



City and County of Swansea

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

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Monday, 8 November 2021 at 2.00 pm

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

### Representing Organisations

Alyx Baharie	SCVS
Moawia Bin-Sufya	Care After Combat
Pat Dunmore	Citizens Advice Bureau
Steve Fry	Deputy Lieutenant
Kirsty Gronow	The Poppy Factory
Julian North	Help for Heroes
Antony Rabey	Aartic Training
Katie Ruddock	Ospreys Rugby
Sandy Shaw	Veterans Club
Stephen Sullivan	Hafal
Yasmin Todd	Regional School Liaison Officer – Service Children (West Wales)
Neil Tomlin	Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund
Victoria Williams	Veterans NHS Wales

### Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
Spencer Martin	Third Sector & Trust Fund Commissioning Co-ordinator
Natalie McCombe	Local Area Coordinator
Emma Thomas	Special Events

### Apologies for Absence

Jackie Davies, Louise Fleet, Sq Ldr Phil Flower, Chris Morrell & Steve Spill

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

None.

#### 115 Minutes.

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Panel held on 12 July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

**116 Boots on the Ground Project.**

Melvin Watts gave a brief overview of the scheme he was involved in which aimed to help veterans, particularly those with mental health problems. He outlined he covered the area of South West England and all of Wales.

More information can be found at:

[Boots on the Ground - Alabare](#)

**117 Armed Forces Covenant Regional Project.**

Bethan Dennedy was not present at the meeting.

Updates would be provided at the next meeting.

**118 Update from MOD.**

Capt Huw Williams reported that 223 Squadron had linked up with the Ospreys for the recent game against Munster. The event had been arranged to promote that the unit and recruitment was back up and running and both the displays and engagement with the crowd had proved successful.

He referred to the links recently developed with Llandovery College and Coleg Sir-Gar and the engagement undertaken with the Muslim Council for Wales.

He indicated that unfortunately again due to the Covid pandemic, participation with events to commemorate Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday were much reduced, but outlined that cadets from Swansea and Neath would be taking part in a parade in Port Talbot on Sunday.

He outlined that cadets are back in face to face training, but detailed some issues relating to Covid that are impacting on training and development.

**119 Swansea Bay University Health Board, Armed Forces Forum.**

Victoria Williams outlined she had received 16 referrals to their service, and had 18 people on the waiting list.

She indicated that the Clinical network meeting had been held last week and had been well attended.

She referred to various other work streams and projects being undertaken.

Due to the apologies from other Health Board representatives, a written update would be circulated after the meeting.

**120 Supporting Pupils from Service Families.**

Yasmin Todd reported verbally and updated the panel on various issues relating to initiatives and projects aimed at helping service children including the new scheme

being developed with SSE Cymru to develop gold, silver and bronze awards for schools. She also referred to the funding from Welsh Government which will be used in Swansea, particularly the "little troopers" scheme.

She indicated a full written update would be circulated after the meeting

## **121 Update from Panel Members.**

### Ospreys Rugby

Katie Ruddock outlined that the 'In the Squad' scheme was up and running in its second venue at Meadowview now, as well as the one in Briton Ferry.

She outlined that participation levels weren't great, but discussion took place around the impact of PIPS and veterans taking part in the activities. It was outlined that the local veterans DWP contact had indicated in another forum that that participation in such activities wouldn't affect benefits. Clarity would be sought from the DWP and information reported back to the next meeting.

### Swansea Council

Councillor Wendy Lewis reported that the Leader of Council had recently announced and established a new fund to support and assist veterans groups with financial assistance. The detailed criteria for applications and application forms would be finalised shortly and circulated to all members of the Panel.

The meeting ended at 2.35 pm

**Chair**