

Report of	Meeting	Date
Cllr Alistair Bradley Leader of the Council	Council	16 April 2013

ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- For Chorley Council to sign up to an Armed Forces Community Covenant for the Borough and to play a leading role in encouraging others to sign up and support the aims of the covenant.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That Chorley Council sign up to an Armed Forces Community Covenant for the Borough and play a leading role in encouraging others to sign up and support the aims of the covenant.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The report outlines the purpose of an Armed Forces Community Covenant. The range of partners who could be involved and details initial local measures that could be included. The report recommends that the Council sign up to an Armed Forces Community Covenant for the Borough and play a leading role in encouraging others to sign up and support the aims of the covenant.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

BACKGROUND

- A template for an Armed Forces Community Covenant is shown as an Appendix to this report. The template gives members a flavour of the signatories/participants, the principles of the covenant, the objectives and general intentions and there is then a section for the specific local measures to be taken.

6. A Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level. The aim of the Community Covenant is to encourage local communities to support the Service community in their area and nurture understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community.
7. Many people have become involved in supporting the Service community, through Service charities or more recently by participating in Armed Forces Day. They have shown their support in a variety of ways including fundraising, military celebrations and open days, and family fun days. Even simple demonstrations of support, such as displaying the Armed Forces Day window sticker in cars and businesses have had a positive effect and boosted the morale of our Armed Forces community. The Community Covenant scheme aims to build upon this support.
8. Armed Forces Day is an extremely positive event and the Community Covenant does not seek to replace it. It does, however, aim to encourage the civilian community to extend their support beyond Armed Forces Day throughout the year and on longer term projects that benefit their local community. Armed Forces Day is very much about celebrating the hard work of our Armed Forces, the Community Covenant is about supporting them.
9. The Government recognised the need to do more to ensure that our Armed Forces, veterans and their families have the support they need and are treated with the dignity they deserve. This is why the Government published a Covenant as a tri-service document, the Armed Forces Covenant. The Armed Forces Covenant expresses the enduring, general principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces community. It is supported by 'The Armed Forces Covenant: Today and Tomorrow' which sets out the actions currently being taken by central government to support the Armed Forces community as well as future measures, many of which have been set at a national level and are being applied by public service providers across the country and within the Devolved Administrations such as the introduction of a Service Children's Pupil Premium, a scholarship scheme for bereaved Service children, and extra assistance for veterans' mental health needs.
10. The Community Covenant complements the Armed Forces Covenant but enables service providers to go beyond the national commitments. It allows for measures to be put in place at a local level to support the Armed Forces. The Community Covenant encourages local communities to develop a relationship with the Service community in their area, this enables support to be tailored according to need.
11. All local authorities are being provided with guidance and encouraged to establish a Community Covenant in their area. Not every local authority will be able to extend the support they already give to the Armed Forces community whilst budgets are being stretched and reduced. However, the establishment of Civil/Military partnerships is an excellent low-cost way to demonstrate support for the Armed Forces community and helps build an understanding of the needs of the Armed Forces. This would ensure that the needs of the Armed Forces community are considered in planning services.
12. Community covenants may look quite different from one location to another. This is a scheme where one size does not fit all and the nature of the support offered will be determined by both need and capacity.

13. Public service providers are already delivering a number of tailored services for the service community, set at a national level across Whitehall, intended to ensure members of the service community do not face disadvantage in accessing school places, healthcare, social housing and so on. Additional support can take a variety of forms and will be determined by the capacity of the Council and partners.
14. Clearly as support develops the local Chorley measures will be enhanced. In signing up to the Covenant, the Council is proposing to initially include the following measures as a statement of its commitment:
- Chorley Council will establish a civil/military Partnership Board for the Borough.
 - Chorley Council will provide opportunities for the Armed Forces to talk about their experiences on operations.
 - Chorley Council will involve the Armed Forces within community and neighbourhood projects.
 - Chorley Council, with partners, will pilot a weekly “drop in” session at the Council offices, specifically for military and ex-military personnel, and their families.
 - Chorley Council, through the pilot project, will aim to identify the specific issues faced by military and ex-military personnel, and bring appropriate reports to the Council’s Executive.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

15. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors’ comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	✓
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

16. The initial commitments made in the report will be met using existing resources. If other issues arise that require additional resources, these will be brought to the Executive for a decision.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

17. No comments.

JAMIE CARSON
DIRECTOR PEOPLE AND PLACES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Jamie Carson	5815	4/4/2013	PPREP2013



Community Covenant

AN ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

BETWEEN

ABCD COUNTY COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHARITABLE
AND VOLUNTARY SECTORS,
THE CIVILIAN COMMUNITY OF *ABCD*

AND

THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY IN *ABCD* LOCATION

**We, the undersigned, agree to work and act together to
honour the Armed Forces Community Covenant.**

Signatories

(This page gives examples of the parties who may sign the Community Covenant. This is an example only and is not limited to the examples given)

Signed:

Signed:

Name:

Name:

Position Held:

Position Held:

Signed on behalf of the Armed Forces Community

Signed on behalf of ABCD Council

Date:

Date:

Signed:

Signed:

Name:

Name:

Position Held:

Position Held:

Signed on behalf of Armed Forces Charities

Voluntary

Signed on behalf of the Sector

Date:

Date:

Signed:

Signed:

Name:

Name:

Position Held: County Manager

Position Held: Branch Chairman

Signed on behalf of the Business and Commercial Sector

Signed on behalf of the Primary Care Trust/NHS Body

Date:

Date:

SECTION 1: PARTICIPANTS

1.1 This Armed Forces Community Covenant is made between:

The serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families working and residing in ABCD

And

ABCD County Council

And

The Charitable and Voluntary Sector

And

Other members of the civilian community

SECTION 2: PRINCIPLES OF THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

2.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level.

2.2 The purpose of this Community Covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in xxxx and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-Service and ex-Service personnel their families and widow(er)s in ABCD.

2.3 For ABCD County Council and partner organisations, the Community Covenant presents an opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community. It also presents an opportunity to build upon existing good work on other initiatives such as the Welfare Pathway.

2.4 For the Armed Forces community, the Community Covenant encourages the integration of Service life into civilian life and encourages members of the Armed Forces community to help their local community.

SECTION 3: OBJECTIVES AND GENERAL INTENTIONS

Aims of the Community Covenant

3.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant complements the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant which defines the enduring, general principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces community

3.2 It aims to encourage all parties within a community to offer support to the local Armed Forces community and make it easier for Service personnel, families and veterans to access the help and support available from the MOD, from statutory providers and from the Charitable and Voluntary Sector. These organisations already work together in partnership at local level.

3.3 The scheme is intended to be a two-way arrangement and the Armed Forces community are encouraged to do as much as they can to support their community and promote activity which integrates the Service community into civilian life.

SECTION 4: Measures

4.1 *Detail regarding specific measures to be put in place could be inserted here, e.g. Civil/Military Partnership Boards, Welfare Pathway, etc*

CONTACT PERSONNEL AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

MOD DCDS (Pers&Trg) Covenant Team

Email address: covenant-mailbox@mod.uk
Address: DCDS (Pers) Covenant Team
Zone D, 6th Floor
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

In-Service representative(s)

Contact Name:
Title:
Telephone:
Address:

ABCD Council

Contact Name:
Title:
Telephone:
Fax:
Address:

Charities

Contact Name:
Title:
Telephone:
Address:

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of
the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.