



# Monmouthshire Armed Forces Forum Minutes

Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019 – County Hall, Usk, NP15 1GA

Present	Joe Skidmore – MCC, Emma Ashmead – Newport & Monmouthshire, Lisa Rawlings – AFCLO, Damon Rees – Change Step, Danielle Welsh – Age Cymru, Julian Wilde-Davies – British Training Board, Antony Metcalfe – RBL, Gino Parisi – ABUHB, Ian Bakewell – MCC
1. Welcome & Introductions	JS introduced himself to the group and all partners went around the room to introduce themselves and their areas of work.
2. Apologies	Callee Andrew – Connect Assist, Annabel Ingram – Army Families Federation, Alison Griffiths – Help for Heroes, Jinty Morgan – Help for Heroes, WO Stephen Perham – RAF, Tom Hall – Blesma, Kirsty Gronow – The Poppy Factory, Capt David Bell – R Mon RE(M),
3. Update – Armed Forces Liaison Officer	<p>Housing – Veterans self-build – is there a need for this in Monmouthshire? MCC has a self-build policy. There is a lot of support for Community Land Trust.</p> <p>Job Fair – September in Newport; there will be a special section for the Armed Forces Community. There is a shortage of care workers within Monmouthshire and there is a bid being progressed via the ICF fund to look at developing a package to encourage these trades. This could be combined with the local lettings policy to give priority to care workers within the social housing register. There is a deficit of young people within Monmouthshire and a growing older population.</p> <p>Armed Forces Covenant Training Package – The WLGA, with funding from the Covenant Fund, commissioned Cardiff and Vale College to produce an Armed Forces Covenant training package. The package consists of a face-to-face training resource together with an eLearning resource. Both resources are aimed at local authority elected members and staff and seek to raise awareness and understanding of the Covenant. <a href="http://www.covenantwales.wales/e-learning/">http://www.covenantwales.wales/e-learning/</a></p> <p>Armed Forces Directory A directory of support has been compiled for Gwent (Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire, Newport, and Caerphilly) which provides</p>

<p>4. Update – Cross Party Group Meeting</p>	<p>Guaranteed Interview Scheme  Monmouthshire County Council has approved the introduction a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for service leavers, spouses, reservists &amp; veterans, as long as they meet the essential criteria on the person specification/job description. The proposal was met with positivity and enthusiasm for support with the recognition of the struggles the Armed Forces Community have seeking suitable employment.</p>
<p>5. Update – Welsh Government Armed Forces Team</p>	<p>A discussion was had around the recording of data through various systems and how ex-service personnel, families and service children could be better recorded and reported upon.</p> <p>MCC Human Resources systems will be updated to start collecting this data as a workforce. School admissions forms have already been amended to collect this information (where provided).</p> <p>A question was asked of post-16 young people, do Coleg Gwent or other relevant service providers ask the question and record data.</p> <p><b>ACTION: JS to liaise with MCC Youth Enterprise team regarding post-16 individuals</b></p>
<p>6. Guest Speaker – Emma Ashmead – Supporting Service Children in Education</p>	<p>A presentation was delivered by Emma Ashmead – HMF Education Support Officer for Newport &amp; Monmouthshire</p> <p>[Presentation Attached]</p>
<p>7. Guest Speaker – Julian Wilde-Davies – British Training Board</p>	<p>A presentation was delivered by Julian Wilde-Davies on the function of the British Training Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are the degree and whole life development pathway specialists</li> <li>▪ We recognise the skills you have gained in our armed forces and want to complement these qualities, as well as provide support to transfer your skills into the civilian workplace. We offer assistance through our programmes to all serving personnel and veterans and assist you in enhancing your careers both inside the wire and outside in the civilian world.</li> <li>▪ This includes providing support to veterans in the Criminal Justice System.</li> <li>▪ The British Training Board is a Community Interest Company (CIC) committed to serving our Armed Forces and selected Public services from when they choose to serve, to when they leave, and beyond.</li> <li>▪ Police, custodial service and ex-services all supported</li> <li>▪ Rolling out throughout Wales to those service areas above</li> <li>▪ Grants are available to those who need it</li> </ul> <p>For more information contact <a href="mailto:JulianWilde-daviesjulian@britishtrainingboard.org.uk">JulianWilde-daviesjulian@britishtrainingboard.org.uk</a></p>
<p>8. Terms of Reference &amp; Draft Action Plan</p>	<p>The Terms of Reference were agreed by the group.</p> <p>The draft action plan was discussed with several key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Policy development – the Housing Register Policy is currently being reviewed</li> <li>▪ Transport seen as a key issue across Monmouthshire – this is true for all cohorts, not just ex-service personnel. A specific partnership has been established in Monmouthshire to look at this and any evidence received from organisations can be fed into this partnership</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Defence Transition Service (DTS) will deliver specialist support for serving personnel who are most likely to face challenges as they adjust to civilian life; to further support this, new ID cards will be available to military service leavers so their service to their country can be recognised easily.</li> <li>▪ Education awareness – commemoration and celebration and ensuring a wider buy-in. A populated calendar with upcoming key dates and events would be useful to provide to wider stakeholders (schools for example) to give them an opportunity to plan and join in with activities.</li> </ul>
9. Update – Partner Organisations	<p>Danielle Welsh – Age Cymru/Project 360 (<a href="https://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/our-work/project-360/">https://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/our-work/project-360/</a>)  This is a national partnership project between Age Cymru, members of Age Alliance Wales and Woody’s Lodge, to ensure that the right support is given to older military Veterans across Wales. Currently rolling out training and working with other charitable organisations to identify Veterans via other means.  Date for the diary: The Project 360° conference will be taking place on Thursday 24 October 2019 at Cardiff City Stadium open for any organisations working with veterans and older people in Wales. More information will be circulated in the near future.</p> <p>Damon Rees – Change Step (<a href="http://www.changestepwales.co.uk/">http://www.changestepwales.co.uk/</a>)  There has been a stop on referrals due to caseloads. An evaluation has been undertaken on cost-effectiveness, last evaluation recognised that for every £1 spent there was a return of £7 for the community.</p> <p>Army Families Federation (<a href="http://www.aff.org.uk/">http://www.aff.org.uk/</a>)  There is a new Forces Families Jobs (FFJ) platform which is launching for spouses of serving personnel in September. This is a tri-service jobs platform and employers who advertise their roles on it must have signed the Armed Forces Covenant; spouses will then have confidence that they are applying for roles where the employers understands that there may be a need for flexible working or even the opportunity to take the role with them on their next posting. There will also be discounted or free training courses provided.</p> <p>Antony Metcalfe – Royal British Legion (<a href="https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/">https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/</a>)  The new Census will be piloted in three areas (Wales area is Ceredigion) with questions to identify Veterans. The Veterans Gateway are approaching 2-years of operations – will be undertaking an evaluation. Aberystwyth Legal Links – a pro-bono service run by final year students doing law degrees.</p>
10. AOB	No other business was raised.
11. Date of Next Meeting	<p>Future meeting dates to be set for the year to allow for forward planning and diarising.</p> <p>It was agreed that the best months for meetings would be May and September for 2020.</p> <p>The next meeting date will be in December 2019 – date TBC. Suggestions for venues would be welcomed – alternatively, a room at County Hall, Usk can be used.</p>