

**ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT AND
COMMUNITY COVENANT GRANT SCHEME**

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council have in the past appointed Champions for various client groups. Their role has been to advocate on behalf of those client groups and contribute to policy development on a strategic basis.
- 1.2 At the Council meeting held on 28 June 2012 members gave further consideration of a proposal to appoint an Armed Forces Champion (AFC) to take on the task of ensuring that local service provision is mindful of the needs of Service Veterans. Following discussion the Council agreed that Councillor Maurice Corrie be appointed as the AFC and it was also agreed that the Executive Director of Customer Services report to a future meeting of the Council on the role and remit.
- 1.3 This paper sets out the proposed generic remit for Champions, and the relevant Senior Officers who currently have responsibilities in regard to the Armed Forces, and seeks approval for the appointment of the Argyll and Bute Community Covenant Partnership.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to;

- 2.1 Note the current activity undertaken by the Council and that further discussions involving the Armed Forces Champion have been arranged to progress the agreement of a remit.
- 2.2 Appoint the Argyll and Bute Community Covenant Partnership to consider local applications for funding to the Community Covenant Grant Scheme. The Council are asked to;
- a) Appoint the Leader of the Council and Provost
 - b) Invite a nomination from the Opposition
 - c) Seek nominations from the signatories of the Community Covenant through the CPP (in respect of NHS Highland and Argyll Voluntary Action) and invite Commodore Wareham to be a member of the Community Covenant Partnership
- 2.3 Agree the proposed remit of the Head of Governance and Law, and Head of Adult Care, who have specific roles in terms of the Armed Forces
- 2.4 To note that a paper on any specific duties in respect of the AFC will come to a future Council meeting.

3.0 DETAIL

3.1 Background/Current Position

AFC and Community Covenant Pledge

- 3.1.1 At the Council meeting held on 28 June 2012 members appointed Councillor Maurice Corry as AFC for Argyll and Bute. In addition, the Council considered a report which set out the aim of the Community Covenant Pledge and recommended 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.
- 3.1.2 The Council noted the contents of the report tabled, recognised the sacrifice made by members of the Armed Forces, particularly those who have given the most, and made a commitment to supporting current and former Armed Forces personnel and their families working and residing in Argyll and Bute. The Covenant was duly signed by Commodore Mike P Wareham, Derek Leslie (NHS), Gillian Barclay (Argyll Voluntary Action), and the Leader of the Council.
- 3.1.3 The Community Covenant is intended to complement, at a local level, the Armed Forces Covenant and outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces. The signing of the Community Covenant will help to 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, which has over 6,500 civilians and service personnel employed on site. We are committed to ensuring the health, education, housing, transport and social needs of current and ex personnel and their families are met.
- 3.1.4 The signing of the Community Covenant for Argyll and Bute presents an opportunity for the Council and partner organisations to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to consider positive measures to provide active support to the Armed Forces Community.

Community Covenant Grant Scheme

- 3.1.5 A Community Covenant Grant Scheme with funding of £30M over 4 years has been launched by the Ministry of Defence (16 August 2011). The aim of the scheme is to put the Community Covenant into action and strengthen the ties and mutual understanding between the Armed Forces and the communities in which they work, are based, or live.
- 3.1.6 An application for funding of between £100 and £250,000 can be submitted by any part of the community and might include volunteer groups, charities, and public bodies such as schools. Applications should meet at least one of the aims of the Community Covenant and the following are provided as examples of possible projects;
- Projects that bring together Armed Forces dependents with others in the local community through community activities in rural, isolated areas
 - One-off activities, such as an activity camp involving the Armed Forces and local young people
 - An exhibition at a local library/town hall etc, explaining what a local Armed Forces unit has recently been doing

- An “oral history” project, where the local branch of a regimental association, locally based Armed Forces personnel or a specific group of Armed Forces personnel recorded their experiences or discussed them with local school children
- Enhancement of existing community facilities used by both local and Armed Forces communities to enable new activities that will lead to greater integration

3.1.7 Bids should be considered in the first instance by the Community Covenant Partnership (those parties who signed the covenant as detailed at 3.1.2) at a local level. Bids that the Partnership are happy to endorse will be submitted to the MOD to be considered by the Community Covenant Grant Panel. The panel meet on a quarterly basis in March, June, September and December and consider each bid against a set of criteria.

3.1.8 Once funds are agreed, funding for the project will be released from MOD to the Local Authority who will manage the finances. Where sums are large or the project is dependent on particular milestones being met, there may be a phased release of funds.

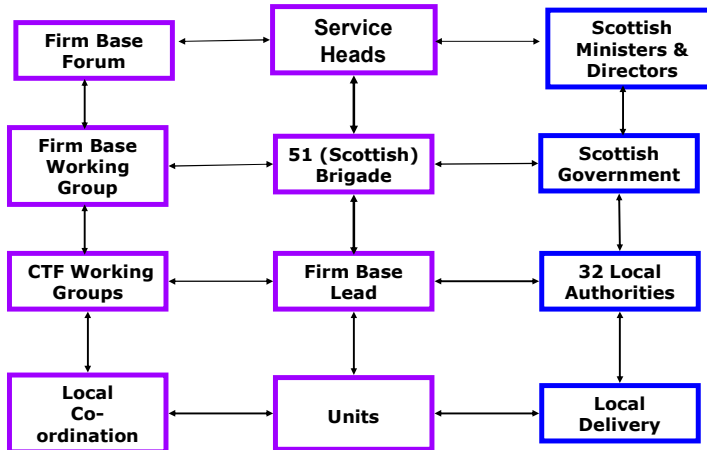
Ministry of Defence Firm Base

3.1.9 Argyll and Bute Council also currently supports the implementation of the Ministry of Defence Firm Base Initiative, which was established to forge stronger partnerships between local government and the military. The Armed Forces Covenant published in May 2011 and the Concordat between the Scottish Ministers and the Secretary of State for Defence underpin the delivery of Firm Base in Scotland. In order to aid coordination and enhance the delivery of aspects of Firm Base activity Scotland has been divided into 9 Firm Base Group Areas following Local Authority boundaries each commanded by a unit Commanding Officer or Garrison Commander.

3.1.10 Argyll and Bute Council is part of the Strathclyde Firm Base Working Group, which has representation from Glasgow City Council, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire Councils, West and East Dunbartonshire Councils, Inverclyde Council, NHS, and a variety of voluntary organisations. The Group is currently chaired by Lieutenant Colonel Simon Higgs. Jim Robb, Head of Adult Care is the Council’s representative on this group, which considers and deals with matters from emergency response coordination and action, to future planning of Council services for current/former service personnel and their families, including; housing, education, state benefits, etc... The composition of the group varies depending upon the topics to be discussed and individuals who are experts in specific areas are invited to attend as and when required.

Firm Base governance framework shown below:

Governance



HMNB Clyde/Faslane Naval Base

3.1.11 Charles Reppke, Head of Governance and Law, is the Council's main point of contact in terms of liaising with the military. Meetings have been held on an ad hoc basis with Captain Jack Tarr and/or Commodore Mike P Wareham to discuss common areas of interest.

3.1.12 It is suggested that in order to formalise these arrangements, a programme of regular meetings (3 or 4 per annum) should be put in place with the military to ensure continuous engagement on important issues such as the Maritime Change Programme, RNAD Coulport and Faslane.

3.3 Roles and Remits

3.3.1 Considering the current activity undertaken across Argyll and Bute in respect of our Armed Forces Community and the work being done by other local authorities the following sections provide an overview of the potential role and remit of the Provost, AFC, and the senior officers who currently act as key contacts on behalf of the Council.

3.3.2 Provost

The Provost represents the Council for civic duties. In certain cases it may be appropriate for the Provost to request a Champion to assist in these duties.

3.3.3 Responsibilities of Champions for their client groups

- i. To highlight where a potential council decision may impact positively or adversely on relevant client group
- ii. To keep abreast of legislation and initiatives
- iii. To liaise with recognised organisations and representatives
- iv. To respond to invitations to attend relevant meetings in respect of their portfolio
- v. To provide an additional point of contact for the public/client group
- vi. To provide necessary input to the Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee
- vii. To provide an annual report to the Council in respect of their activities

3.3.4 Senior Council Officers

As detailed at sections 3.1.6 and 3.1.7 above Jim Robb - Head of Adult Care, and Charles Reppke - Head of Governance and Law, are currently the main points of contact for the Council in regard to particular matters relating to the Armed Forces. These roles are summarised below;

Charles Reppke

- i. Council's main point of contact/liaison for issues relating to the military
- ii. Arrange and attend regular meetings (3 or 4 per annum) with Captain Jack Tarr and/or Commodore Mike P Wareham to ensure continuous engagement and awareness of key issues for Argyll and Bute, including;
 - Maritime Change Programme
 - RNAD Coulport
 - Faslane Naval Base
- iii. Preparation of reports/briefings, as appropriate, for the SMT and members on key issues within remit
- iv. Liaison with Head of Adult Care in regard to Firm Base issues
- v. Regular liaison with AFC in regard to Armed Forces matters as a whole

Jim Robb

- i. Represent the Council on the Strathclyde Firm Base Working Group as a senior Officer
- ii. Ensure that the needs of current/former service personnel and their families within Argyll and Bute are met across a range of areas, including;
 - emergency response coordination and action
 - future planning of Council services such as housing, education, state benefits, health care etc...
- iii. Preparation of reports/briefings, as appropriate, for the SMT and members on key issues within remit
- iv. Liaison with Provost/AFC in regard to Firm Base matters and to keep the Head of Governance and Law advised on a regular basis

4.0 SUMMARY

- 4.1 This paper sets out the proposed generic remit for Champions, and the relevant Senior Officers who currently have responsibilities in regard to the Armed Forces. A further paper will be brought to the Council on any specific duties in regard to the AFC.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy – in accordance with Council Policy and Community Covenant
- 5.2 Financial - none
- 5.3 Legal - none
- 5.4 HR – none
- 5.5 Equalities – in compliance with Equal Opportunities Policy
- 5.6 Risk - none

5.7 Customer Service – potential positive impact on customers, particularly those within our Armed Forces community

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