

COMMUNITY SERVICES

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ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT PLEDGE

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**1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out the aim of the Community Covenant Pledge and recommends that Argyll and Bute Council along with NHS Highland and Argyll Voluntary Action agree to support the armed forces community within Argyll and Bute by signing the Argyll and Bute Armed Forces Community Covenant.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Council is asked to
- i) Note the contents of this report.
  - ii) Recognise the sacrifice made by members of the armed forces, particularly those who have given the most; and
  - iii) Commit to supporting current and former Armed Forces personnel and their families working and residing in Argyll and Bute by signing the Argyll and Bute Community Covenant.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. The Community Covenant is signed by various members of the local community including representatives from the Armed Forces and community planning partners including the local authority, voluntary sector and health.
- 3.2 The Community Covenant is intended to complement, at local level, the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces.

**4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 Signing of the Community Covenant would help build upon the existing relationship Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership has developed with the Armed Forces at Her Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Clyde. The HMNB

Clyde is the Royal Navy's main presence in Scotland and is home to the core of the Submarine Service.

- 4.2 HMNB Clyde has over 6,500 civilians and service personnel employed on site and provides a base port to the ships and submarines of the Faslane Flotilla, also supplying many other visiting vessels each year.
- 4.3 Argyll and Bute Council also currently supports the implementation of the Ministry of Defence Firm Base initiative, which was established to help build strong partnerships between local government and the military. A nationwide armed services scheme, Argyll and Bute Council reports to the Strathclyde Firm Base Working Group covering matters from emergency response co-ordination and action to future planning of Council Services for current / former service personnel and their families.
- 4.4 The Community Covenant aims to bring together civilian, public / private sectors and military organisations to build an understanding of the needs of the armed forces and how best to serve them. The scheme is intended as a two way agreement where armed services personnel are encouraged to support the community where they live and promote activity that integrates them into civilian life.
- 4.5 The Community Covenant outlines the aspiration that the Armed Forces community should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services and those partners signing today will consider positive measures to enable equality of outcome with other citizens.
- 4.6 Community Covenants have already been established in a number of areas across the United Kingdom, including; Glasgow, Fife, Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Blackpool, Wakefield and Plymouth. In demonstrating support for the Armed Forces a number of local authorities have organised fundraising events, military celebrations, open days and offering commercial discounts, which have all had a positive effect and boosted the morale of the local Armed Forces communities.

## **5. CONCLUSION/SUMMARY**

- 5.1 The Armed Services Community Covenant rewards and recognises what the Armed Forces do for our communities. This recognition extends not just to those in the Services, but also their families and veterans, especially the injured and bereaved.
- 5.2 In consideration of the sacrifices made by Armed Forces personnel, it is recommended that the Council commit to support current and ex personnel and their families within Argyll and Bute by signing the Argyll and Bute Community Covenant.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Policy: None

5.2 Equal Opportunities: The Covenant supports the equality of access to services for all current and former service personnel and their families.

5.3 Personnel: None

5.4 Financial: None

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