

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Council

Date of meeting: 17-06-2021

Title: Armed Forces Covenant

Purpose of the report: To ask that Ceredigion County Council sign the Armed Forces Covenant and publicly commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the Covenant.

For: DECISION

Elected Member with lead responsibility for the Armed Forces: Cllr Paul Hinge, Armed Forces Champion

BACKGROUND

In June 2011 the Government launched the Armed Forces Community Covenant (AFCC) following the notion of a 'Military Covenant' between the Government and the UK Armed Forces which all started in around 2000. Every Local Authority in UK has signed a 'Community Covenant Partnership'. Ceredigion County Council signed the AFCC in 2013.

Businesses at the time signed a 'Corporate Covenant' but there is now no distinction between a Community Covenant, with a community collectively making a declaration, and the Corporate Covenant. The two have evolved into the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC), please see **Appendix 1** for a draft of the Covenant, which the Council would sign.

All signatories of the AFC are acknowledged on a data base publicised by the MOD. Prior to 2014 there was no centrally held data and signatories before this date are not acknowledged nationally, therefore Ceredigion County Council do not feature on this centrally held database. Some of the partner signatories on the Ceredigion AFCC, and our Armed Forces stakeholders have gone on to sign the AFC and now feature on this centrally held database

CURRENT SITUATION

When the AFCC was published in 2011, it outlined tangible commitments to the Armed Forces community. During this time Ceredigion County Council has delivered on these commitments and tenets of the Covenant, thereby demonstrating ongoing commitment to the Armed Forces community. This commitment is evidenced through the work of the Armed Forces Champion, Cllr Paul Hinge, and through appropriate policy integration.

Across Ceredigion County Council, the Education, Housing and HR departments are developing initiatives in collaboration with the Regional Armed Forces Liaison

Officer (ALFO) on strengthening the delivery of the covenant. Notably Ceredigion's Housing department has been acknowledged as good practice by Welsh Government for their progressive work with identifying and meeting the needs of service users from within the Armed Forces Community. Much has been achieved in this time.

The 10th Anniversary of the AFC is an opportune moment to reaffirm the Council's commitment, celebrate the successes and continued commitment to uphold the principles of the AFC that were made back in 2013. It will also serve to refresh the Council's commitments into more appropriate measures that are more pertinent today. By signing the AFC we will join our local partners and be formally acknowledged nationally.

PROPOSAL

This paper serves to ask for Council agreement to sign the AFC and for the official signing to be conducted as part of a ceremony to reaffirm the Council's commitment and to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the AFC. If agreed, it is proposed that the reaffirmation take place in the Autumn of this year, at the end of September or beginning of October and arrangements will be made to take account of the availability of Elected Members and other dignitaries.

	Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why	No. This paper seeks to reaffirm the commitment already made by the Council to the Armed Forces Community Covenant in 2013.
Wellbeing of Future Generations:	Summary: Long term: Collaboration: Involvement: Prevention: Integration:	
Recommendation(s):	That Ceredigion County Council sign the Armed Forces Covenant and publicly commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the Covenant in Sept/Oct 2021.	
Reasons for decision:	To reaffirm the Council's commitment, celebrate the successes and continued commitment to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant that were made back in 2013.	
Overview and Scrutiny: Policy Framework:		

Corporate Priorities:	Investing in People’s Future; Enabling individual and family resilience
Finance and Procurement implications:	N/A
Legal Implications:	None
Staffing implications:	None
Property / asset implications:	N/A
Risk(s):	N/A
Statutory Powers:	N/A
Background Papers:	Please see appendices below
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Draft Armed Forces Covenant
Corporate Lead Officer:	Alun Williams, Corporate Lead Officer Policy, Performance and Public Protection
Reporting Officer:	Diana Davies, Corporate Manager Partnerships and Performance
Date:	17-06-2021



Ceredigion County Council

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of:

Ceredigion County Council

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom

Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles Of The Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We at **Ceredigion County Council** will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- *no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen*
- *in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 **Ceredigion County Council** recognises the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- *promoting the fact that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation – through appointment of an Armed Forces Champion. The Champion will lead the delivery of a quarterly Armed Forces Covenant partnership forum which aims to bring together public and non-public bodies to ensure collaboration for the benefit of the Armed Forces Community as outlined in the Covenant.*
- *seeking to support the employment of veterans young and old, by working with our Armed Forces Community to enable this.*
- *Striving to support the employment of service spouses and partners.*
- *seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve Forces reflected in our employment policies for accommodating their training and deployment where possible*
- *Aiming to actively participate in Armed Forces Day*

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community and our customers on how we are doing.