support the Armed Forces community was undertaken to inform the development of the proposed policy, the outcomes of which were presented to the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

## 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 The total benefit to the families that have accessed the reduced fees during the pilot period amounts to £11,937. This represents a loss of income to the Council during this period, however, this is of course a minor consideration given the commitment the Council has made to support the Armed Forces community. The 25% reduction has meant that some families have received a reduction in fees and charges in excess of £400. The view of the service is that a 25% reduction on all fees and charges remains the appropriate approach in that it provides the right balance of ensuring the policy is of significant benefit to the families concerned but also sustainable. The loss of income is relatively inconsequential set against the overall income received for bereavement fees and the benefit to the individual families.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The Council has discretion to set its bereavement fees and charges. There are no legal implications arising from these proposals.

## 9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 9.1 This proposal contributes to the Council's corporate priorities by supporting community cohesion and building stronger relationships with the Armed Forces community.
- 9.2 This proposal contributes to the Well-being goal of "A Wales of Cohesive Communities".

## 10. CONCLUSION

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- 10.1 The pilot in 2018/19 has been well received by families and following consideration of the operational and financial implications arising from the pilot period it is proposed that the reduction in fees and charges continues.

### **Other Information:-**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer: David Batten – 01443 562202





**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO ACCOMPANY A DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR FOR PUBLIC HEALTH,  
PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2019**

**BEREAVEMENT FEES & CHARGES FOR WAR VETERANS AND SERVICE  
MEN & WOMEN**

**Background Papers**

Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee – *Bereavement Fees & Charges for War Veterans and Service Men & Women* – Report of the Service Director, Public Health & Protection. 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017.

Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee – *Bereavement Fees & Charges for War Veterans and Service Men & Women* – Report of the Service Director, Public Health & Protection. 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

Cabinet – *Council Fees and Charges Policy 2018/19* – Report of the Group director Corporate & Frontline Services in Discussion with the Leader of the Council, Cllr A. Morgan. 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

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Officer to contact: ~~David Batten, Head of Leisure, Parks & Countryside and Bereavement.~~ Tel No: 01443 562202