



**PROUDLY
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MINUTES	MEETING:	Rotherham Armed Forces Community Covenant Group (AFCCG)
	DATE & TIME:	Monday, 11 th April 2022 (2.00 – 4.00pm)
	VENUE:	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
	CHAIR:	Councillor Eve Keenan, Armed Forces Champion, Rotherham MBC
	SUPPORT & MINUTES:	Vicky Hartley, Executive Office Manager, Rotherham MBC Jack Moore, Senior Member & Civic Support Officer & Armed Forces Lead Officer, Rotherham MBC Wendy Silkstone, Member Support Assistant, Rotherham MBC

In Attendance	
Cllr Eve Rose Keenan	Armed Forces Champion, RMBC
Jack Moore	Armed Forces Lead Officer/Senior Member & Civic Support Officer, RMBC
Vicky Hartley	Executive Office Manager, RMBC
Natasha Aucott	Homelessness Development Officer, RMBC
Fiona Grayson	CBT, Rotherham IAPT/RDASH
Major Adrian Hunt	Chairman of Trustees, MCV
Jonathan Hunt	Chairman SSAFA South Yorkshire
Cllr Ian Jones	Executive Chairman, MCV
Katie Kay	Coordinator, Keeping Families in Mind Project
Elaine Mason	Project Nova, South Yorkshire
Ron Moffett	Rotherham Royal British Legion
Aisha Morgan	Senior Mental Health Nurse, Veterans' Mental Health Complex
Major Pat Ralph MM	Assistant Regimental Secretary, The Yorkshire Regiment
Dawn O'Rourke	Armed Forces Lead, Department for Work and Pensions
Wendy Silkstone	Member Support Assistant, RMBC
Capt. Dave Tomlinson	102 BN REME
Jane Townsend	Armed Forces Champion, Department for Work & Pensions
Apologies	
Malcolm Bleasdale	Chairman, Royal Air Forces Association
Lt Col Mac McPherson	High Sheriff of South Yorkshire
Louise Peppard	Senior Strategy Business Manager, RD&SH NHS
Angela Smith	Counsellor, Rotherham and Barnsley Mind

Item	Title	Action
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies	
1.1	Councillor Keenan introduced Jack Moore as the new Armed Forces Lead Officer, taking over from Vicky Hartley.	
1.2	Jack Moore facilitated introductions of all in attendance.	
2.	Minutes of the last meeting, 6th September 2021 and Matters Arising	
2.1	Vicky Hartley, Executive Office Manager, Rotherham MBC screen shared the minutes of the last meeting which were agreed. Updates on progress of actions were picked up as part of the meeting agenda as follows:	
2.2	4.1 (Help 4 Homeless Veterans & Farm Therapy Project). Cllr Keenan thinks it would be good to invite Steven Bentham-Bates back to give an update on how the farm is growing and the great work it is doing to support veterans. She also confirmed that Jamie Quinn is currently running the project but to attend go through Steven Bentham-Bates, Help 4 Homeless Veterans. Jack will circulate contact details.	Jack Moore

2.3	8.3 (Lt Colonel Mc Pherson and ASDIC) Lt Colonel McPherson is absent from this meeting as he is being appointed today as High Sheriff of South Yorkshire.	
2.4	Major Adrian Hunt confirmed the ASDIC conference will be taking place on 4/5 th May in Leeds. There will also be a re-run of the session delivered a couple of years ago, where Lt Colonel Mc Pherson will take the lead in pulling together. The likely venue will be somewhere in Rotherham, date TBC.	
3.	Armed Forces Act 2021	
3.1	Vicky Hartley, Executive Office Manager, Rotherham MBC referred to the paper attached to the agenda pack.	
3.2	In response to Cllr Keenan's question of when training would be taking place for front line staff taking calls, Vicky Hartley will be having conversations with Customer Services and other Councils and will feedback through Jack Moore.	Vicky Hartley / Jack Moore
4.	South Yorkshire Armed Forces Covenant & Projects – Support to Homeless Veterans	
4.1	Natasha Aucott, Homelessness Development Officer, RMBC updated on the Veteran Funding which was available until end of March this year. £7,789 has been spent assisting four applicants and the balance of £8,460 remains unspent. Currently in talks with South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to try and secure a 6-month extension on the funding and will keep the group up to date with any developments on this.	Natasha Aucott
4.2	Natasha Aucott agreed to send the referral criteria to Aisha Morgan. Aisha Morgan explained that she covers South Yorkshire and North East Lincolnshire and has veterans spread out across a wide area and as such would appreciate if anyone has any links to other Councils to please let her know.	Natasha Aucott
4.3	Jane Townsend, DWP, thanked Natasha and the department in Rotherham Council for the work undertaken to date and the information shared which is vitally important in helping to support veterans.	All
5.	Veterans Outreach 'Hidden Faces'	
5.1	Cllr Ian Jones, Executive Chairman, MCVC gave an update and advised on the appointment of new Project Manager, Christine Bradley, who takes over at the end of April.	
5.2	Cllr Ian Jones added that from leaflet drops at the Armistice event and the Real Ale Festival, more veterans have been visiting the drop-ins and breakfast clubs. Venues were confirmed as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toby Carvery Rotherham, every Saturday 9:30-11:30am Silverwood Miners Welfare, every Friday at 10am 	
5.3	Cllr Keenan asked for the details on venues and times to be sent to the group.	Jack Moore
5.4	Cllr Ian Jones advised that the outreach vehicle will be out more over the coming months around supermarkets, fetes, and Armed Forces related events.	
6.	Covenant Group Member Updates	
6.1	Fiona Grayson (CBT, Rotherham IAPT/RDASH) interested in finding out more about Armed Forces Day in terms of having a stall there again (See 7.4)	
6.2	Major Adrian Hunt, Chairman of Trustees, MCVC, pointed out that 146 have downscaled from a company to platoon location, but they are still very active operating out of the McKay VC barracks and SAFFA Rotherham is up and running and anyone requiring to do a referral should send those details through to himself. Major Adrian Hunt will provide Jack Moore with his e-mail address to share.	Major Adrian Hunt / Jack Moore

6.3	Major Adrian Hunt asked the group to refer any budding casework volunteers from their organisations directly to him and reminded the group that volunteers are critical in the organisation.	All
6.4	Cllr Ian Jones, Executive Chairman, MCV, talked about the coach trip organised for Veterans to go up to the National Armed Forces Day at Scarborough.	
6.5	Katie Kay, Coordinator, Keeping Families in Mind Project, who has taken over from Sam Mullholland, spoke about the project ending on the 31 st August and the training for supporting people with PTSD designed for family members that may have someone in the house that is a Veteran suffering from PTSD. The training is one day a week for 3 weeks for an hour and a half each day and Katie asked the group to get in touch with her if anyone knows of anyone who might want to undertake the training.	All
6.6	Elaine Mason, Project Nova, South Yorkshire, gave an update on the work being done with SYP and Probation when veterans have had a brush with the law and spoke about the Past and Present Project that covers War and Victoria Cross graves as an alternative to community hours. Elaine invited the group to get in touch with her at any time, should they require further information.	
6.7	Major Pat Ralph, MM, The Yorkshire Regiment, reiterated the need for more volunteers and thinks a message should be put out from London to assist across the whole of the UK. Major Adrian Hunt confirmed this is has been approached many times with Central Office but unfortunately adverts are being placed in the wrong media, e.g., the Times and Telegraph etc. It has been noted this is not ideal and Major Adrian Hunt confirmed it is something they are on to.	All
6.8	Major Pat Ralph offered his apologies that the Regiment are not able to support Rotherham's Armed Forces Day as they would be supporting Scarborough given it is the day of the National event but confirmed veterans not attending Scarborough would be encouraged to support their local events. Major Adrian Hunt added they are in communications with Ed Culver who has offered to push the awareness across individuals who have settled in South Yorkshire. Major Adrian Hunt offered to meet with Major Pat Ralph to come up with a plan.	
6.9	Dawn O'Rourke, Armed Forces Lead, DWP, confirmed that Armed Forces Champion funding will continue this financial year and that 50 DWP staff are going to Liverpool to understand what it is to be a Reservist. Dawn confirmed DWP will be at the ASDIC Conference.	
7.	Key Dates / Upcoming Events	
7.1	Jack Moore, Senior Member and Civic Support Officer & Armed Forces Lead Officer, Rotherham MBC updated on the following:	
7.2	VE Day There will be some acknowledgement from the Council on media channels, e.g., the Mayor recording a commemorative message.	
7.3	Anniversary of Sgt Ian John McKay, 12th June A bench unveiling on 12 th June. Cllr Ian Jones, Executive Chairman, MCV, added this is something that is organised every year by the Parachute Regiment Association and will take place between 9.30-10.30am. Hopefully the bench will be unveiled by a number of members of Sgt McKay's family. This year to commemorate the 40 th anniversary the Association will be setting off on a route March to London once the commemoration is complete. It will be a nice event to get as many veterans and as many people there as possible. Falklands 40, 14th June.	
7.4	Rotherham's Armed Forces Day, 25th June Taking place in the centre of Rotherham along a pedestrian route, forming up in All Saints Square. The Mayor Elect is keen to focus on the ceremonial side. In response to Fiona Grayson's earlier question around stalls, Jack will contact the Rotherham MBC Events Team and update on that front.	Jack Moore

8.	Any Other Business	
8.1	Aisha Morgan, Senior Mental Health Nurse, Veterans' Mental Health Complex, spoke about the difficulties veterans faced when contacting Councils where switchboard staff are not aware of a Veteran Champion within the Council.	.
8.2	Cllr Ian Jones, Executive Chairman, MCV, was surprised to hear Aisha's comments and detailed the Military Human Training delivered by York St John University to nearly 1000 frontline Council staff and to all Housing departments across all four South Yorkshire Authorities.	
8.3	Cllr Eve Rose Keenan, Armed Forces Champion, RMBC, thanked Aisha for her comments and agreed to tackle the issue around training.	
8.4	Vicky Hartley, Executive Office Manager, Rotherham MBC will feedback concerns with Helen Barker, Head of Customer Services and look at what Rotherham Council can do to further improve to raise awareness of the Covenant and the Council's duty to support veterans.	Vicky Hartley
8.5	Aisha Morgan, Senior Mental Health Nurse, Veterans' Mental Health Complex, asked the group to let her know of any venues \ room space available to meet with her veterans one to one.	All
8.6	Cllr Eve Rose Keenan, Armed Forces Champion, RMBC formally thanked Vicky Hartley for all the hard work she has done in her lead role as the Council's lead officer for Armed Forces.	
8.7	Cllr Eve Rose Keenan, Armed Forces Champion, RMBC requested the AFCCG formally congratulate Lt Col Mac McPherson on his appointment as High Sheriff of South Yorkshire.	Jack Moore
9.	Dates of Future Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday 25th July 2022 (2-4pm) Monday 7th November (2-4pm) 	