



Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Peter Le Marinel, Lead Member for Armed Forces	Council	25 January 2024

Periodic report – Lead Member for Armed Forces

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform the Council of the current position on various issues relating to the Armed Forces Covenant and Community.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council has been a signatory of the Armed Forces Community Covenant since 25 June 2012. On 23 June 2022, Wyre Council re-signed the updated Armed Forces Covenant.
- 3.2 The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation that those who serve and have served, and their families, should be treated fairly. The Covenant was enshrined in law in the 2021 Armed Forces Act and ensures that members of the Armed Forces community are not disadvantaged as a result of their service when accessing Government and commercial services. Special consideration is also appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most, such as the injured and bereaved. The Government, Local Authorities, the wider public sector, charities, commercial organisations and civil society all have a role in supporting the armed forces community. This includes in areas such as employment, healthcare, housing, education, and financial advice.
- 3.3 The Government will review the operation of the new duty across the UK in its 2023 Covenant Annual Report and an interim update in the 2022 Covenant Annual Report.

3.4 Johnny Mercer MP was appointed Minister of State (Minister for Veterans' Affairs) at the Cabinet Office on 25 October 2022 with responsibility for championing veterans' interests at the heart of government. This appointment is to highlight the outstanding contribution veterans from all walks of life are already making to our economy and society, ensuring no individual who needs help is left behind after they leave service.

4. Armed Forces Covenant and Community Activity in Wyre

4.1 Since the last report the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Armed Forces Lead Member and councillors have attended and laid wreaths at the 2022 and 2023 Remembrance Parades and Services across the Borough. Even though the weather was inclement, we saw large numbers of people, of all ages come together to pay their respects.

4.2 On 20 March 2023 the Mayor, Chief Executive and Lead Member hosted a presentation to two World War 2 Lady Veterans at the Civic Centre. Both were members of Blind Veterans UK and celebrated their 100th birthdays this year.

4.3 Over March 30/31st 2023 a 24 hour sleep-out was held to raise money and awareness for homeless veterans, this was carried out by Wyre Councillor Peter Le Marinel, County Councillor Alf Clempson and Dave Whitworth head of a Veterans Combat Information Centre in Wyre, on behalf of Tommy Club which is a part of the Royal British Legion Industries. Just over £3000 was raised - this took place outside of Booths in Poulton, from 10am on 30 March to 10am on 31 March.

4.4 On 19 June 2023, there was a flag raising day to mark the start of Armed forces week. This was attended by the Mayor, the Deputy Lieutenant on behalf of the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, Corporate Management Team and Cadets from the McKee College.

4.5 Throughout the year, the Armed Forces Lead Member has attended regular meetings with Armed Forces Covenant Lead Ian Barber from UCLAN, based in Preston.

4.6 There have been a series of regular veterans breakfast clubs, quizzes and 'walk and talks' through the year.

4.7 Wyre Council has made an Armed Forces catalogue available in Reception, covering the support available within Wyre and the wider Lancashire Area.

5. Future activity

5.1 Over the next 12 months, there will be numerous meetings of the various Veterans groups across the whole of Wyre, from walks and coffee mornings, to quizzes, sport and support groups.

- 5.2** Wyre Council will continue to work with the Covenant to support Veterans on issues from housing and benefits, to education and employment, and will continue its work towards the Gold Award.
- 5.3** June 2024 will mark the 80th commemoration of the D-Day landings. This will be marked at the flag raising ceremony on 24 June as part of the Mayors speech.
- 5.4** Armed Forces week will begin on Monday 24 June 2024 with Flag Raising events, and Armed Forces Day will be celebrated on Saturday 29 June, with events taking place throughout the Borough.

Financial, Legal and Climate Change implications	
Finance	There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.
Legal	There are no legal implications directly associated with this report.
Climate Change	There are no Climate Change implications directly associated with this report.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with an x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

None