



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Armed Forces Community Covenant Signatories Panel**

Committee Room 2, Civic Centre, Swansea - Civic Centre,
Swansea

Monday, 25 September 2017 at 2.00 pm

Present: J E Burtonshaw (Chair) Presided

Representing Organisations:

Alyx Baharie, SCVS
Shelley Elgin, Wales/Cymru / Help for Heroes
Captain Chris Evans, Welsh Transport Regiment
Ruth Fleming, Navy Reserve
Jackie Preston, Citizens Advice Bureau
Adrian Rabey, British Training Board
Antony Rabey, Aartic Training
Nicola Russell-Brooks, Age Cymru Swansea Bay
David Singletary, SSAFA
Dean Thomas, South Wales Police
Eve Warburton, UWTSD
Paul Whapham, Ospreys
Victoria Williams, Veterans NHS Wales

Officers:

Gareth Borsden - Democratic Services Officer
Spencer Martin - Voluntary Sector Relationship Coordinator

Apologies for Absence

Eleonora Evans, Peter Evans, Medwin Hughes, Byron Lewis & Peter Neville

16 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests from Members.

None.

17 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Panel held on 24 July 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

18 Help for Heroes. (Presentation)

Shelly Elgin (Recovery Manager) and Paula Mitchell (Veterans Clinical Liaison) from Help for Heroes, gave a detailed and informative presentation to the Panel on the background details and work carried out by Help for Heroes in Wales.

Topics covered and discussed as part of the presentation include the following areas:

- Background to establishment of the organisation;
- Main aims and objectives;
- Team in Wales;
- Recovery Centres across the UK, and specialist clinics available;
- Regular weekly sports events in Newport & Bridgend, possibility of developing links with Ospreys wheelchair rugby;
- Various course & classes available;
- Pathfinder scheme;
- Welfare assistance & advice available (housing, employment, benefits etc);
- Band of Brothers/Sisters project;
- Hidden Wounds Psychological Support Scheme;
- Newly established Veterans Clinical Liaison Service;
- New Funding links with Veterans NHS Wales for therapists;
- Issues with veterans not registering themselves as “veterans”;
- Help for Heroes “hotspots”;
- Eligibility criteria:

The Chair thanked the Officers for their presentation.

19 Update from Panel Members.

Panel members provided verbal updates relating to the current and proposed activities, events, and workloads of their respective groups & organisations, including the following areas:

Ospreys

Paul Whapham reported that the recent funding application relating to the “sporting reminiscence” project had not been successful, but further work and research will be carried out before its resubmitted in a future funding round.

He referred to the Armed Forces event being held at the Clermont game on 15 October, which will include cadets, reserves, various service personnel from across the military, climbing wall, trailers/displays etc.

Aartic Training

Antony Rabey reported that in excess of 2000 people had now signed up for various training courses.

The skills transfer scheme is continuing to work well with the retraining and reskilling of former service personnel.

He referred to a new scheme that the organisation is going to be involved with called the Teamwork project which is financed via Cynydd funding and is aimed at young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS).

British Training Board

Adrian Rabey reported that he had recently received a series of detailed statistics relating to the numbers and locations of veterans in the Swansea area. He indicated he would share the information with Members of the Panel.

He indicated that the guaranteed interview scheme continues to progress with 24 companies now taking part.

He outlined the background to the development of a Armed Forces Community Academy scheme which will hopefully be progressed via Cynydd funding that will aim to help young people develop their links with the Military.

Navy

Ruth Fleming indicated that the various events at the Ospreys game on 15 October are eagerly anticipated, with a whole series of events taking place and a wide range of personnel in attendance.

She also outlined that the Royal Marines will deliver the match ball to the Swans game on 4 November, to coincide with the Remembrance Day Commemorations.

She indicated that a series of dates for meetings of the Naval Families Federation will be shortly confirmed and shared with panel members.

Chair

Councillor June Burtonshaw indicated that the intention is to run a "poppy" planting scheme next year to coincide with the 100 year end of World War 1 Commemorations, along the lines of the successful scheme held a few years ago.

She indicated she continues to help individuals on a case by case basis when requested for assistance by Panel Members.

She outlined that the issue of the Flagpole had hopefully been resolved, and reported that the Air Show in 2018 would be held on 30 June & 1 July 2018, with 30 June also being Armed Forces Day, further discussions would be needed on how best to maximise the links between the two events to everyone's benefit.

SSAFA

Dave Singletary outlined his organisation had lost some case workers recently and would welcome any new volunteers.

He indicated that the Bulldog project continues to grow and will hopefully develop links with the NHS Veterans and Help for Heroes in the future.

Army

Chris Evans reported on the success of the Jobs fair held at the Grange recently which attracted in excess of 40 veterans. The event will hopefully be repeated in the future.

He referred to the project being developed with Aartic Training which will use the facilities at the Grange over a period of months.

He indicated that the necessary arrangements for the upcoming Remembrance Day Parades are all in place.

Age Cymru Swansea Bay

Nicola Russel-Brooks reported that she had recently met with representative from HMS Cambria regarding the Woodies Lodges Scheme.

She detailed the "loneliness" meeting/lunch scheme that is available in Swansea and Bridgend areas following funding from Tesco.

She indicated that due to funding being withdrawn, the "befriending" project would end in March 2018, but she stated her organisation can signpost people to other similar schemes if required.

She also indicated that Swansea Women's Aid are keen to get involved with supporting over 50's, and developing their links with Military families.

She stated that this would be her final meeting before retirement.

South Wales Police

Dean Thomas indicated that he was attending his first meeting of the Panel, and his experience and views would reflect his "custody" background in the police service.

He referred to the scheme already in operation in custody suites where veterans are encouraged by the arrest referral workers to disclose their past service on arrest, in order that they can be referred to organisations such as Change Step.

He also outlined the link with the Probation Service's STOMP project.

Dave Singletary indicated that there are courses and posters available for Police Officers and stations to encourage veterans to disclose.

University of Wales Trinity St David's

Eve Warburton indicated that the University continues to provide courses to both veterans and serving personnel alike.

Veterans NHS Wales

Victoria Williams reported that her service had secured an additional £500k over a 3 year period which will fund 3 additional therapists in the Swansea, Neath and Bridgend areas. She indicated she would be looking for the use of rooms locally to enable the new staff to work locally.

Members of the panel indicated that they may have suitable rooms that the service could utilise and would discuss the options following the meeting.

She indicated that the new staff will hopefully reduce the current waiting list down to around 3 months.

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Cont'd

She referred to the excellent links with Help for Heroes with referrals for service.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Jackie Preston indicated that her service is available for advice on issues like debt for both veterans and serving personnel.

The meeting ended at 3.13 pm

Chair