



City and County of Swansea

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

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Monday, 12 July 2021 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor W G Lewis (Chair) Presided

Representing Organisations

Bethan Dennedy	Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer
CPO Rob Evans	HMS Cambria
Squadron Leader Phil. C. Flower	Royal British Legion Swansea Branch
Steve Fry	Deputy Lieutenant
David Griggs	SSAFA
Sarah Mallaghan	DWP
Julian North	Help for Heroes
Steve Spill	Swansea Bay University Health Board
Stephen Sullivan	Hafal
Yasmin Todd	Regional School Liaison Officer – Service Children (West Wales)
Neil Tomlin	Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund
Capt Huw Williams	157 Squadron
John Williams	Royal British Legion
Victoria Williams	Veterans NHS Wales

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
Dan Garnell	Local Area Coordinator for Swansea Marina, Brunswick and Sandfields
Spencer Martin	Third Sector & Trust Fund Commissioning Co-ordinator
Emma Thomas	Special Events

Apologies for Absence

Alyx Baharie, Rob Denman, Caryn Furlow, Louise Fleet, Thomas Hall, Debbie Hamer, Rhodri Jones, Christine Morrell, Councillor Alyson Pugh, Nick Vanderpump and Melvin Watts

106 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests from Members.

None.

107 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Panel held on 15 March 2021 be approved as a correct record

108 Boots on the Ground Project.

The Chair indicated that Melvin Watts had sent his apologies to the meeting, following a recent family bereavement.

The item would be deferred to the November meeting.

109 Armed Forces Covenant Regional Project.

Bethan Dennedy indicated that she would formally take up her new position of the regional armed forces liaison officer next week.

She looked forward to working with members of the panel.

110 Update from MOD.

Capt Huw Williams reported that the reserves had recently returned to face to face training which was fully Covid compliant.

He referred to the “crossing borders” group that is meeting on Friday, with a view to starting an initiative over the summer months to link up with local community groups. He indicated he would be happy to assist any panel members and groups to become involved.

111 Swansea Bay University Health Board, Armed Forces Forum.

Steve Spill reported that the health board had held its meeting in May, which had been well attended.

He outlined that the authority is currently undertaken a staff survey of its 12500 staff, part of which is to establish how many staff have any military links and background.

He detailed that the prosthetic team have recently taking on several additional staff, which has increased their capacity to assist with both veterans and the public.

He outlined he had attended the flag raising ceremony in Neath on Armed Forces Day.

Victoria Williams outlined she had received 34 referrals to their service, 27 of which had opted in via the new online service and remain in touch with her team.

She outlined that the new digital provision is working well.

She outlined she had done radio interviews with the Wave around Armed Forces Day, and referred to an allotment project in Baglan which has been established with help from the bulldogs club.

112 Supporting Pupils from Service Families

Yasmin Todd reported that the number of service children identified in Swansea schools has risen to 114 in 34 schools, this is a welcome increase from the 92 at the time of the last meeting and she outlined she had visited 20% of the schools in Swansea to date, as well as schools in other areas.

She indicated that there are currently 6 Swansea schools involved in CPD sessions. These sessions were launched in April which was the month of the military child.

She indicated the aim and ambition to create a service network between schools in the new school year.

She outlined that she was awaiting confirmation of additional funding from Welsh Government for extra work and liaison between schools.

113 Update from Panel Members.

Royal British Legion

Sqd Ldr Phil Flower outlined that Swansea Council had recently approved the Lord Mayors Cadets revised scheme, which will see 1 cadet from each of the forces appointed.

He outlined he was anticipating announcement and proposals for Remembrance Week to come forward shortly. A lot will depend on any restrictions at the time.

He outlined that discussions continue with Swansea Council on 2022 Armed Forces Day and the Air Show. Further discussions with the various reservists groups around the proposals for next year will be needed.

He outlined the potential for expanding the Armed Forces Day event.

Swansea Council

Emma Thomas indicated that the Air Show/Armed Forces Day would need to remain on the same weekend for logistical reasons.

She and the Chair indicated that the flag raising ceremony on Armed Forces day this year had worked very well, and could potentially be repeated going forward.

The Chair in response to queries referred and outlined the various events that had been held over armed forces week, most of which were online due to the restrictions.

The Chair also outlined that the authority had agreed to take on the future maintenance and upkeep of all the memorials in its area. This should greatly assist the various veterans groups going forward.

DWP

Sarah Mallaghan outlined that her organisation has established 11 armed forces leads across the UK, with 3 in Wales. She is the veterans champion for this area.

SSAFA

David Griggs indicated that the Carmarthen and West Glam branches had now merged, and were being run from the premises in Alamein Road in Swansea.

He indicated he was attending his first meeting of this group and looked forward to working with panel members.

RAF Benevolent Fund

Neil Tomlin outlined that a revised and updated guide to their services had recently been produced and was happy to share it with panel members that needed it.

He outlined that the link established with the prison service after the previous meeting has been working very well.

The group's links with the NHS continue to also expand.

The meeting ended at 2.38 pm

Chair