

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

County Council
13th July 2017

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Rosemarie Harris, Leader

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Matthew Dorrance

Question

Will the Cabinet make a statement on how it fulfils this Council's responsibilities as part of the Armed Forces Covenant?

Answer

The Powys Armed Forces Community Covenant is a formal commitment to mutual support between the County's civilian and armed forces communities, with a special focus on service children.

It was signed at the Armed Forces Day National Event on Dering Lines Brecon on Thursday 4th August 2012.

At the heart of the covenant is a shared understanding that service families receive all the support available to them from the public and voluntary sectors in Powys.

It aims to raise awareness of the issues affecting the armed forces community and ensure that the County's service families and veterans are not disadvantaged in any way – by improving access to housing, healthcare and employment for example.

Signing the covenant also gives Powys the opportunity to bid for UK-wide funding.

Since 2012 the Armed Forces Community Covenant has evolved and a new way of working is now in place. There are now Regional Devolved Administration Boards under which Regional Covenant Partnerships sit. In most cases they are defined by Health Board areas, but Powys is unique because it sits alone due to the size of the County.

We have always worked in Partnership with:

- Brecon Beacons National Park
- NPTC Group
- Royal British Legion
- PAVO
- Powys Teaching Health Board
- Mid Wales Manufacturing Group

New partnerships have been formed to continue and improve the aims of the Armed Forces Community Covenant, namely:

- Army Families Federation
- Joint Director Workforce and Organisation Development (Workforce and Organisation Development)
- SSAFA
- Powys Dyfed Police
- Wales & West Fire Service

Workforce and Organisation Development are working with the Army Families Federation regarding employment opportunities within the Local Health Board and Powys County Council with the spouses of the Armed Forces personnel, many of which have the skills required in both organisations.

Ongoing work with the Powys Armed & Ex Forces Health Forum, highlighting and raising issues such as PTSD, enabling GP's to be aware that they are treating ex forces personnel so that a correct referral can be made.

Supporting Service Children in Education is the NPTC part of the partnership. Connections have been made through the partnership with a local school in Brecon which was successful in gaining funding, highlighting the issues of service children.

Two Community Days are being arranged to take place on 9th September at The Barracks, Brecon and on the 23rd September at The Park, Newtown.

It is envisaged that all of those that are in the partnership are represented on both days, primarily to showcase partnership working and the Armed Forces Covenant, but also to make a 'fun day' out for the family. Covenant funding has been secured to hold this event from the Armed Forces Covenant Small Grant fund, as this is the essence of the Covenant, bringing the Armed Forces and the public together.