



Dinas a Sir Abertawe

Hysbysiad o Gyfarfod

Fe'ch gwahoddir i gyfarfod

## Panel Llofnodwyr Cyfamod y Lluoedd Arfog

Lleoliad: O bell drwy Microsoft Teams

Dyddiad: Dydd Llun, 14 Medi 2020

Amser: 2.00 pm

Cadeirydd: Y Cynghorydd Wendy Lewis

Aelodaeth:

Cynghorwyr: A Pugh

Gwyllo ar-lein:

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### Agenda

Rhif y Dudalen.

- 1 Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb.
- 2 Derbyn datgeliadau o fuddiannau personol a rhagfarnol.  
[www.abertawe.gov.uk/DatgeluCysylltiadau](http://www.abertawe.gov.uk/DatgeluCysylltiadau)
- 3 Cofnodion. 1 - 4  
Cymeradwyo a llofnodi cofnodion y cyfarfod(ydd) blaenorol fel cofnod cywir
- 4 Diweddariad Covid 19 Cyngor Abertawe.
- 5 Diweddariadau gan Y Weinyddiaeth Amddiffyn.
- 6 Prosiect Cyfamod y Lluoedd Arfog Rhanbarthol.
- 7 Cynllun Grant Cyfamod y Lluoedd Arfog.
- 8 Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe - Fforwm y Lluoedd Arfog.
- 9 Diweddariad gan Aelodau'r Panel. 5 - 8

Cyfarfod nesaf: Dydd Llun, 16 Tachwedd 2020 ar 2.00 pm

Huw Evans

**Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Democrataidd**

**Dydd Llun, 7 Medi 2020**

**Cyswilt: Gareth Borsden - 01792 636923**

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# Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

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

Committee Room 1 - Civic Centre, Swansea

Monday, 27 January 2020 at 2.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor W G Lewis (Chair) Presided

### Representing Organisations

Craig Finn	Veterans Club
Thomas Hall	Blesma
Mathew Hendry	Royal Navy Reserve
Fiona Jones	DWP
Phil Jones	Swansea Outdoor Fitness
Anna Looker	Royal British Legion
Natalie McCombe	The Poppy Factory
Kathryn Morgans	Veterans Club
Finola Pickwell	Hafal
Adrian Rabey	British Training Board
Sandy Shaw	Veterans Club
Paul Thomas	Citizens Advice Bureau
Danielle Welsh	Age Cymru

### Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
David Price Deer	Special Events Manager
Grace Halfpenny	Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer
Spencer Martin	Third Sector & Trust Fund Commissioning Co-ordinator

### Apologies for Absence

Alyx Baharie, Tania Davies, Capt Chris Evans, Deb Hamer, Bernice Morgan, Peter Neville and David Singletary

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#### 71 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests.

None.

#### 72 Minutes.

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Panel held on 25 November 2019 be approved as a correct record.

### **73 Armed Forces Covenant Regional Project.**

Grace Halfpenny reported that she had met with the Welsh Local Government Association's Armed Forces Network last week. The Armed Forces Strategy that is currently being finalised by the UK Government was discussed along with certain aspects of the strategy which will be covered by Welsh Government via their devolved powers. Further details will follow in due course.

At the Armed Forces Network meeting the Veteran's Gateway had given a presentation outlining what services they provide via their 'one stop shop' approach. She outlined that the referrals via the veterans gateway in Swansea was one of the lowest for any Council area in Wales.

Members of the panel discussed the referral statistics and outlined that the low numbers in this area was more likely to be due to the comprehensive amount of information already available on the Covenants website in Swansea, the good links and proactive groups/organisations in this area and that the gateway was merely a 'referral/signposting service' and not an actual service provider, rather than a lack of knowledge of the gateway service from veterans in the Swansea area. Grace suggested that the Veteran's Gateway could be invited to give a presentation to a future meeting of the panel.

She also referred to the initiative for local youth groups to attend 'royal gun salutes' in Cardiff. This could include assistance with transport and a tour of the museum in Cardiff castle. She indicated she was able to pass on details of interested groups if required.

She also reported on the meeting she had attended with Swansea headteachers which had raised the profile of service children in education. She was due to meet with Bridgend schools shortly on the same matter. Neath Port Talbot had already been successful in bidding for funding from Welsh Government for two staff specifically to assist with the issues affecting service children, and encouraged other Council's to explore the funding opportunities. Contact would now be maintained with schools, to ensure that the best possible support was available to children from Armed Forces families.

She also sought information from covenant members on their plans for Armed Forces Day/ VE day and VJ day.

Anna Looker outlined the legion's plans for various events across the country for VE/VJ day and outlined that the legion following on from the success of providing travel and accommodation which enabled veterans to attend the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D Day in France last year would be arranging for veterans to visit south east Asia. She asked for details of any people that could potentially attend.

David Price Deer outlined that the Council wouldn't be finalising its budget until 5 March, so as of yet no money had been able to be allocated for any potential VE/VJ day commemorations.

He indicated that he understood that a church service was planned for St Marys on the Sunday closest to VE day and a potential event could be linked to this.

He outlined that the Authority was considering bidding for Welsh Government funding to hold the Wales National Armed Forces Day in Swansea. The bid would be submitted on the basis that the event would be held on the same weekend as the Air Show.

#### **74 Swansea Bay University Health Board, Armed Forces Forum.**

Grace Halfpenny outlined that disappointingly no progress had been made to date with the attendance of a health board representative at panel meetings. She would continue to pursue this matter with the board.

She also would attend the next health board meeting and would continue to chase the board on several issues including Armed Forces Children referrals for those with mental health problems and the withdrawal of the Red Cross support for people leaving hospital.

The suggestion of an Armed Forces Champion on each ward would also be followed up.

#### **75 Update from Panel Members.**

##### Royal British Legion

Anna Looker gave a summary of information from the legion's annual report and conference. She outlined the various campaigns and initiatives that the organisation had been involved with over the last year including the 75 Anniversary of D Day, World War 1 Service at Llandaff Cathedral and various remembrance day events.

She outlined it had been confirmed that the census in 2021 will contain a question relating to 'service within the armed forces'.

She referred to the plans for VE and VJ day commemorations and that the Legion itself will be 100 years old in May 2020 with various events planned to commemorate this.

She outlined the ongoing internal review and audit that the legion is currently undertaken.

She referred to the part time position for an advice & information officer in Carmarthen that was currently being advertised.

##### DWP

Fiona Jones outlined the 'self employment' event that is being held at the Grand Hotel on 27 February.

##### British Training Board

Adrian Rabey reported that following on from a recent meeting with Welsh Government, funding had now been agreed to establish two hubs in Swansea and

Newport. These would open in February and provide help and assistance to veterans and their families looking for training and work opportunities.

He referred to the excellent links developed with both Careers Wales on training/employment etc and the Aneurin Bevan Health Board on a veteran's strategy. The health board's strategy will potentially be used as template for all health boards going forward and links in with veterans and their families.

He outlined the links developed with the YMCA in Swansea for young people to access funding for sporting activities.

He referred to the links recently established with the Buckingham construction group who are the developers of the new arena in Swansea. These links have been developed in conjunction with Swansea Council and will provide a guaranteed interview subject to the person having the necessary qualifications.

He also outlined the process and assistance the company can provide to veterans and their families in getting their military skills and experiences converted into relevant qualifications to use going forward.

#### Hafal

Finola Pickwell outlined that funding/grants are available from the Armed Forces Covenant Trust for activities for veterans with mental health issues. She indicated she could assist any potential applicants with their submissions and would circulate the relevant information following the meeting.

#### General Issues

Wendy Lewis referred to the recent announcement of a veteran's railcard which will be formally launched in November.

Spencer Martin outlined that veterans are able to access the various foodbanks in Swansea, he could assist with any queries and provide information where requested.

Grace Halfpenny requested information on the Single Advice Fund, Paul Thomas from the Citizens Advice Bureau indicated he would seek information for the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 2.55 pm

**Chair**

# Agenda Item 9



## Armed Forces Community Covenant Signatories Panel

14 September 2020

### Update from Panel Members

#### Help For Heroes

Help for Heroes are currently running all services virtually these include:

- Welfare case management support - <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/welfare-service/>
- Clinical Nurse Physical Health support - <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/physical-health-support/>
- Hidden Wounds Psychological support - <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/mental-health-and-wellbeing/hidden-wounds-service/>
- Individual Grants support- <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/financial-support-grants/>
- Virtual Wellbeing Recovery College courses such as, helping with sleep, anger management etc.. <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/mental-health-and-wellbeing/sleep-for-wellbeing/>
- Band of Brothers/sisters virtual get togethers. <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/fellowship-groups/>

We currently have no waiting lists for any service. We currently have no confirmed dates for face to face activities or re-opening of local hubs throughout Wales.

You can refer wounded veterans or their loved ones through our website: [helpforheroes.org.uk/getsupport](https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/getsupport) or email [wales.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk](mailto:wales.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk)

#### Blesma

Blesma Wales and West continues to provide direct welfare support and grants to members and widows to ensure that their needs have been met quickly. The Support Officer (Tom Hall) has dealt with Prosthetics issues and liaised with NHS ALACs closely in support of members. The Support and Outreach Officers, along with the help of Blesma Volunteers and Members who are not 'at-risk,' are supporting with essential tasks such as shopping, paying bills, repairs to disability and mobility aids, and offering Blesma befriending calls and contacts through Welfare and wider Volunteers. Blesma continue to collaborate closely with other services, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, agencies and local community groups to provide help with War Pension, benefits and entitlements issues. They are offering practical or emotional

support to Blesma members who may be isolated or lonely in communities across Wales and West. In all aspects it has been “business as usual” with essential physical visits by the Blesma Support Officer taking place to those most in need. Outreach Officers have been constantly in touch with members by phone, video calls and virtual events, which have replaced physical get-togethers. The period between March to August has been extremely busy with more younger veterans being supported with poor mental health and older members assisted with the purchase and repair of mobility and disability aids. With the reopening of Limb Centres the Support Officer has been in close touch with ALACs to address prosthetics concerns, ensuring that provision requirements have been met and priority appointments offered. Blesma staff and Volunteers are taking every precaution to ensure they are not a potential risk to Members and for all member contact a comprehensive risk assessment process has been carried out.

### **Activities and Events**

Blesma postponed all physical UK and overseas Blesma Events until at least the end of August but all Activities and Events in September and October are under review. Local Wales and West events are similarly affected, but we are hoping to start some limited Outreach activity soon. Blesma Wales and West Outreach developed online and video activities, including weekly virtual Tea and Toast, interactive Quizzes, fitness sessions and Amputee Health Discussion Groups. The Outreach Officer is also running events such as virtual Escape Rooms and seated yoga which are very popular. Blesma have also continued their Making Generation R (Resilient) sessions online, running communication workshops for members and widows, including recently extending the sessions to Secondary Schools and young people around the UK.

### **Information For Our Members and Supporting Agencies**

If members require any additional support at this time or agencies have veterans who they wish to **refer for Blesma support**, or they find members in need, they can make contact with the Blesma Support Officer: Tom Hall - Tel: 07780165085, E mail: [bsowest@blesma.org](mailto:bsowest@blesma.org)

More information: <https://blesma.org/news-media/blesma-news/> or [www.blesma.org](http://www.blesma.org)

### **Citizens Advice**

At Swansea and Neath Port Talbot’s Citizen Advice, we have had to stop all face to face services but have been delivering advice via phone and email throughout. We are still developing our plans for a safe way to return to face to face advice, in the meantime our contact details are:

- 1) We have set up an email service: [help@citizensadviceSNPT.org.uk](mailto:help@citizensadviceSNPT.org.uk), where you can email us your queries. We will try to respond to you as soon as we can.
- 2) All our advisers are still available to give advice over the phone, and where necessary a telephone appointment for this can be made. We now have more advisers answering the phones than we did before, to make this change run as smoothly as possible. You can receive advice from us by telephoning 0300 3309 082.



3) Most of our advice is available online, at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk). If you would like help to fill in a benefit form for example, our website has a step by step guide to help with this.

4) Universal Credit claims. Support is available from our Help to Claim team online and over the phone. Go to [citizensadvice.org.uk/help-to-claim](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/help-to-claim) or phone 08000 241 220. Calls are free and lines are open 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. This is a national service but whoever you get through to will be able to help you, wherever you live.

### **The Poppy Factory**

Natalie McCombe advises that she is now back with the Poppy Factory after a 4 month furlough. However, the Poppy Factory was still operational and during that time 5 of her clients gained employment. Natalie is now re-engaging with her network to encourage new referrals. Clients are not being seen face to face, although Natalie and her colleagues can offer the full service over Teams, Zoom, telephone, text, whatsapp or email. They are also on facebook, linkedin, Twitter and Instagram. Contact details are available on the web site where eligible Veterans can also register [www.poppyfactory.org/register](http://www.poppyfactory.org/register) . You can also check a Veteran is eligible on the web site. If you have any queries on referrals or criteria, Natalie says to drop her an email or text and she will ring you or the potential client to discuss the query.

Natalie McCrombe, Employability Consultant:

Telephone 020 8940 3305

[NatalieM@poppyfactory.org](mailto:NatalieM@poppyfactory.org)

Mobile number 07468476407.

### **Woody's Lodge**

During COVID 19 restrictions Woodys has continued to maintain its Welfare and Support Services mainly by Zoom technology, with major support directed at PiPs and UC benefits. Woodys has run bi-weekly virtual "Brew Up" Meetings and has maintained its weekly direct phone calls to 998 veterans across Wales over the last 12 weeks.

Our 3 Main Hubs are now open with Social Distancing/ Cleaning /Track and Trace requirements in place in place, Beside Barry and Colwyn Bay we have now opened our West Wales Farm hub in Ceredigion. 40 minute drive from Swansea.

Working with Local Authorities, we plan to re-open our 12 Urban Drop In Centres across Wales.

Our latest project funded by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, commenced in August, is to develop direct links with Royal Navy Community in South East Wales, Swansea included, particularly in support for the older RN/RM veteran and for younger families that require health and welfare support. This project has already been in contact with veterans living in Swansea.

Phone 01446 781793

<https://www.woodyslodge.org/>