



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ARMED FORCES WORKING GROUP

8 OCTOBER 2019

ARMED FORCES COVENANT UPDATE

**REPORT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE
RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER CLLR MAUREEN WEBBER, DEPUTY
LEADER**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information on the work undertaken to fulfil the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.

2. FUNDING UPDATE

- 2.1 The Council's Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer (AFLO) post is currently funded by the Armed Forces Covenant grant fund.
- 2.2 The Welsh Government (WG) have confirmed they will fund the Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer posts for a further 2 years.

3. SUPPORTING THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

The Council supports the Armed Forces Covenant in a number of ways. Outlined below are updates since the last Armed Forces Working Group was held in June 2019.

3.1 Armed Forces Officer Network

This internal network meet twice a year to discuss activity in relation to the Armed Forces across the Council. Notes of this meeting are taken and a verbal update will be provided at the Armed Forces Working Group.

3.2 Reserves Day

On 1 July 2019 we held two Reserves Day events along with 'Wear Your Uniform to Work Day'. The first of these tri service events were held in Ty Trevithick, which was well attended by Council staff. The second was held in Abercynon Leisure Centre where we engaged with the public. Both events were successful in showing support for Council employees who are also reservists but also raising awareness of recruitment opportunities for the reserve forces.

3.3 Engagement and Networking

Officers continue to regularly engage with veteran groups across Rhondda Cynon Taf. This is extremely important as their views are vital in developing future initiatives.

3.4 Cinema Night

On 5 November, 2019 the Park and Dare Theatre will be hosting a special showing of Zulu, specifically for Armed Forces families. This initiative has been developed following discussions with veterans concerning how fireworks can be a trigger of PTSD symptoms.

3.5 Tickets for Troops

The charity Tickets for Troops offers free tickets to events for those who serve in the Armed Forces, those medically discharged post 2001 and the next of kin of those who have passed as a result of their service. RCT theatres have agreed to reserve an allocation of 10 family tickets for the December panto as a trial.

3.6 Armed Forces Covenant Newsletter

A newsletter has been produced to highlight the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. It will also raise awareness of commemoration events and initiatives. This newsletter will be circulated widely to Armed Forces networks.

4. **WELSH GOVERNMENT ARMED FORCES COVENANT CONFERENCE**

- 4.1 The Council's AFLO will attend WG's Armed Forces Covenant Conference on 3 October, 2019 in North Wales, where he will be providing a presentation on the partnership's progress to date.

5. **ARMED FORCES IN WALES AWARDS NOMINATIONS**

5.1. This annual event organised by the Ministry of Defence recognises those who have made outstanding contributions to the Armed Forces Community.

5.2 This year the Council has made 2 nominations:

5.2.1 The Armed Forces in Wales Award

Paul Bromwell, organiser of Ton Pentre based 'Valley Veterans'. Paul's passion and commitment has made a huge contribution to the lives of veterans throughout the valley.

5.2.2 The Armed Forces Covenant Award

Friends of Ynysangharad War Memorial Park and Julie Edwards, RCT Project Co-ordinator for the 'Poppies in the Park' project which attracted more than 900 participants.

6. **GUARANTEED INTERVIEW SCHEME FOR VETERANS**

The Council is currently evaluating whether to adopt a guaranteed interview scheme for veterans. The scheme is being promoted by the Minister following discussions at the WG Cross Party Group on Armed Forces.

7. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the content of the report is for information purposes only.

8. **CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

Consultation is not needed because the content of the report is for information purposes only.

9. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

10. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

There are no legal implications as the report is for information only.

11. **LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

Supporting our Armed Forces Community contributes to UK and Welsh Government priorities and all well-being goals.

12. CONCLUSION

The Council has a strong commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and this is evidenced by cross-cutting work by a number of service areas to support its pledge.