



Report for:	Leader decision	Item Number:	
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Title:	Armed Forces Community Covenant
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Report Authorised by:	Zina Etheridge, Director of Strategy and Performance
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Lead Officer:	Eve Pelekanos, Head of Strategy and Business Intelligence
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Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key/Non Key Decisions: Non Key
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1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 The national [Armed Forces Community Covenant](#) initiative was launched by the government in May 2011. A Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community.
- 1.2 Haringey has not yet committed to signing up to a Covenant. The Ministry of Defence has contacted the council to ask when Haringey will be signing up to this initiative.
- 1.3 This report:
 - provides information about the current services and support that the council offers to service and ex service personnel and the potential support it could offer through a Community Covenant;
 - asks the Leader to commit the council to signing a Community Covenant with the armed forces.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

- 2.1 Some service personnel and their families need greater support in accessing local public services. For example, families may move frequently around the country, and in doing so children may miss school admissions dates. For some health matters, moving to a different health authority may mean that particular treatments are harder to access. Some veterans



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may experience homelessness, unemployment or mental illness for which support from local agencies is needed.

- 2.2 I am committed to helping service and ex-service personnel and their families access the support they need. An Armed Forces Community Covenant is a demonstration of this commitment, and I support this initiative wholeheartedly.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that:

- The Leader commits the council to signing an Armed Forces Community Covenant.
- The Leader approves the draft community covenant document – see Appendix A
- Should the Leader commit the council to signing a Community Covenant, this decision is recommended to Cabinet and Full Council for noting and endorsement.
- Should the Leader commit the council to signing a Community Covenant, that a multi agency working group is set up to agree a community covenant action plan

4. Alternative options considered

- 4.1 The council does not have to sign up to a Community Covenant – it is not a legal requirement. However, most other local authorities have committed to signing a Covenant.

5. Background information

- 5.1 The Community Covenant is designed as a **statement of intent. It is not a legal contract.** The Covenant aims to:
- encourage local communities to support the armed forces community in their areas and to nurture public understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the armed forces community
 - recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the armed forces community
 - encourage activities which help to integrate the armed forces community into local life
 - to encourage the armed forces community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement
- 5.2 A covenant should set out what the local area seeks to achieve on particular issues and, where possible, will be signed by representatives from all parts of the community, in particular public service providers. It is for the local area to decide on the issues it wants to support, depending on the need of the local armed forces community. The government has issued a sample [pledge and guidance notes](#) for local authorities wishing to sign up to a covenant.
- 5.3 Most covenants pledge to provide civic support in the following areas (wording used in covenants):
- Adult support to cadet forces
 - Enabling recruitment



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- Allowing work and training
- Housing
- School transition for service children
- Medical and welfare pathways
- Veterans
- Post operational home-coming parades and support to residents

- 5.4 Most pledge to provide military support in the following areas (wording used in covenants):
- Aid in civil emergencies as permitted by legislation
 - Periodic access to our estate and its facilities
 - Representation at celebrations, commemorations and parades
 - Sign Service Presentation teams
 - Sharing with partner organisations
- 5.5 Along with the armed forces, key personnel from the borough have been invited to co-sign the covenant, including representatives from the police, fire brigade, HAVCO and Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group as well as The Mayor of Haringey, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and the Deputy Lieutenant for Haringey.

Armed Forces in Haringey

- 5.6 There is no category for the Armed Forces in the Census 2011 list. From Ministry of Defence (MOD) data:
- Based on a count done by the Ministry of Defence in January 2013, there are 10 Army officers living in Haringey, and no Navy and no Air Force officers (rounded to the nearest 10 by the MOD).
 - As at March 2011 80 people living in Haringey were in receipt of payment under the War Pensions Scheme (numbers rounded by MOD)
 - As at July 2011, 85 people living in Haringey were in receipt of payment under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (numbers rounded by MOD)

NB. Individuals can be in receipt of payments under more than one pension scheme simultaneously so it is not possible to assess the exact number of those in receipt of a pension living in Haringey.

- 5.7 However, research conducted by the Royal British Legion in 2005 indicates a veteran population of around 3,700.
- 5.8 Even considering this, the number of Armed Services personnel in Haringey is low, as it is in many London boroughs. Some boroughs, however, have much larger numbers, due to the location of barracks – e.g. Westminster, Hillingdon, Hounslow.

6. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 6.1 As the current level of service / ex-service personnel living in the borough is low, the financial impact on the council of continuing with the existing provisions or indeed agreeing to any of the possible new proposals looks to be low. However, it must be borne in mind, that numbers could increase which could then lead to higher financial costs to the council which would be difficult to control if the Covenant amended existing policies.



7. Head of Legal Services and legal implications

7.1 The adoption of an Armed Forces Covenant is not an express statutory function and as such there is no formal route for the decision either by the Cabinet or the Full Council. Reporting the adoption of the covenant to the Cabinet and Full Council will assist in ensuring cross-party commitment to its terms.

There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in the report.

8. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

8.1 This report has no specific implications for the council's public sector equality duty as Armed Forces personnel as a group are not a protected characteristic within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

9. Head of Procurement Comments

9.1 N/A

10. Policy Implications

10.1 The policy implications of signing up to a covenant would depend upon the specific areas of support which the council and partners offered to the local armed services community.

11. Use of Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Haringey Community Covenant

COUNCILLOR CLAIRE KOBER

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