

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OUTSIDE BODY REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2015
title: ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT REPORT 2014
submitted by: COUNCILLOR JIM WHITE

1 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this annual report is to inform and update Committee of the changes to Section 4 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Armed Forces Community Covenant as at 08 October 2015, and to update the Committee on other changes in relation to the Armed Forces Community Covenant

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – to treat everyone equally and ensure that access to services is available to all. To engage with all our communities to ensure we deliver services to meet customer needs and expectations.
- Corporate Priorities – to seek to continually improve, ensuring that council services are fit for purpose and customer focused.
- Other Considerations – to meet our ongoing Commitment to the Armed Forces Community in the Ribble Valley.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 On the 24th July 2013 The Borough Council with partners from the Military, Private and Charitable Sectors signed an Armed Forces Community Covenant.

3 COMMUNITY COVENANT SECTION 4

3.1 Section 4 of the Community Covenant requests that the Armed Forces Champion –Cllr White co-ordinates and keeps the Council informed of ongoing issues and initiatives relating to the Covenant.

3.2 Section 4 of the Community Covenant remains as a workable document, and all members, partners and officers are requested to have input into it to make it meaningful, and fully representative for the Armed Forces Community in the Ribble Valley. Additions since the last report in September 2014 are:

- a. From May 2014 to April 2015 RVBC supported the Mayor (Cllr Ranson) by presenting trees to every Parish in the Borough, and poppy seeds to all of the schools within the Borough to commemorate 100 years since start of WW1. The initiative was welcomed by all and included a Royal Visit by HRH Duke of Kent on the 26th November 2014 who planted a tree at Clitheroe Castle;
- b. 03/08/14 Civic Service for Commemoration of WW1 at St Marys Parish Church Clitheroe, and candle lighting ceremony and tree planting at Clitheroe Castle on the 04/08/14;

- c. Parish Councils via guidance from English Heritage were briefed on Conservation/Management of War memorials min 406 PC Liaison Committee 30/10/14;
- d. Ribble Valley commemorated the 70th anniversary of the end of the WW2 with a gun salute from Clitheroe Castle on Friday, May 8, at 3pm, followed by a two-minute silence marking the moment Winston Churchill broadcast his historic speech formally announcing the end of the war;
- e. Request to Full Council in July 2015 to consider and change the policy to advertising affordable new properties in the RV to include informing 42 BDE personnel.

4 ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUNDING CHANGES

4.1 The fund (with a budget of 10 million pounds this financial year) has four broad funding themes - They are : 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; and non-core healthcare services for veterans.

- The themes will shape the fund and annual priorities;
- Annual priorities for 2015/16 are local Armed Forces Community Integration projects, the coordination and delivery of support to the armed forces community and veterans in the criminal justice system;
- The fund has two components - small grants up to £20,000 and large grants up to £500,000. Small grants will be primarily for community integration projects with the larger grants focussed on more strategic, higher impact projects;
- The fund was launched and opened to applications in mid-August 2015;
- Decisions on both small and large grants will be made by a national panel incorporating recommendations of regional panels.

5 LANCASHIRE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT BOARD

5.1 Cllr D Clifford from LCC invited all Lancashire Armed Forces Councillors to a series of meetings in 2015 with the aim of forming a Lancashire Armed Forces Community Covenant Board. Due to availability and attendance by Cllrs the terms of reference are still in early draft, however its aims and principles are broadly in line with RVBC AF Covenant, and it does not require any financial input from RVBC.

5.2 The membership will include representatives from all Lancashire Councils and representatives from 42 NW BDE.

5.3 LCC are also launching a website called The Armed Forces Network. This will include a two way portal and be open to all Armed Forces Personnel and the wider community to access.

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – the suggestions made in this report may impact on an element of officer time.

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – none identified.
- Political – none identified.
- Reputation – the Council has a reputation for supporting the Armed Forces.
- Equality & Diversity – the Council should be consistent in its considerations of all groups.

7 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

7.1 Note the updated contents of Section 4 in 3.2 (amendment 4.5 dated 8 September 2015)

7.2 Note the changes to the Armed forces Covenant funding for 2015/2016.

7.3 Note the LCC draft Armed Forces Community Covenant Board.

Cllr J White
Armed Forces Champion

For further information please ask for Olwen Heap, extension 4408