

# COUNCIL

## Designation of Veterans' Champion 27 July 2022

### Report of the Head of Democratic Services

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To ask that Council consider changing the title of "Veterans' Champion" to "Armed Forces Champion" in view of the wider remit of the role being undertaken.

This report is public.

#### RECOMMENDATION

- (1) **Council is asked to consider whether the role of the Veterans' Champion be widened to include serving members of the Armed Forces and renamed the 'Armed Forces Champion'.**

#### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The role of Veterans' Champion was established by Council in February 2013 specifically "to support and champion the plight of services leavers within Lancaster District."

2.2 This role was made prior to the creation of the Armed Forces Community Covenant which was signed on 12 February 2014. The Veterans' Champion at that time, former Councillor Liz Scott, was one of the signatories along with the Council's Leader and numerous other groups and stakeholders.

#### 3.0 Proposal

3.1 With the advent of the Armed Forces Community Covenant, the then Veterans' Champion began to take on a role wider than that originally defined by Council, and to refer to herself as the 'Armed Forces Champion'. The current Veterans' Champion also unofficially uses that title to refer to his role. Every other Lancashire Authority within the Armed Forces Covenant Hub has an elected member who is an Armed Forces Champion; this is also the title that the Ministry of Defence uses. Below is an extract from the Government website:

*"Since we launched the 'community covenant' in June 2011, every local authority in mainland Great Britain has signed a 'community covenant partnership' with their local armed forces and we are seeing positive benefits as result. The community covenant is now known simply as the Armed Forces Covenant, which covers all aspect of society. Many local authorities have an 'Armed Forces Champion'. The role of a 'champion' is often to make sure that the local authority achieves its commitments to the armed forces community*

*and any blockages are resolved.”*

- 3.2 In February 2021, the Council renewed its commitment to the covenant to reflect how it has evolved. It is now called the Armed Forces Covenant and a copy is attached for information.
- 3.3 In view of this, Council is asked to consider changing the role of the Veteran’s Champion to include championing serving members of the Armed Forces as well as services leavers and redesignating the role “Armed Forces Champion.”

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 Council is asked to consider the name change in light of the points made in this report.

#### **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

The Council first signed an Armed Forces Community Covenant on February 2014. This was renewed in 2021.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Legal services have been consulted and have no comments.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

Champions are eligible for an allowance not exceeding £250pa each out of an overall total of £1,000 (as set out in the Councillors Allowances Scheme in the Council’s Constitution). A change to the title and remit of a champion’s role will have no effect on that allowance which is included in existing budgets.

#### **OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources; Information Services; Property; Open Spaces:**

None.

#### **SECTION 151 OFFICER’S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

#### **MONITORING OFFICER’S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

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