

Title: ARMED FORCES BRIEFING PAPER

For: ALL MEMBERS

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide Members with information on the Council's approach and current support for The Armed Forces Community.

## THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

The Armed Forces Covenant represents a promise by the nation that those who serve or have served, and their families, are treated fairly.

The covenant is a national responsibility involving government, businesses, local authorities, charities and the public. It focuses on helping members of the Armed Forces Community have the same access to government and commercial services and products as any other citizen. It covers such issues as healthcare; education; housing; benefits and tax; family life; transition and support after service.

The covenant aims to bring together the armed forces community and the civilian community on a local level, nurturing mutual understanding and raising awareness of issues faced by the armed forces.

It is a pledge that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy and society they serve with their lives.

Monmouthshire County Council was one of the first local authorities in Wales to sign the Covenant in October 2012.

## DEFENCE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant.

By becoming a forces friendly employer you can benefit from the wide range of unique skills and experiences that reservists and veterans can bring to your organisation. Employing armed forces community members can help diversify the talent in your workforce.

Monmouthshire County Council secured Silver status in 2014 and will be making the application for Gold status in 2020.

## ARMED FORCES COVENANT TRUST FUND

The Covenant Fund has £10M a year to fund projects that support the Armed Forces Community and has four broad funding themes now and in future years:



**ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT**  
LLUOEDD ARFOG  
**CYFAMOD**

**EMPLOYER  
RECOGNITION SCHEME**  
CYNLLUN CYDNABOD  
CYFLOGWYR

**SILVER AWARD**  
GWOBR ARIAN

- Removing barriers to family life
- Extra support after service for those that need help
- Measures to integrate military and civilian communities and allow the Armed Forces Community to participate as citizens
- Non-core healthcare services for veterans

## THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY IN MONMOUTHSHIRE

Advice and support for the ex-service community (including veterans) to live, work and access services within Monmouthshire is available at <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/armed-forces/>

Support is also available for serving members (including reservists) of the armed forces and their families. A Gwent-wide directory of services has been produced in order to provide the Armed Forces Community with a resource which combines all relevant information in one place.

Monmouthshire has an active Armed Forces Forum which meets twice a year and is comprised of statutory services, third-sector organisations, charities and other relevant partners. For additional information surrounding support in Monmouthshire, or if you'd like to be involved in driving this agenda forward, the email address is [ArmedForces@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:ArmedForces@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

## ARMED FORCES COVENANT TRAINING PACKAGE

The WLGA, with funding from the Covenant Fund, commissioned Cardiff and Vale College to produce an Armed Forces Covenant training package. The package consists of a face-to-face training resource together with an eLearning resource. Both resources are aimed at local authority elected members and staff and seek to raise awareness and understanding of the Covenant.

The eLearning resource can be accessed here: <http://www.covenantwales.wales/e-learning/>

Lisa Rawlings, Armed Forces Regional Covenant Liaison Officer is funded via the Welsh Government to ensure Covenant guidelines and services are embedded within the Local Authorities. Lisa is also a key member of the Armed Forces Network and the Regional and Local Authority Armed Forces Fora. Additionally, her role enables third sector organisations to work closely with the Local Authority to support the Armed Forces Community. Lisa's email address is [RAWLIL@CAERPHILLY.GOV.UK](mailto:RAWLIL@CAERPHILLY.GOV.UK)

## SUPPORTING SERVICE CHILDREN IN EDUCATION

Monmouthshire County Council and Newport City Council were successful in securing funding from the MOD to employ an Education Support Officer whose role would be to work with all schools to raise awareness of Service Children and the potential educational difficulties they may experience. The key aspects of this role are to:

- Plan, coordinate and deliver support to families in Newport and Monmouthshire affected by mobility and deployment or returning from Her Majesty's Service to their home local authority area
- Coordinate and enable the development of expertise to provide specialist wellbeing support within the school environment working with existing providers and facilitating their integration into other statutory services.
- To advise and guide schools on applying for additional funding to support Service Children

- To train staff and raise awareness of Service Children and share best practice of providing in-school support
- Where required provide additional support for Service Children in partnership with schools. , Emma can provide a 1:1 intervention session, with parental consent. If this has no impact, then a referral to outside agencies may be required in order to prevent disadvantage to help Service Children to settle in and achieve their potential at school
- Work with education professionals to develop and provide the best possible interventions with Service Children, their families and school

Further information on support for Service Children can be found here: <https://www.sscecymru.co.uk/>

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