

# Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 20 March 2019,  
STANTA, West Tofts, Norfolk.

## Present:

Tony Tomkinson (TT)	Norfolk Armed Forces Commissioner
Air Cdre Kevin Pellatt (KP)	SSAFA
Wg Cdr Stewart Geary (SG)	RAF Marham
Lisa Thipthorp (LT)	RAF Families' Federation
Col Jamie Athill (JA)	Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association
Jocelyne Newman (JN)	RAF Marham
Cdre David Elford (DE)	Royal Navy
John Boisson (JB)	Royal British Legion
Hugh King (HK)	Royal British Legion
Capt Jason Davies (JD)	1 <sup>st</sup> The Queen's Dragoon Guards
Jan Feeney (JF)	Norfolk County Council
Sarah Rhoden (SR)	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen (SCA)	Breckland Council
Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds (EN)	King's Lynn and West Norfolk Council
Kevin Blogg (KB)	Norfolk County Council
Craig Chalmers (CC)	Norfolk County Council
Dr Andrew Hayward (AH)	NHS
Merry Halliday (MH)	Norfolk County Council
Bev Herron (BH)	Norfolk County Council

## Apologies:

Maj Gavin Rushmere (GR)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Royal Anglian
Chris Haystead (CH)	Norwich City Council
Ivor Bartrum (IB)	East Anglia Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association
Mark Goldsmith (MG)	DWP
Derek Holesworth (DH)	NHS
Ann Berry (AB)	NHS
Maj Jerome Tyson (JT)	1 <sup>st</sup> The Queen's Dragoon Guards
Cllr Keith Kiddie (KK)	Norfolk County Council

## 1.0 Welcome introductions, apologies and minutes from September 2018

1.1 Introductions and apologies are reflected above.

1.2 Minutes from September 2018 were agreed as a true record.

## 2.0 Budget

2.1 BH took members of the Board through the budget paper. TT thanked Breckland District Council for their contribution of £5k (per year for 4 years) to delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant.

2.2 SCA ran through the caveats associated with the funding and encouraged the Commissioner to write to the other District LAs to ask them to consider making a similar contribution. SR suggested that NAFC Board take this funding into

All

	consideration when progressing workstreams, in particular, thinking about “shelf-ready” projects or tools.	
2.3	EN reminded the Board that KL&WN operates <a href="#">funding schemes</a> which communities can apply to for financial assistance towards delivery of projects (£50k for capital and £20k for revenue) and encouraged Board members to promote this amongst the armed forces community.	<b>All</b>
	<b>Finance sub-group membership</b>	
2.4	NAFC Board agreed it would be useful to have someone with an understanding of the civic world to backfill the space created by KP replacing TT as Commissioner. SR volunteered to fulfil this role. Board noted that SG will be replaced by his successor in August.	
3.0	<b>WW1 Fund</b>	
3.1	BH took the NAFC Board through a paper marking the closure of the WW1 Fund. It was agreed that the fund had been a success, helping to support 84 projects across Norfolk. The Board felt that the fund ‘model’ had the potential to be replicated in the future. Lessons learnt included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small amounts of funding proved to have a large impact;</li> <li>• the way in which the fund was advertised, including civic routes and word of mouth, was useful. It was also felt that the breadth of knowledge and contacts of NAFC Board members contributed towards its success by reaching a large number of groups / organisations; and</li> <li>• the projects were intergenerational, with a local focus driven by communities, giving them broad scope to be creative and to galvanise communities.</li> </ul>	
3.2	LT suggested that the NAFC Board could review the most successful projects to see if there was further work that could be funded using these groups / communities that have already come together in delivering something.	<b>All</b>
3.3	SG noted that RAF 100’s success was partly because it represented an opportunity for celebration and inspiration as well as commemoration. The key to future projects will be coming up with ‘theme(s)’ that enable all of these things and capture people’s imaginations.	
3.4	NAFC Board agreed to consider what future funding might look like as part of their action plan workstreams.	<b>All</b>
3.5	NAFC Board noted the closure of the fund and thanked Norfolk Community Foundation for administering the fund. TT agreed to write a letter of thanks to the Foundation.	<b>TT / MH</b>
	<b>Refreshment Break</b>	
4.0	<b>Action Plan 2019-22</b>	
4.1	KP introduced the paper and re-enforced with the NAFC Board that the action plan signified a step change in the way the Board needs to work.	
4.2	NAFC Board members nominated to lead one of the workstreams were asked to confirm they were willing to do so and for other Board members to signify	<b>KP / Workstream leads</b>

	which areas of work they would contribute towards. It was recognised that several members of Board nominated as workstream leads were absent from the meeting but KP agreed to follow this up with the separately.	
4.3	<b>Establishing a baseline of understanding</b>	
4.4	The following was agreed regarding this workstream for stages one, two and three:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KP will lead the workstream overall.</li> </ul>	<b>KP</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work will involve several different target audiences – serving population / families / veterans / civic authorities / businesses / charities and therefore whatever resources are developed will need to be flexible to give the right messages to the right audience.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any existing presentations (MOD / Dependents) that NAFC Board members feel useful to be shared with KP / MH / BH for consideration so as not to re-invent presentations.</li> </ul>	<b>All</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The message will need to be clear and tangible to show what the Covenant has done, what it intends to do and the areas where key sectors such as Local Authorities could / should be doing more. This should include case studies where possible.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KP / SG / SCA will work on a generic presentation together – this will take on board comments about ensuring everything is eye-catching and uses case studies to illustrate points as much as possible.</li> </ul>	<b>KP / SG / SCA</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies should focus on demonstrating how the armed forces community is / can be disadvantaged and what the Covenant has done to change this; a “You said, we did.” approach. This may include national Covenant examples.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCA raised whether engaging with Local Authorities is planned too early in the schedule? The Board were reminded that Local Authorities should be aware of their obligations through previous engagement and the fact they all signed the Covenant in 2012. Senior level discussions had been identified as the first step in continuing this work to identify any gaps / issues that need to be improved.</li> </ul>	<b>KP</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board agreed that presentations to serving personnel and families should include KP, Service Personnel Rep and other member(s) of the Board (who, will be dependent upon audience) to make up a panel to allow an audience Q&amp;A to ensure the presentation is two-way conversation – these presentations to be split into senior ranks, junior ranks and families.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working group of KP/ SG / JD / GR / DE to be formed to scope what presentation events for serving personnel and families will look like, including booking dates / making arrangements with the support of MH /BH</li> </ul>	<b>KP / SG / JD / GR / DE / MH / BH</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LT offered to use the RAF-FF’s database to identify case studies and advise the workstream on key messages for families and liaise with other family federations.</li> </ul>	<b>LT</b>

4.5	<b>Health, welfare and housing</b>	
4.6	The following was agreed regarding this workstream:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Derek Holesworth will lead the workstream (to note that DH and AB were not at the meeting and therefore all points relating to NHS below were raised by AH).</li> </ul>	<b>DH</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCA felt that social housing and the recent <a href="#">proposed changes</a> to improve access to social housing for the armed forces community under the National Covenant should be included in the workstream. SCA suggested that all local authorities be written to and asked what their response to the consultation was in order to give a baseline of understanding. The Board thought this could be picked up through KP's discussion with local authorities.</li> </ul>	<b>KP</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AH suggested that due to changes in the NHS's operating model, engagement at a clinical level may be a more proactive approach. A national lead is being appointed to roll out the veteran friendly GP practices system / guidance - AH has volunteered to pilot the scheme in Norfolk and to ascertain national progress against this.</li> </ul>	<b>AH</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board discussed the benefits of posters and other forms of advertising to encourage individuals to identify as veterans, including ensuring that they are coded correctly on the system by their GP.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AH / DH / AB to work together to ascertain what the key message is that needs to be promote to GPs and how best to engage with the 5 Norfolk practice manager forums to promote this message.</li> </ul>	<b>AH / DH / AB</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Veterans' Gateway has a video clip that can be used to promote it and will be useful to share with health colleagues. JB to send the link to MH along with the name of the national project lead to share with the workstream lead</li> </ul>	<b>JB / MH</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board discussed a lack of an evidence gathering stage in this workstream. The Board agreed that although complex, that this should be working towards better understanding of what the problem(s) is, including the size of the issue(s) and identification of potential solutions. Where possible, the evidence should be focused on Norfolk.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board felt that this evidence could then be used to target funding for the Board and Adult Social Care / Charities. It would also assist in understanding of pathway(s) that members of the armed forces community take through care. DH / AB / AH / CC to form a working group to determine what this might look like supported by MH / BH.</li> </ul>	<b>DH / AB / AH / CC / MH / BH</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board discussed the role of the Veterans' Gateway, Early Help Hubs and Social Prescribing Groups. They are evolving but signposting individuals to the appropriate support was recognised as one of the key challenges for the workstream. JB / HK / SCA to support the working group above to determine if any information can be used from these</li> </ul>	<b>JB / HK / SCA</b>

	sources and how to disseminate the evidence base to these key stakeholders.	
4.7	<b>Promote greater understanding amongst businesses operating in Norfolk of the benefits of employing a member of the armed forces community.</b>	
4.8	The following was agreed regarding this workstream:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently there is no agreed lead for this workstream (to note that neither MG or IB were present at the meeting).</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JA commented that the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association and the MOD's Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS) are keen to engage with more businesses in Norfolk.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MH stated the Norfolk Chamber of Business is happy to support this workstream. The Chamber provides a website for member organisations to promote employment opportunities e.g. including hosting a link to Right Jobs (Job advertiser for CTP). and it offered to hold an event to include veterans employed in Norfolk and businesses that employ them. They suggested the need to make a link between the Chamber and CTP first to move this forward.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board agreed that the workstream must establish a mechanism to link the skills required by businesses in Norfolk with the skills of those transitioning out of the armed forces. This needs to be wrapped up in the conversation between CTP and the Chamber.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board agreed that case studies would be useful and to engage with re-settlement officers / current serving population via bases about how these links are made.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCA encouraged the workstream lead to contact the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) and JF endorsed this stating the LEP holds data on the types of skills needed in the county which will be useful.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Together, with the action above, this would start to build a baseline of: the types of jobs available; the skills required to fill them; the numbers of jobs available and their location. This could then be linked with case studies that could be shared with the business community to show what members of the armed forces community could bring to these 'gaps'. There also needs to be case studies for members of the armed forces community to show them what Norfolk's businesses need and have to offer.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LT suggested that the Board contact organisations which have obtained 'gold' status under the DERS to be part of this work, to promote the employment of armed forces community amongst other employers.</li> </ul>	
4.9	<b>Explore how children and young people from service families are supported in Norfolk</b>	
4.10	The following was agreed regarding this workstream:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LT and KB happy to work on workstream together with LT taking the lead role.</li> </ul>	LT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LT is a member of the Service Children in Education (SCIE) Board which provides advice for families and education establishments. LT suggested that an event could be held for education leads in the County, at which, speakers could be invited to talk about the issues relating to Service Pupil Premium and the specific challenges in Norfolk to enable best practice to be shared.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EN suggested that governors also be included in the event and that the Governors Support Unit be involved.</li> </ul>	<b>KB</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SG offered to host the event at RAF Marham.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LT / KB to put plan together and share with KP and then the Board.</li> </ul>	<b>LT / KB</b>
4.11	<b>Develop a Covenant Pledge for Norfolk which sets out how members of the community will be supported in the county.</b>	
4.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KP asked the Board for thoughts about developing a 'Pledge' after the workstreams are in place and a clearer picture has emerged about what will be achieved.</li> </ul>	
4.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DE felt that the 'Pledge' should be a living document which will change over time. Initially, the Pledge is about upholding the Covenant and then as workstreams develop, detail can be added.</li> </ul>	
4.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JA questioned as to whether or not a single statement such as a 'pledge' was useful? Or whether the workstreams will replace this with specific commitments that are relevant to each area of work.</li> </ul>	
4.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board agreed to leave the Pledge until the workstreams are further progressed.</li> </ul>	
4.16	<b>Management of workstreams</b>	
4.17	The Board discussed the importance of each workstream remaining on target by using project management techniques, including the potential of using a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating which can be reported to Board. KP said he intended to arrange meetings to take forward the work.	
4.18	<p>To ensure progress, each workstream lead agreed to carry out the following actions with support from MH / BH where necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold an initial scoping meeting to determine what the workstream is looking to achieve overall and pull together a project plan (MH / BH to assist with this)</li> <li>The project plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual actions to achieve the scope;</li> <li>Dates when actions will be achieved;</li> <li>Key stakeholders that need to be involved; and</li> <li>A responsible person(s) for each action.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>MH / BH</b>
5.0	<b>AOB</b>	
5.1	<b>Outside wire funding bid</b>	
5.2	MH raised awareness with the Board that a funding bid will be circulated from Outside the Wire ahead of a submission to the MOD's national Covenant Trust Fund.	
5.3	<b>Royal Norfolk show</b>	

5.4	The Board discussed an opportunity which has been raised by GR to take part in the Royal Norfolk Show in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Royal Anglian's tent. They thought it would be a good opportunity to publicise achievements. KP agreed to discuss this with GR, to identify the outcome for NAFC Board and to report back to members of the Board.	KP
5.5	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
5.6	17 September at Breckland District Council Offices starting at 10am.	
6.0	<b>Farewell to Tony Tomkinson, Wg Cdr Geary and John Boisson and welcome to Air Cdre Kevin Pellatt</b>	
6.1	A presentation was made to TT by JA on behalf of the Board as this was his last Board meeting before handing over to KP. TT thanked the members of the Board for their support and expressed his heart felt support for the Covenant moving forward as it does such important work.	
6.2	The Board officially welcomed KP as Norfolk's new Armed Forces Commissioner.	
6.3	A presentation was also given to thank JB and SG for all of their hard work in support of Norfolk's Covenant as this was their last meeting. SG and JB thanked the Board for their support and expressed their admiration for the work of the Board and their sadness at leaving.	
7.0	<b>Tour of STANTA</b>	
7.1	The Board wished to thank John Boisson for a very interesting and informative tour of STANTA.	