



City and County of Swansea

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

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

**Teams**

**Monday, 10 July 2023 at 2.00 pm**

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

### **Representing Organisations**

Frankee Auditano	Student Nurse
Alyx Baharie	SCVS
Lt Cdr Andy Davies	Royal Navy
Ross Edwards	Garrison Farm
Wing Cdr Phil Flower	Royal British Legion Swansea Branch
Caryn Furlow-Harris	Neath Port Talbot Council
Phil Jones	SO Fit / Veterans RV
Chris Kelshaw	Garrison Farm
Cllr Elliott King	Swansea Council
Emma Reeves	Regional School Liaison Officer
Paul Smith	Veterans RV
Tony Strutt	Veter Aid
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

### **Apologies for Absence**

Ruth Birch, Pat Dunmore, Louise Fleet, Steve Fry, Rob Govier, Jon Hinkin, Natalie McCombe, Christine Morrell, Steve Spill, Neil Tomlin and Capt Huw Williams

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

None.

### **34 Minutes.**

**Agreed** that the minutes of the Panel held on 17 April 2023 be approved as correct record.

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

Caryn Furlow-Harris (NPT Council) outlined that Bethan had moved to another post within NPT at the end of June.

The Armed Forces Covenant Officer job has been advertised and applications have been received. Shortlisting will take place shortly prior to interviews.

An update would be provided to the next meeting.

### **36 Update from MOD.**

Andy Davies (Royal Navy) gave a brief update and reported that HMS Cambria has been extended to 2033, which is to be welcomed. An affiliation day will be held on 31<sup>st</sup> July, and invitations would follow shortly.

He outlined that the service continues its recruitment of both regular and reserve positions.

He referred to the service's involvement in the Armed Forces Day event in Newport and looked forward to year's event in Swansea.

He outlined that the Chair had been invited to an event at the Swansea Sea Cadets this evening, and outlined that recruitment for the cadets had gone well during the Airshow.

The Chair outlined that Capt Huw Williams was abroad on deployment and unable to attend today's meeting. He had submitted an update, which would be circulated following the meeting.

The update summary is as follows;

This most recent Military Support Meeting was held on the 13 June 2023 where we looked at forthcoming events that have now concluded, areas discussed were:

Month of the Military Child – 25 April 23. Event was delivered at The Grange ARC for service children in conjunction with 160 Bde Regional Engagement Team.

It was great that the Lord Mayor of Swansea and the Mayor of Neath & Port Talbot were able to attend, along with the Lord Lieutenant and our Armed Forces Champion, Mrs Wendy Lewis. The children participated in several activities which included poetry writing, mindfulness yoga, problem solving and an historical look at life in bygone days.

Kings Coronation – local events were held on the 30 Apr 23 in Neath and Swansea. This was a really special day, and it was great that so many Service Personnel, Cadets and Veterans were able to attend these services. A massive thank you to everyone who helped organise, deliver and attend this very special day.

Armed Forces Day/week took place between the 19-25 Jun 23 : 19 Jun @ Neath & Port Talbot and Sat 24 Jun in Swansea. Once again, this was a well represented event, particularly by the Cadets and Veterans community. The Pipers of the Air Cadets were absolutely fantastic, could my personal thanks be passed onto these young individuals.

Wales National Airshow was delivered over 30 Jun – 2 Jul 23. The crowds were absolutely massive and there were lots of activities taking place. We had numerous military stands present over the weekend.

**Forthcoming Events:**

Duke of Edinburgh Gower Walk 9 Sep 23. Either a 22 Mile (Rhossili start) of 10 mile (Port Eynon) walk around some of the most scenic coastline in the world.

Remembrance Events 2023: The Royal British Legion request support over the Poppy Appeal fortnight to assist with collecting and selling of poppies so that the RBL can continue to do it's sterling work.

If any veterans or veteran organisations would like to assist, please contact Wg Cdr Phill Flower or pass your details through to myself and I will forward them on.

27 Oct – Princess Royal Theatre, Port Talbot Festival of Remembrance

28 Oct 23 – Flag Raising and Garden of Remembrance opening

4 Nov Brangwen Hall Festival of Remembrance

11 Nov 23: Poppies to Paddington – Swansea train Station – by invite only.

11 Nov 23: Poppies in the Square Swansea (more details to follow)

11 Nov – Swansea Cenotaph, Mumbles Road – 1030 parade

12 Nov – Port Talbot – 1100 hrs – 223 Tpt Sqn

12 Nov – Swansea Cenotaph

12 Nov – The Gnoll, Neath

12 Nov – St Mary's Church – 1400 hrs

157 Regt, 223 Sqn provided support to many agencies in the local area, and it was good that we were being asked to support events such as open days and providing activity sessions for local groups. Please note, we do not 'cherry pick' which organisations or agencies we supported but attempted to assist those who requested our help and assistance. There are rumblings around the veterans' charities that I have my 'favourites' this is not the case.

Also note, we are unable to provide Military resources at Nil Cost for charitable activities that are raising funds for charity organisations. Organisations that can potentially be used are the cadet forces, and charities should liaise directly with these.

We are also engaging with other local groups in relation to briefing them on what the Army Reserve entails and what our role is. This is to provide clarity to our role. Please use us if you think that we can add value.

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

Victoria Williams reported that Veterans NHS Wales have had 27 people referred into their service over the last 3 months, 21 of which have been assessed.

A new therapist has been appointed and will start in early October, which is to be welcomed.

The loss of a therapist has been helped by the addition to the team of a student nurse Frankie, who as part of her Masters in Mental Health Nursing Studies has been assisting the team and dealing with patients before the commence their therapy, this has and will continue to assist greatly until the new person starts.

Other members of the Health Board had given apologies for the meeting, but had submitted an update which would be circulated after the meeting.

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

Emma Reeves reported that Welsh Government education directorate has funded the whole SSE whole team until the end of the academic year in 2024.

She and a colleague had attended the Airshow and seen lots of people during the event which had proved a great success, which can be built on next year.

Her plan was to get more schools on board with their Armed Forces Friendly Schools Status.

### **39 Veter Aid.**

Tony Strutt spoke further to the circulated information which detailed the background to the establishment of the group, which aims to use veterans to support charity/disaster relief projects in the UK and abroad.

If any individuals or organisations wanted to get involved, they can e mail him at [info@v-aid.org.uk](mailto:info@v-aid.org.uk) .

### **40 Update from Panel Members.**

#### So Fit/Veterans RV

Phil Jones outlined that he had been involved and supported Capt Huw & Emma in the Month of the Military Child event at the Grange in April, which had been a great success.

He outlined that his organisation continues to deliver mental health sessions to service children in Swansea schools, this seems to be working well and will hopefully be expanded going forward.

He detailed a link up with Swansea University that has been developed looking into benefits of cold water therapy for veterans. He outlined that volunteers would be needed to assist with the research going forward.

He also thanked Swansea Council for the funding assistance for the Veterans RV swimming group.

### Garrison Farm

Ross Edwards introduced a new member of the Team Chris Kelshaw.

He also indicated that the farm would hopefully be in a position to bring crops to market for sale shortly.

### Swansea Council

David Price Deer thanked all the organisations for their help and assistance in a delivering another extremely successful Airshow. He outlined the event couldn't be delivered without their help and goodwill.

Spencer Martin echoed the comments and outlined the different people from all over the country he had spoken to whilst in the Covenant Tent over the weekend.

Hopefully the Airshow in tandem with Welsh Armed Forces Day in Swansea next year can only be a bigger and better event.

The meeting ended at 2.20 pm

**Chair**