



City and County of Swansea

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

Chamber Meeting Room - Civic Centre, Swansea

Monday, 26 February 2018 at 2.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor J E Burtonshaw (Chair) Presided

### **Representing Organisations:**

Alyx Baharie, SCVS  
Captain Chris Evans MBE, 157(Welsh) Regt RLC  
Lt Cdr Ruth Fleming, Navy Reserve  
Thomas Hall, Blesma  
Paul Jones, Probation  
Sq Ldr Phil Flower MBE, Royal British Legion/Royal Air Force  
Rob Nicholls, Care after Combat  
Jackie Preston, Citizens Advice Bureau  
Raj Rahman, Veterans Club  
Sandy Shaw, Veterans Club  
David Singletary, SSAFA  
Amanda Thomas, Wales/Cymru / Help for Heroes  
Eve Warburton, UWTSD

### **Officer(s)**

Gareth Borsden Democratic Services Officer  
Spencer Martin Third Sector & Trust Fund Commissioning Co-ordinator

### **Apologies for Absence**

Alison Fisher and D B Lewis.

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## **25 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests.**

None.

## **26 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Panel held on 4 December 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

## **27 Presentation - Blesma.**

Tom Hall, Support Officer(West) from Blesma gave a powerpoint presentation outlining the following topic areas:

- His military background;
- Background history to the establishment of Blesma after the 1<sup>st</sup> World War;(Only 1 of 10 charities that still exist from that period)

- Main aims of the Charity are to assist ex service men and woman who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight;
- Organisational layout and staffing structure:
- Mission and vision;
- Membership types;
- Areas of expertise and help/advice available:
- Regional support officers role;
- Geographical areas covered;
- Self funding;
- Members activities & events available;
- Number of members and visits/grants/activities undertaken.

## **28 Update from Panel Members and Ideas for Commemorations for the 100th Anniversary of the end of World War One.**

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

### SCVS

Alex Baharie referred to the Armed Forces Day grant scheme that is still open for applications and indicated she would circulate a link to the scheme.

### Veterans Club

Sandy Shaw reported that regular Monday & Friday “drop in” meetings are about to start in Swansea at the Schooner Inn.

### Royal British Legion/Royal Air Force

Phil Flower reported on the various events planned to commemorate the 100 years of the RAF including a Gala concert at the Brangwyn Hall on 20 April and a church service at St Marys and parade of 400plus personnel afterwards on 22 April.

He outlined the ongoing discussions with Swansea Council regarding potential events to commemorate the 100 year WW1 anniversary, including the “lighting up” of buildings, a field of remembrance, extended parade and event on remembrance Sunday. Further discussion would be undertaken in the coming months with key partners on the proposals.

He outlined that the 2017 Poppy appeal had raised in excess of £111k in Swansea, which is the highest total ever.

### Care after Combat

Rob Nicholls outlined the main role of the organisation was to assist veterans who are in the judicial system. He outlined that they work well with other agencies to advise/assist veterans both before and after release, and indicated they currently have a 92% success rate of no reoffending within 1 year of release.

### SSAFA

Dave Singletary indicated they continue with their normal casework and referred to the success of the recent SSAFA ball at the Aberavon Beach Hotel which raised over £1800.

#### Blesma

Tom Hall referred to an issue with a reduction of blue badges costs he had been involved with in England relating to veterans, and queried whether something similar could be done locally.

#### UWTSD

Eve Warburton indicated that the University is looking to expand its involvement with the Covenant, re-sign the agreement and try and establish a base in Carmarthen in conjunction with Help for Heroes.

#### Help for Heroes

Amanda Thomas indicated that she had only been in post for 6 weeks, and referred to the coffee mornings to be held at the Bulldogs gym.

#### Royal Navy

Ruth Fleming referred to the Freedom of the City event for HMS Cambria on 17 March. The Royal Marine Band will be in attendance.

She also referred to the Royal Navy Women rugby match against Swansea University to be held at St Helens.

She indicated she was happy to assist with "manpower" for any events for WW1 remembrance events.

She indicated that for this year's Remembrance Day, past service personnel are being encouraged to wear uniforms.

#### Army

Chris Evans referred to the ongoing discussions and plans for this years Armed Forces Day and Air Show which are over the same weekend. He referred to issues around the flag raising, military village and various events over the weekend.

He outlined the change in procedure that has been announced by the MoD relating to the Armed Forces Covenant grants procedure. All current applications are on hold pending the implementation of the new system.

He referred to another upcoming event at The Grange.

#### Swansea Council

Spencer Martin reported that the Authority continues to work towards the award of the gold standard covenant award.

June Burtonshaw indicated she continues to work on individual cases with SSAFA, and referred to the plans for potential series of events around Remembrance Day

The meeting ended at 2.50 pm

**Chair**