



Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26 September 2018,
RAF Marham, Norfolk.

Present:

Tony Tomkinson (TT)	Norfolk Armed Forces Commissioner
Wg Cdr Stewart Geary (SG)	RAF Marham
Kevin Pellatt (KP)	SSAFA
Lisa Thipthorp (LT)	RAF Families' Federation
Ann Berry (AB)	NHS
Jamie Athill (JA)	Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association
Jocelyne Newman	RAF Marham
Cdre David Elford (DE)	Royal Navy
Ivor Bartrum (IB)	East Anglia Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association
Hugh King (HK)	Royal British Legion (representing JB)
Maj Jerome Tyson (JT)	1 st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
Capt Michael Green (MGR)	3 rd Battalion, Royal Anglian (representing GR)
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen (SCA)	Breckland Council
Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds (EN)	King's Lynn and West Norfolk Council
Mark Goldsmith (MG)	DWP
Kevin Blogg (KB)	Norfolk County Council
Derek Holesworth (DH)	NHS
Dr Andrew Hayward (AH)	NHS
Sarah Rhoden (SR)	Norfolk County Council (representing DA)
Cllr Keith Kiddie (KK)	Norfolk County Council
Merry Halliday (MH)	Norfolk County Council
Bev Herron (BH)	Norfolk County Council

Guests:

Wayne Copsey (WC)	Outside the Wire
Paul Martin (PM)	The Matthew Project

Apologies:

Jan Feeney (JF)	Norfolk County Council
David Ashworth (DA)	Norfolk County Council
Maj Gavin Rushmere (GR)	3 rd Battalion, Royal Anglian
Chris Haystead (CH)	Norwich City Council
John Boisson	RBL

1.0	Welcome introductions, apologies and minutes from March 2018	
1.1	Board members and substitutes introduced themselves and apologies received (see above).	
1.2	The Board agreed minutes from 21 March 2018.	
2.0	Presentation by Outside the Wire and The Matthew Project	

	Wayne Copsey and Paul Martin	
2.1	<p>The Board were given a presentation on the work of Outside the Wire (OTW) and The Matthew Project to help veterans suffering from PTSD and substance abuse. The following points were raised by Board and explained by the presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with the NHS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There have been challenges getting GP surgeries to refer individuals to OTW – this is thought to be a lack of awareness and a desire to use more ‘well known’ organisations. • Support before and after treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Before clinical treatment a support system is put in straight away to provide contacts. ○ OTW sign post individuals to therapy – there are two practitioners trained to support clients with low level issues but higher-level cases go to Combat Stress. OTW workers will provide a support network during the referral / treatment process. ○ Clients can stay with OTW after treatment has ceased so they have support if they need it. • Expansion of the charity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OTW is backed by the Matthew Project as a specialist ‘niche’ which only supports veterans and their families – it started as a part time job for one individual 5 years ago. ○ A support group has been set up recently in Sheringham and a veterans’ breakfast event is being held in Gt Yarmouth. ○ OTW is looking to open a ‘recovery’ hub on Oak Street in Norwich because 50% of clients with issues are in and around Norwich – this would provide a place for drop-ins, events and enterprise opportunities. ○ OTW are increasingly seeing more complex cases and increasing delays to get into statutory services. ○ Some individuals who receive help from the project will go on to volunteer. ○ The OTW practitioners are all veterans – they believe this gives a unique ability to help veterans. They are all trained in safeguarding, mental health first aid and PTSD recognition. ○ Practitioners also go into other organisations to give insight into working with veterans. • Future funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Libor is a key funding stream because it supports core management functions that other funding streams will not fund. Longer-term funding is a concern. ○ OTW is looking longer term at partnerships with other charities – for example, currently negotiating with RBL in London, because limited funding is secured for 2019/20. • Working with other charities: 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concern was raised by Board members about the potential for OTW to be duplicating the work being done by others. A general observation was made that this is a very ‘crowded’ space. ○ OTW does try to work with other charities and share best practice, for example, working with RBL community branch support members to advise them on what OTW can do to support beneficiaries. ● OTW working at RAF Honington to help individuals recognise the signs of PTSD. 	
2.2	TT thanked WC and PM for attending and asked them to keep the Covenant Board up to date with their work. WC and PM left the meeting.	
2.2	<p>SCA raised a question about how LAs can effectively work with charities in this sector when the landscape is so complicated and how can they determine who is best to refer to?</p> <p>The Board discussed the fact that there is no simple answer but councils need to be made aware of the Veterans’ Gateway and how to refer people into it. It was unclear if OTW is part of the VG and registered with Cobseo. Board raised concerns about the limited funding available to OTW going forward but commented on how it is not atypical for charities of this size.</p>	
3.0	The International Aviation Academy	
3.1	Presentation postponed.	
4.0	Budget	
4a	<p>The Board discussed the current budget.</p> <p>SCA reported that a paper had gone to the Norfolk Council Leaders’ Group earlier in September requesting that District Councils contribute financially to the work of the Covenant, in addition to the money received from Norfolk County Council. This would extend what the Board is able to do for the Armed Forces community in Norfolk. Sadly, this additional funding was not forthcoming from any of the District Councils except Breckland.</p> <p>TT was asked to write to Leaders again to ask for additional funding and all Board members were asked to advocate this at every opportunity possible.</p> <p>DE raised concerns over some of the costs associated with the Norfolk Armed Forces Conference held in June. Officers reassured the Board that every effort had been made to keep cost at a minimum without compromising the impact and output from the event. The Board agreed that the Conference had been a huge success and that the venue/cost would be revisited should a future event be planned, potentially speaking to Silver / Gold ERS winners to see if they could assist.</p>	TT/MH

	Officers thanked Board for their recent comments on the Cadet Apprenticeships Group bid to the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund and said the bid was withdrawn pending further development. The outcomes of the bids submitted by the Jon Egging Trust and the 1 st The Queen's Dragoon Guards are awaited.	
4b	<p>The Board discussed the report following the closure of the WW1 Fund to applicants. Norfolk Community Foundation are still distributing the funding to the final tranche, in line with Board's decisions.</p> <p>The Board agreed that this had been a good investment and had assisted a broad range of commemorative projects across Norfolk.</p> <p>EN reported that King's Lynn Borough Council provided a £4k fund to support the WW1 commemoration and developed a special programme for 600 school children working with RBL on the rolls of honour.</p>	
4c	SG – thanked the Board for their support of RAF Marham's Friends and Families Day. General feedback was very positive and the spectacular air show made it a particularly special event during the RAF's 100 th celebrations.	
5	<p>Update from NSFT and The Walnut Tree</p> <p>JA reminded the Board of their request, at the previous meeting, that a visit should be made to The Walnut Tree project. A report of this visit was included in the papers.</p> <p>It was acknowledged The Walnut Tree and NSFT are very committed and provide a valuable service. Discussion focused on the size of the client base, future funding, the length of wait for treatment and the sustaining force of the individuals running the treatment programmes.</p> <p>TT to write to Dr Roger Kingerlee at NSFT to thank him for his report on the work being carried out by the partnership of NSFT and Walnut Tree.</p>	TT/MH
6.0	<p>Stand Easy – a report on progress</p> <p>MH reminded Board of a presentation they received at the previous meeting, in March, on the work of Stand Easy. This was followed by an agreement from Board to fund Stand Easy with £5k to help them treat 21 veterans suffering from PTSD. This has now been completed and all 21 have reported recovery from their symptoms.</p> <p>MH was asked to circulate the HealthWatch Norfolk report on findings of the impact of Stand Easy's PTSD treatment, funded by the British Acupuncture Council.</p> <p>SG to consider how these findings can be shared with RAF Marham's medical colleagues with a view to examining the approach for current serving personnel.</p>	MH SG
	Break	

7.0	Conference follow up	
	<p>Board commented on Section A of the draft Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan 2019/21.</p> <p>Building Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board thought more should be done to promote awareness of the Covenant both in local authorities and among the serving community. SG offered to take the lead on the latter. • It was also agreed the successes of the Board, such as the WW1 Fund, should be promulgated to the community. • DE thought it important to understand more about how the armed forces community is disadvantaged e.g. through isolation. • LT suggested Board produce a newsletter, run smaller events on specific topics with speakers, and recommended a communications plan be developed. • AB referred Board to the MOD's self-assessment tool for local authorities in the national armed forces covenant guidelines. • Board agreed that the Norfolk Community Directory would be a good repository for armed forces specific information. • There was considerable discussion about the Veterans' Gateway, how it is being taken forward and how charities register. Clarity to be sought by MH. <p>Health, Welfare and Housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AB advised Board on various NHS activities and Board agreed it appropriate to link into the NHS's timetable on Veteran Friendly GP Scheme. • DH volunteered to talk to the primary care lead in South Norfolk CCG and find out further information. • AB cited Lincolnshire and Leicestershire as counties that have successfully agreed standard practices for local authority practitioners working with the armed forces community. <p>Education, Employment and Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment for those transitioning out of the forces and for spouses and dependents is important. The West Norfolk Partnership have a job website. MG advised Board the DWP is working on how to support spouses and dependants. LT confirmed the MOD are also working on this now the Spouse Employment Trial has concluded. There are large employers in Norfolk the Board could work with, particularly in supporting service leavers. • The Board would involve the Career Transition Partnership in its future plans. • LT said the RAF FF have conducted a piece of work on school places and how Service Pupil Premium is spent. This should help inform Board's work on sharing best practice in Norfolk schools. 	<p>SG</p> <p>MH</p> <p>DH</p>

	<p>Board reviewed Section B of the draft Action Plan. For purposes of feeding back to those who attended the Conference it is necessary to clearly show which issues have been dealt with and those that are not the responsibility of the Covenant.</p> <p>It was noted some issues have already been addressed and closed (Item 1 – re transport at the bases – car share and driving lessons).</p> <p>AB thought the mental health issues (Items 2-5) need moving up to the main body of the action plan. This link to the HealthWatch Norfolk report. This was agreed.</p> <p>MG advised Board the Forces in Mind Trust report on transition across all three services is due to be published later this month and this would provide valuable insight on how to better support families during transition (Item 9).</p> <p>Board will feed back to the MOD the issues raised in Section C.</p> <p>SG, LT, AB, LT and SCA agreed to form a Conference Task and Finish Group to finalise the action plan.</p>	<p>MH SG LT SCA AB</p>
<p>8.0</p>	<p>Appointment of the new Armed Forces Commissioner</p>	
	<p>Members of the Board were asked by Cllr Keith Kiddie to volunteer to be part of the interview panel. The following came forward:</p> <p>Representing the Serving Community – Wg Cdr Stew Geary and Lt Col Matt Woodeson.</p> <p>Representing Armed Forces Charities – John Boisson (RBL), Wg Cdr Stew Geary (RAF Association) and Jamie Athill (Veterans Norfolk).</p> <p>MH to contact volunteers and establish one representative from the serving community and one from the armed forces charities. Norfolk County Council will be represented by Cllr Keith Kiddie.</p>	<p>MH</p>
<p>9.0</p>	<p>AOB</p>	
	<p>a) Royal Norfolk Show: On behalf of the 3-ANG, MGR asked if the Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board would consider a presence at the Royal Norfolk Show in 2019. SG offered space within RAF Marham’s footprint in the military village at the Show. The Board agreed that this would be useful. Further work will be carried out to investigate the way forward.</p> <p>SCA requested that a formal question be asked about allowing concessions for the serving community (in uniform) – SG happy to have discussion off line and then come back to Board.</p>	<p>GR/SG/ MH</p> <p>SCA/SG</p>

	<p>b) Veterans' Mental Health Conference: AB fed back about a conference she had attended hosted by the NHS Veterans' Mental Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS) in the East of England. This brought together NHS medical health services, charities and academic research organisations that work across East Anglia and talked about a range of issues including transition, PTSD and moral injury. It was reported that TILS had won an award for supporting people back in to work. AB will share information from the event as it becomes available.</p>	AB
	<p>c) Update on the QDGs: JT took the opportunity to talk about QDG's presence at Board and the mobility of the Regiment. Currently 150 personnel are in Poland, after 6 months they will be replaced by another QDG squadron. Next year, they will be deploying to Kenya.</p> <p>The QDG's 60th anniversary is next year. There are plans to engage with local community around Swanton Morley in a family type event (but plans are not yet developed). The main celebrations will be in Cardiff as the Regiment's 'home'.</p>	
	<p>d) DWP Update: MG advised that he could supply Board members with information about the rollout of Universal Credit.</p>	MG
	<p>TT thanked everyone for attending and RAF Marham for its hospitality.</p>	
9.0	Date of next meeting	
	<p>Wednesday 20 March 2019 at STANTA, 1000 – 1400 (including lunch and a bus tour of the training facility).</p>	