



EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION
SCHEME

GOLD AWARD 2020

Barnsley Armed Forces Covenant Board
Thursday 18 January 2024
10:30am-12:00pm
Hybrid – Westgate level 3 boardroom/Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Attendees		
Name	Position	Organisation
CLlr Joe Hayward (CLH)	Chair – Armed forces champion	Barnsley Council
Jayne Hellowell (JH)	Head of Commissioning and Healthier Communities – Armed forces lead	Barnsley Council
Anne Asquith (AA)	Senior commissioning manager – Healthier Communities	Barnsley Council
Louise Beaumont (LB)	Commissioning officer – Healthier Communities	Barnsley Council
Pauline King (PK)	Regional employer engagement director	Reserve Forces and Cadet Association
Luke Lancaster (LL)	Public affairs and campaigns officer (North)	Royal British Legion
Susan Smith (SS)	Economic policy officer – employment and skills	Barnsley Council
Jess Callear (JC)	HR officer – HR and Organisational Development	Barnsley Council
Neil Halsey (NH)	DWP Armed forces champion for South Yorkshire	DWP
Adrian Hunt (AH)	Branch secretary	SSAFA
Andrew Simpson (AS)	Royal Navy and Falklands war veteran Rep for BU6 and Smithies depot	Barnsley Council
Roya Pourali (RP)	Equality, diversity & inclusion lead	Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Paul Carpenter (PC)	Armed forces community covenant SPOC	SYP
Liam Davies (LD)	Lettings Manager	Berneslai Homes
Elaine Mason (EM)	Case worker	Op Nova - Forces Employment Charity
Susan Smith (SS)	Economic policy officer	Barnsley Council
Pauline King (PK)	Regional employer engagement director	RFCA Yorkshire and Humber

Lucy Bramwell (LB)	Employment consultant	The Poppy Factory
Luke Lancaster (LL)	Public affairs and campaigns officer	Royal British Legion
Audrius Kopka (AK)	Communications and marketing officer	Barnsley Council

Apologies		
Name	Position / Organisation	Deputy
Craig Phillips	Managing director - G8 Property Solutions	
Patrick Otway	Head of commissioning - NHS ICB	
Terri Milligan	Patient experience and engagement manager	
Karen Hallam	Senior HR business partner – Barnsley Council	Jess Callear
Tom Smith	Head of employment and skills – Barnsley Council	Susan Smith
Zarah Khan	Senior employment advisor – NHS Talking Therapy	
Steve Lowe	Regional lead – Op Nova - Forces Employment Charity	
Elaine Mason	Case worker – Op Nova - Forces Employment Charity	
Michelle Kaye	Group leader housing and welfare – Barnsley Council	
David Andy	Operational manager – Citizens Advice Bureau	

Action	Owner
Michelle Kaye and Louise Beaumont to work together to ensure housing information is up to date on AF website.	Michelle Kaye/Louise Beaumont
Explore numbers of veterans in care homes, and if residents are asked if they are a veteran on referral.	Anne Asquith
Circulate save the date invite for the November SY wide armed forces covenant meeting.	Louise Beaumont
Make agreed changes to TOR's and membership.	Louise Beaumont
Publish meeting minutes on the armed forces website.	Louise Beaumont
Approach key people in SWYPT regarding potential board membership.	Jayne Hellowell
Circulate details of the walkway to board members for support with wider promotion where appropriate.	Louise Beaumont

Minutes	
1	Welcome, introductions and apologies – Chair
	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, introductions and apologies noted as above.
2	Actions from previous meeting held on 5 October 2023 – Jayne Hellowell
	The previous minutes were accepted as an accurate record. Updates on actions:

JH advised Veterans Tri Services CIC Penistone have ceased operating so armed forces day 2024 will no longer be held in Penistone. Barnsley Council will be leading on the organisation of armed forces day 2024, with the event taking place in Barnsley town centre.

Action to carry forward – MK and LB have time planned in to update the housing section of the armed forces website.

3 Veteran Friendly Framework for Care Homes – Luke Lancaster

LL provided an overview of the veteran friendly framework (VFF) for care homes, with the main points being:

- The VFF aims to tackle loneliness and isolation in residential care home settings.
- Only around 20 out of 15,000 care homes offer specialist veteran support.
- Most veterans in care home settings are not in one offering specialist support to veterans.
- LL has made contact with Emma White, Public Health principle to support in raising awareness of the veteran friendly framework through Barnsley social services.
- Census data does not provide detail around number of veterans in care homes.
- LL provided an overview of the key asks of care homes regarding their support to veterans, as part of the VFF (further details in the embedded documents below).
- Further details about the scheme can be found in the below documents or via [Veteran Friendly Framework](#)



VFF Accreditation Programme Informat



VFF Accreditation supporting hints and



Framework process flow chart.pdf

JH advised there are currently around 44 care homes in Barnsley, but we are not aware of how many veterans are in these homes. We do not have full engagement with all care homes, not all work with Barnsley Council.

JH advised it would be useful to have an overview of the number of veterans and what their needs are in care homes locally.

PK advised very few care homes have signed the covenant and agreed for her details to be shared with care homes, to support signing of the covenant.

PK asked if hospices were included in the scope of the VFF. LL advised not.

JH advised Barnsley Council have a good relationship with Barnsley Hospice and can potentially facilitate a discussion re the VFF.

It was highlighted many people choose Extra Care or care at home, with a question of how we can extend the VFF principles to these areas.

ACTION:

- **AA to explore numbers of veterans in care homes and if the question is asked on referral if residents are veterans.**

4 Updates from South Yorkshire Armed Forces Covenant Board – Jayne Hellowell

JH advised a South Yorkshire covenant action plan has been prepared, (shared with board members). This contains high level priorities that each SY local authority are working towards.

The plan identifies where there are opportunities for collaborative working with other local authorities to promote best value and joint working.

The action plan is based around the key themes of:

- Community and relationships
- Employment, education, and skills
- Finance and debt
- Health and well-being
- Making a home in civilian society
- Veterans and the law

South Yorkshire armed forces covenant board meetings are held three times per year. One additional meeting will be held each year which will be open to all individual local authority covenant board members. This will allow all sub-regional boards to learn about the work of the SY AFC board and will provide a networking opportunity. The next SY wide covenant board meeting will be hosted by Rotherham Council and will be held:

Tuesday 19th November
Rotherham Town Hall
12:30pm-15:00pm

A save the date outlook invite will be circulated shortly.

Rotherham Council are currently working towards armed forces covenant gold employer recognition scheme status. This will promote a consistent response across the sub-region, with all four authorities holding gold status.

ACTION: LB to circulate save the date invite for the November SY wide armed forces covenant meeting.

5 Armed Forces Covenant Board Governance Update – Anne Asquith

Terms of reference:

The board's terms of reference (TOR) were revisited. Key changes, agreed by board members were:

- A quoracy of 75% for decisions made to be added.
- Cadet force adult volunteers to be added to the definition of the armed forces community.
- Addition to allow the publishing of the Barnsley armed forces covenant board meeting minutes on the Barnsley armed forces website.

- Addition to stipulate the need for good representation from the armed forces community on the board membership.

Comments re TOR's:

LL asked if the 'making a home in civilian society' theme within section 4 of the TOR's related to the transition from military to civilian housing, or homelessness within the armed forces community. JH advised the themes are not rigid in structure and it is up to the board to interpret meanings.

AS – related to the employment, education, and skills theme – an enhanced induction may need to be considered for employees that are veterans. Is there potential for support with turning things into 'civilian language'. There is a very different language within the military and different ways of communicating that some veteran employees may struggle with.

Board membership:

JH advised clarity is required relating to what capacity people are attending board meetings in. If they are a veteran representative, they are attending in this capacity, rather than their professional capacity.

One person should attend for each meeting with an expectation that this is the key lead. If leads are unavailable, a deputy should attend, ready to fully engage. If there is a requirement for more than one member of a partner organisation to attend this should be agreed prior to the meeting, by emailing armedforcescouncilqueries@barnsley.gov.uk

Only people invited to the meeting should attend, as sensitive issues may need to be discussed within the board meeting. If potential additional representatives would like to join, requests should be made by emailing armedforcescouncilqueries@barnsley.gov.uk for consideration.

It would be preferable for a high percentage of members to be external partners, to allow collaborative working to support Barnsley's armed forces community.

If members do not attend for two consecutive meetings (main rep or deputy) LB will make contact to ask if there are issues with board timings etc and if any other colleagues can attend or be added to the membership. If no response is received the rep will be removed from the board membership.

The board should be a collaborative meeting, with all members offering/presenting agenda items of relevance.

RP advised Terri Milligan can be added as deputy for RP and both can attend on behalf of each other. LB to amend membership to reflect this.

RP asked if the board would benefit from a representative from SWYPT (South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust) and PCN (primary care network). JH advised there is better engagement from SWYPT. JH to approach key people in SWYPT regarding potential board membership.

	<p>ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LB to make agreed changes to TOR's and membership. • LB to publish meeting minutes on the armed forces website. • JH to approach key people in SWYPT regarding potential board membership.
6	Barnsley Council Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Status Revalidation – Louise Beaumont
	<p>Barnsley Council's armed forces covenant employer recognition scheme gold status is due for revalidation in 2025.</p> <p>There are essential criteria as well as desirable criteria. Essential criteria has been updated and can be found here.</p> <p>LB advised the council are already meeting four essential criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed the Armed Forces Covenant. • Have an existing relationship with their regional employer engagement director. • Be accredited as a holder of ERS Silver Award and held it with sufficient time to develop suitable plans and policies to evidence and support the ERS Gold application. • Not been the subject of any negative public relations or media activity that could cause embarrassment to Defence. <p>Key additions to note in updated criteria are a focus on support for cadet force adult volunteers and engagement with the cadet movement.</p> <p>LB advised the council already have, and are working to increase, required key contacts to enable work to be undertaken that will contribute to meeting gold status criteria. The council also have established positive engagement with the cadet movement.</p> <p>There was an ask for board members to support the council with work towards gold status where required.</p> <p>LB advised it would be useful for the board to be used as a platform for sharing of good practice and support, regarding work being undertaken among partners to meet gold status criteria.</p> <p>PK advised the period to complete the online revalidation process will be around April 2025 – August 2025.</p>
7	Barnsley Armed Forces Walkway – Louise Beaumont
	<p>Barnsley's armed forces walkway was created by Barnsley Council, in partnership with Barnsley College. The walkway is located in College Gardens on Westgate and provides a dedicated space for people to remember family and friends that have served or are still serving.</p>

Stones can be purchased for individuals, past and present, who have served or are still serving. Stones can also be purchased for units. Units and individuals both require a connection to Barnsley.

There are 28 stones laid in total so far, with 4 new applications being processed. Stones are £300 each, inclusive of VAT. The cost includes production and laying of the stone, and an unveiling ceremony.

Individual applications require:

- Service personnel's full name
- Rank
- Unit served in
- Dates served
- Service number
- Proof of service
- Connection to Barnsley

Unit applications require:

- Name of unit
- Unit establishment dates
- Unit emblem
- Connection to Barnsley

There are plans to install a sign explaining what the walkway is, and the walkway will be added to new town centre directional signs.

The next unveiling ceremony will be held in June.

More information and the link to apply for a walkway stone can be found [here](#).

Promotion of the walkway is currently via the Barnsley armed forces website, armed forces newsletter and Barnsley Spotlight magazine.

Board members were asked to support the promotion of the walkway.

EM advised Op Nova (Forces employment charity) could promote the walkway on their website.

PK advised it can be included in the RFCA newsletter.

ACTION: LB to circulate details of the walkway to board members for support with wider promotion where appropriate.

9 AOB

- The board were advised of a military/business expo: partnering with defence event taking place 12th March 2024, 8:30am-13:00pm at Hillsborough Football Ground. The event aims to raise awareness among businesses about the benefits of employing members of the armed forces community and the many transferable

	<p>skills they can bring to organisations. More information can be found here along with a link to book a place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is also an army engagement event taking place in Barnsley, 19 March at the Holiday Inn, Barnsley Road, Dodworth. This is an opportunity to meet the army, understand who they are, what they do and why they do it, and to understand what they do in your community and activities in the area. More information and a booking link can be found here.
Next Meeting	
	<p>Wednesday 24 April 2024 11:00am-12:30pm Westgate Plaza level 3 boardroom/Microsoft Teams</p>