



City and County of Swansea

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

**Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS**

**Teams**

**Monday, 10 October 2022 at 2.00 pm**

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

### **Representing Organisations**

Alyx Baharie	SCVS
Moawia Bin-Sufyan	Care After Combat
Kev Bogdan	Change Step
Stephen Boswell	SSAFA
Wing Cdr Phil Flower	Royal British Legion Swansea Branch
WO1 Rob Govier	HMS Cambria
Kirsty Gronow	Poppy Factory
Thomas Hall	Blesma
Wayne Jenkins	Swansea Veterans Hub
Phil Jones	SO Fit
Dai Llewellyn	British Training Board
Sarah Mallaghan	DWP
Adrian Rabey	British Training Board
Tom Sloane	Ospreys Rugby
Paul Smith	RAF Veteran
Stephen Sullivan	Hafal
Neil Tomlin	Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund
David Watkins	Swansea Veterans Hub
Dai Williams	Armed Forces Bikers
Capt Huw Williams	157 Squadron
Victoria Williams	Veterans NHS Wales

### **Officer(s)**

Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
David Price Deer	Special Events Manager
Spencer Martin	Third Sector & Trust Fund Commissioning Co-ordinator

### **Also present**

Neil Cornish	Northampton University
Mallika Singh	Nacro

### **Apologies for Absence**

CPO Rob Evans, Louise Fleet, Steve Fry, Debbie Hamer, Jon Hinkin, Nick Marsh, Finola Pickwell and Yasmin Todd

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

None.

**10 Minutes.**

**Agreed** that the minutes of the Panel held on 11 July 2022 be approved as correct record.

**11 FiMT - Forces in Mind Trust.**

Neil Cornish and Mallika Singh outlined and detailed the scheme being funded by FiMT in conjunction with Northampton University and Nacro to try and review and improve the identification of veterans in the justice system and monitor their subsequent take up of support once identified.

The scheme covers Wales, England and Scotland and a national phase of interviews has been completed, but a more local phase is now looking to be developed in Swansea & Bridgend.

He indicated that they had contacted the Armed Forces leads in both the local Police and Probation services and would seek to further develop these links. Contact had also been made with Swansea Prison and a visit there was planned in November.

He asked for any volunteers from the various groups and organisations from within the Panel to come forward to be interviewed.

They can be contacted via [Neil.Cornish@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:Neil.Cornish@northampton.ac.uk) and [Mallika.Singh@nacro.org.uk](mailto:Mallika.Singh@nacro.org.uk)

**12 Armed Forces Covenant Regional Project.**

Bethan Denny was unable to attend the meeting, an update would be circulated following the meeting.

**13 Update from MOD.**

Capt Huw Williams reported that it has been a busy 3 months since the last meeting which has seen all military units within the area working hard to both deliver events and provide support to various events.

Many military personnel were deployed on Op UNITY over July and August in support of the Commonwealth Games. This was a great spectacle and our boys and girls got free access onto some of the events taking place.

More recently all services commemorated the sad passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II by undertaking commemorative and thanksgiving services locally, nationally and across the UK.

We also had the opportunity to welcome King Charles III to Wales which was a great honour for those armed forces personnel taking part in this significant event.

We have a full diary of events coming up, some of the key highlights are:

Oct 22: The Ospreys are signing the Armed Forces Covenant before their game against the Stormers. The Ospreys do offer free admittance to their games for serving members of the regular and reserve armed forces.

29 Oct 22: Poppy Appeal Launch

11 Nov: Armistice Day

11 Nov: Mayor's Armed Forces Festival – Princess Royal Theatre, Port Talbot

12 Nov: Lord Mayor's Armed Forces Festival – Brangwyn Hall, Swansea

13 Nov: Remembrance Parades across the area with a Church Service in St Mary's church at 1400 hrs

He outlined that the regiment has recently returned from its Annual Continuous Training exercise over in Germany. This had proved a great success.

If there are any events coming up that organisations would like us to attend, please try and give us as much notice as possible as we need 6 weeks' notice to submit the necessary public military event clearance forms and we will try and attend wherever possible.

WO Rob Govier outlined the close links that exist between HMS Cambria and the Tawe Division in Swansea.

He indicated he had not yet seen a programme for the Remembrance Period, but was happy to provide a uniformed presence to events where ever possible.

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

Steve Spill and Christine Morrell were both unable to attend the meeting, an update would be circulated following the meeting.

Victoria Williams reported that Veterans NHS Wales have had 28 people referred into their service over the last 3 months, 19 have opted in and been assessed, with their average time for assessment being currently only 2 weeks so we are doing very well at the moment and the average time for treatment is around 8-10 weeks.

The last SBUHB Armed Forces Forum meeting was held on 8<sup>th</sup> September and the next one is scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022, and all panel Members are welcome to attend.

Welsh Govt have asked the Health Board to attend Swansea Prison and to start seeing veterans held there. We will start attending the prison next month and start to offer any veterans with service related mental health problems an assessment.

Due the length of time that treatment takes and the make up of the prisoners in Swansea, it is unlikely that treatment will begin there, but they will be assessed and the results can be passed to their local health boards on release.

The randomised control trial for EMDR has been given the green light in SBUHB and will begin shortly comparing online/in person provision and she indicated she is looking for veterans to participate in the trial.

#### **15 Supporting Pupils from Service Families.**

Yasmin Todd was unable to attend the meeting, an update would be circulated following the meeting.

## **16 Update from Panel Members.**

### Swansea Council

Wendy Lewis asked panel members if they have a veteran that is looking for assistance from the Council, that they be referred to her in the first instance so she can try and direct them to the appropriate people in the relevant departments.

Spencer Martin outlined that the council's veterans fund is still available for applications.

### Ospreys Rugby

Tom Sloane repeated that the Ospreys will be signing the Armed Forces Covenant before their game against the Stormers this Friday.

He thanked the 3 services for their support in the build up to the game, and indicated there would be various activities going on before the game and that cadets would parade around the field at half time during the game.

9 local schools would also be in attendance at the game.

He indicated he would be applying for funding for the In The Squad initiative that they run, as the current level of funding is coming to an end.

### Poppy Factory

Kirsty Gronow indicated that if panel members know of anyone who could benefit from her organisations support and help, they were welcome to refer them to her.

She outlined that she would be keen to attend any veterans hub events in the area that occur on weekdays.

### British Training Board

Adrian Rabey outlined that the Proud programme which aims to get veterans and their family members into employment with the Civil Service is still available to join, and is fully funded in Wales.

He detailed an event to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> October at the Village Hotel which is linked with security roles with Border Force.

He indicated that they continue to work with Business Wales on their Veterans Enterprise UK programme which has grants of 2k for new start-up businesses and is still available until March 2023, if anyone needs help to apply, please get in touch.

### SO Fit

Phil Jones outlined that they had run some mental health taster sessions in schools in NPT which had proved successful. The aim of the sessions was to support service children who have parents/guardians currently in service.

This will hopefully be rolled out to other NPT and Swansea schools in the future.

We are currently writing a well-being programme for veterans, which is awaiting some funding and partner organisations to link into, and indicated he would contact Tom at the Ospreys to try and link in with In The Squad initiative that is already out there. It will be targeted at veterans with PTSD.

He outlined that SO Fit had picked up a silver award at the recent Armed Forces Covenant Awards and the company employees are currently 90% ex-military. They will be looking to employ more veterans and reservists going forward.

He indicated that himself and others had resigned from the board of the Swansea Veterans Hub in July, so was no longer involved with the group.

### Royal British Legion

Phil Flower spoke further to the update from the MOD and outlined that he details currently of 23 events around the Remembrance Period. He would circulate a list after the meeting to panel members.

He outlined that the RBL is always looking to recruit people to collect for the Poppy Appeal in the local area to try and recover the amount collected to pre pandemic levels.

Tom Sloane indicated that there was an opportunity if practical to have a bucket collection at this Fridays game

Phil outlined that the Swans v Wigan fixture on 5<sup>th</sup> November will have an Armed Forces presence at the game.

He also outlined that on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> of October at 10.30am in the Quadrant Centre, Swansea, a Battle of Britain Memorial Exhibition will be launched by the Air Officer for Wales.

### Armed Forces Bikers

Dai Williams outlined that a new drop in centre for veterans in being launched this Sunday at the Copr Bar in Castle Street, Swansea between 10 -12, and all were welcome.

The aim is to roll out the drop in sessions to weekdays as well going forward.

The meeting ended at 2.36 pm

**Chair**