



City and County of Swansea

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

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Monday, 7 March 2022 at 2.00 pm

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

### **Representing Organisations**

Alyx Baharie	SCVS
Moawia Bin-Sufya	Care After Combat
Kev Bogdan	Change Step
Glyn Davies	SSAFA
Bethan Dennedy	Armed Forces Covenant Officer
Steve Fry	Deputy Lieutenant
WO1 Rob Govier	HMS Cambria
Jonathan Hinkin	Swansea University
Louisa Huxtable-Thomas	Swansea University
Anna Looker	Royal British Legion
Adrian Rabey	British Training Board
Tom Sloane	Ospreys Rugby
Stephen Sullivan	Hafal
Neil Tomlin	Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund
Kelly Walter	
Capt Huw Williams	157 Squadron
John Williams	Royal British Legion
Victoria Williams	Veterans NHS Wales

### **Officer(s)**

Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
Bethan Dennedy	Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer
Spencer Martin	Third Sector & Trust Fund Commissioning Co-ordinator
Natalie McCombe	Local Area Coordinator

### **Apologies for Absence**

Louise Fleet, Sq Ldr Phil Flower, Thomas Hall, Antony Rabey, Sandy Shaw, Steve Spill and Yasmin Todd

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

None.

**131 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Panel held on 17 January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

**132 Armed Forces Covenant Regional Project.**

Bethan Dennedy outlined that the 2 applications from the Armed Forces Bikers and Swansea Hub under the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund mentioned at the last meeting and been considered and approved at a recent meeting with herself, Councillors Wendy Lewis and Alyson Pugh and Spencer Martin.

She indicated the Battle of Britain Anniversary exhibition is currently being worked on, but more details will be shared when available.

The Armed Forces newsletter for June is currently being compiled and she asked panel members to submit any articles if they had any to be included in the publication.

**133 Update from MOD.**

Capt Huw Williams reported that the service continues to assist the Ambulance Service in its daily operations, this is currently due to continue until the end of March.

He indicated that the recent storms had impacted on recent events and had caused damage to several trees at the Grange.

The new training is due to start in April, with several events planned around the country.

He also outlined that the regiment will get a new commanding officer in April with Lieutenant Colonel Briggs replacing Lieutenant Colonel Beaumont.

He again stated that if people wanted the units involvement in the Platinum Jubilee, Armed Forces week and the Air Show they should get in touch as soon as is practicable due to the necessary heightened security clearances needed to approve events with service personnel due to events in the Ukraine.

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

Victoria Williams outlined that during the last quarter she had received 35 referrals to their service, of which 24 had been assessed and 48 people had also been discharged, but had indicated that the waiting list for services was around 3-4 months with currently 7 people waiting for assessment.

She outlined that the next Clinical Network meeting will be held next week, all are welcome and the meeting is being held in person at the Bulldogs in Baglan.

She outlined that the service is currently preparing a 'digital story' for the website/social media etc on what the service provides, which will give a brief 2/3

minute overview of the veterans service in Swansea Bay area. There will also be a patient's story perspective recorded as well.

She outlined that the service has just completed the Royal College of Psychiatrists audit of services to ensure a gold standard of service is provided, some amendments to the service and five minor areas were identified for adoption going forward, such as a carers leaflets.

An away day of all the NHS Veterans services in Wales was held recently with the aim of improving and progressing each services across the country.

She indicated that her research on EMDR on combat trauma has been sent away for publishing, and said the service was about to start another randomised control trial comparing online with face to face therapy.

### **135 Supporting Pupils from Service Families**

The Chair indicated that Yasmin was unable to attend the meeting, but had e mailed information through, which would be distributed after the meeting.

### **136 Update from Panel Members.**

#### Swansea University

Louisa Huxtable-Thomas and Jonathan Hinkin introduced themselves as new Armed Forces Champions from the University and outlined that the University was looking to sign up to the Covenant by the end of March.

They both looked forward to working with members of the panel.

#### Royal British Legion

John Williams outlined that his organisation are doing research on benefits for veterans and trying to establish that all authorities disregard war pensions and armed forces compensation when considering council tax reductions and housing benefits claims. He would be getting in touch with all Councils across the country.

#### British Training Board

Adrian Rabey outlined the Barriers to Start Up grants of up to £2000 for new businesses are still available up until the end of March, as are grants from Swansea Council of £1000.

The Proud programme with the Civil Service goes live this Thursday, the 10 people involved will undertake a 12 week programme of 4 days on the job training with the other day based around mentoring.

The Security academy with funding from the DWP is still available for unemployed veterans with a guaranteed job in various roles at the end across Wales.

Minutes of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Signatories Panel (07.03.2022)  
Cont'd

He also outlined that 90% funding is available for Close Protection Training, so the cost to veterans/reservists would be £250 not £200.

The meeting ended at 2.20 pm

**Chair**