

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 4
10 JULY 2012	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Irene Walsh, Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion and Safety	
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ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM : Corporate Management Team	Deadline date :
That the Armed Forces Community Covenant is officially adopted by the City of Peterborough.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following a referral from Corporate Management Team on 15th May 2012.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement on the adoption of the Armed Forces Community Covenant in the City of Peterborough
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference 3.2.2, 'To promote the Council's role as community leader, giving a 'voice' to the community in its external relations at local, regional and international level, and fostering good working relationships with the Council's partner organisations, Parish Councils and the relevant authorities for Police, Fire, Probation and Magistrate's Courts Services'.

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO
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4. PETERBOROUGH ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

4.1 What is the background to the Covenant?

The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a statement of mutual support between the Armed Forces community and the civilian community in Peterborough. It is a formal document that, at a high level, sets out what the Armed Forces Community Covenant seeks to achieve for Peterborough and is signed by all parts of the community it represents. The attached Armed Forces Community Covenant has been drawn up based on the best practice model across the United Kingdom and follows Ministry of Defence recommended guidelines. Almost 50 authorities across the United Kingdom already have a signed Covenant in place

4.2 What does the Covenant do?

The Community Covenant encourages local communities to support members of the Service community (serving, veterans or family members) in their area and raise awareness of issues that affect them but also encourages those members of the Service Community to be active citizens within their city. The Covenant will build upon the strong relationship we have with RAF Wittering and the forces personnel in the city and will also encourage local projects that strengthen the ties and mutual understanding between the wider community and the Armed Forces community.

4.3 What opportunities does the Covenant bring?

The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a further opportunity for the City of Peterborough to strengthen its relationship with the Armed forces community. Once the Covenant is implemented it can continue to develop at a local level. A working group will be set up to progress this.

4.4 Attached to the Armed Forces Community Covenant is the opportunity to apply for funding from the Community Covenant Fund. This fund is a £30 million pot of central Government funding which will be allocated over the next four years to community projects. Once Peterborough has a signed Armed Forces Community Covenant in place Community groups and organisations can apply for funding for local projects. Priority for funding will be given to practical projects which deliver rapid results.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Consultation has taken place with the Peterborough City Council Corporate Management team who have made the recommendation that the Armed Forces Community Covenant is supported by the Cabinet and adopted. Consultation has also taken place with the commanding officers at RAF Wittering who are also keen for this to progress. They have agreed to promote volunteering and corporate social responsibility opportunities across all personnel, their families and veterans.

5.2 Future consultation as the Covenant develops and promotion will now take place in accordance with the attached communications plan.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

It is recommended that the Cabinet support the signing of the Armed Forces Community Covenant by Peterborough City Council, and are champions for its continuing development.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Armed Forces Community Covenant will bring benefits to the city. It will strengthen the relationship between the city, RAF Wittering and the Armed forces community and will open up the opportunity to apply for funding for community projects through the Community Covenant Fund.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The only alternative option is not to adopt the Covenant in Peterborough. Although it is entirely optional to implement a Covenant in the city it would prevent any community groups or organisations from having the opportunity to apply for funding from the Community Covenant Fund. This funding is specifically designed to fund projects that will benefit all members of the community.

9. IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 At this stage there are no financial implications to the Council in adopting the Armed Forces Community Covenant. During any future development to the Covenant any financial implications will need further approval through due process. There are, however, opportunities for local groups and organisations to apply for funding for community projects that perhaps the Council would usually wish to fund but are unable to due so during the current economic pressures.
- 9.2 The Covenant should also help to ensure that service personnel, veterans and their families do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of services that civilian communities have access to.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

Attached

- Armed Forces Community Covenant
- Communications Plan

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