



Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board Minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2021

Virtual meeting held on Microsoft Teams

Present:

Air Cdre Kevin Pellatt (KP)	Norfolk Armed Forces Commissioner (Chairman)
Vanessa Plumley (VP)	RAF Families' Federation
Wg Cdr Jim Walls (JW)	RAF Marham
Jocelyne Newman (JN)	RAF Marham
Mark Van Den Bergh (MV)	Royal Navy
Hugh King (HK)	Royal British Legion
Craig Chalmers (CC)	Norfolk County Council
Wg Cdr Stew Geary (SG)	Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association Norfolk
Wayne Farrow (WF)	DWP
Cllr Keith Kiddie (KK)	Norfolk County Council
David Powell (DP)	NHS
Maj David Hoey (DH)	1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
Maj Rob Mansell (RM)	1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
Gavin Pearce (GP)	1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
Andy Tovell (AT)	Norfolk County Council
Dr Andrew Hayward (AH)	NHS
Ian Razzell (IR)	Guest Speaker: Veterans' Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA), Item 4 only.
Merry Halliday (MH)	Norfolk County Council
Bev Herron (BH)	Norfolk County Council

Apologies:

Sarah Rhoden (SR)	Norfolk County Council
Jan Feeney (JF)	Norfolk County Council
Adrian Tearle (AT)	SSAFA
Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds (EN)	King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen (SCA)	Breckland District Council
Maj Gavin Rushmere (GR)	3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

- 1.1. KP welcomed everyone attending today and listed the apologies.
- 1.2. Vanessa Plumley RAF Families Federation, Wayne Farrow DWP, Adrian Tearle SSAFA were all welcomed as new members to the Board.
- 1.3. A formal thank you was recorded to Lisa Thipthorp (RAF Families Federation), Judy Hill (SSSAFA), Pat Finney (DWP) for their hard work as NAFC Board members and wished them well for the future.

2. Minutes from previous meeting - 18 March 2021

- 2.1. JW wished to note the following against para 2.3 – The regional administrative process for assessing bids to the “Local Grants” Covenant Fund ceased to be operational at the end of 2019/20.

3. Appointment to the Chair of the Board

KP left the meeting prior to this item.

- 3.1. As elected member champion for NCC, KK introduced the paper on the appointment to the Chair of the Board.
- 3.2. Members of the Board voted on the re-appointment of Air Commodore Kevin Pellatt for a further two years – the motion was carried.

KP was invited back into the meeting.

- 3.3. KK congratulated KP and passed the position of Chair back.
- 3.4. KP expressed his thanks to the Board for his re-election and confirmed that he was happy to remain as Armed Forces Commissioner for an additional two years.

4. Veterans’ Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA) – guest speaker Ian Razzell

- 4.1. KP introduced Ian Razzell as guest speaker, talking about the Veterans’ Covenant Healthcare Alliance.
- 4.2. IR gave a presentation.
- 4.3. IR explained the VCHA has 7 regional leads. All hospitals and hospital trusts are being encouraged to sign up to being “Veteran Aware” and to be part of armed forces covenant. Nicky Murdoch represents the patient’s voice. VCHA do not deal with individual cases but it can approach trusts on their behalf.
- 4.4. Accreditation as “Veteran Aware” can be given and taken away based on evidence from any Covenant Board.

Questions

4.5. JW – is there a list of accredited providers?

IR – yes, I can share [website address](#) with Board which contains this information on a map.

4.6. JW – one of your asks is for Board to gather intelligence from the community on their experiences but how would we be expected to contact patients and how is it done elsewhere?

IR – Healthwatch Norfolk might help, or the Board could consider running a survey.

4.7. JW – how would Board find out which patients were from the armed forces community?

IR - speak to Nicky Murdoch about what can be done.

4.8. KP – you mention that the transition from DMS to NHS is difficult for some; why is this? [KP noted that this had not been his experience, partly because his family were already registered with a GP when he transitioned out]. KP explained that along with AH, he had spoken to GP Practice Managers, but this had met with differing levels of engagement, based on their level of understanding.

IR – there is huge variation between those who leave the armed forces and register with a GP straight away and those who wait until they are ill. This can often lead to issues with being able to identify someone as a veteran and knowing their medical history. The way in which GPs engage with the community can also differ greatly.

4.9. AH – if a GP marks a patient's referral to a hospital as a veteran what happens at the other end? Will there be someone who understands the meaning of it?

IR – the summary care record is visible across primary and secondary healthcare as well as the ambulance service, therefore if someone is flagged in the system this should be visible to all. VCHA are asking that all organisations continue to focus on the codes available in primary and secondary to ensure all veterans and families are coded appropriately. This facilitates CCG deep dives, and this can also be done by the hospital trust. If done correctly, this should mean when someone attends the hospital, they should identify them as someone with a service background straight away. The most complex are those with medical records from different places like Cyprus / Germany etc. VCHA are looking at how the entire ICS (Integrated Care Service) can be accredited to capture the whole care path. The forthcoming Duty of Due Regard will help with some aspects of this.

4.10. HK commented on the importance of ensuring GP practices are accredited under the Veteran Friendly GP scheme, echoing the work that KP / AH have been doing.

IR said the literature including posters that accompany the scheme have been digitised, making it easier for practices to demonstrate their support.

4.11. KP thanked IR for his comprehensive presentation.

IR, RM and GP left the meeting.

5. Budget including an update on Norfolk 2020 and the Wellbeing Fund

- 5.1. BH ran through the current budget, including an update on Norfolk 2020 Commemoration Fund and the launch of the Wellbeing Fund.
- 5.2. Board noted the budget.

Coffee Break

VP left the meeting.

6. Update on the Action Plan 2019-23

- 6.1. MH gave an overview of the status of the action plan, including key areas of activity / proposed changes.
- 6.2. KP updated Board on progress towards the formation of an Elected Members champion group to include representatives from the districts and the county. This new group will be an important step towards Norfolk meeting the new Duty of Due Regard and ensuring increased awareness of the needs of the community amongst Local Government services.
- 6.3. Board agreed with the proposed changes to the action plan which included the closure of Actions 7, 9, 10 and 16, the pausing of Action 17 and the addition of a new action, Action 18, the Board's Wellbeing Fund. Board was content with the progress against the delivery of the other actions.

7. Updates from Members of Board

- 7.1. Members of the Board were given the opportunity to provide an update.
- 7.2. KP – said now that some of the pandemic restrictions had been lifted and some face-to-face meetings were being held, he hoped he'd be able to start promoting the Covenant one more. The Chairman of the Royal British Legion was very complimentary about the Covenant Board at a recent RBL event. He was looking forward to taking forward engagement with districts through the elected members champion group. KP wished to reiterate how very fortunate Norfolk's Covenant is due to ongoing support from NCC.
- 7.3. DP – The new mental health High Impact Service has been awarded to the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust (NSFT) – this links with the NHS's Op Courage. It will go live Dec / Jan. NCC requested that DP take part in an awareness raising session for World Suicide Day, talking about the impact of suicide on members of the armed forces community. Unfortunately, due to lack of numbers, the virtual event had to be cancelled. DP expressed a willingness to take part in future such events which has been passed on to NCC's Wellbeing Team.

- 7.4. HK – RBL are engaging well with local veterans and looking at new membership alongside how to work with other organisations to support the community.
- 7.5. CC – Adult Social Care, along with the NHS are seeing increasing volumes of people through the front door. The Afghan settlement is going apace and working well with good community support. Mental health services are under great strain – creating issues because getting to see people is a problem due to demand but this is stabilising – trying to make improvements alongside NSFT.
- 7.6. WF – DWP now have an Armed Forces Champion in each county. These posts are full time apart from Norfolk and Suffolk which is down to funding. WF hoping to visit local charities working with the armed forces community as well as DWP offices.
- 7.7. SG – has received a request from Hockwold Parish to talk about the Covenant Pledge. MH to let SG have relevant paperwork. To note that SG also sits on Feltwell Parish Council and another three in Suffolk due to his new post.

8. AOB

- 8.1. None

9. Date of next meeting(s)

- 9.1. Workshop – 19 January 2022
- 9.2. Board - 24 March 2022
- 9.3. A meeting invitation will be sent to members of the Board shortly. Meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice.