



Monmouthshire Armed Forces Forum Minutes

Friday, 6th December 2019 – County Hall, Usk, NP15 1GA

Present	Joe Skidmore – MCC, Lisa Rawlings – AFCLO, Emma Ashmead – Newport CC, Cllr. Laura Jones – MCC, Gino Parisi – ABUHB, Sarah Brown – Gwent Psychology, Capt. David Bell – RMRE(Militia), James Cook – Pen-y-Graig Woodland Centre
1. Welcome & Introductions	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the group went around the room and introduced themselves.
2. Apologies	Will Kay – Army Welfare Service, Julianne Williams – The Forces Employment Charity, Tom Hall – Blesma, Stephen Boswell – SSAFA, Kirsty Gronnow – The Poppy Factory, Alison Griffiths – Help for Heroes, Annabel Ingram – Army Families Federation
3. Minutes of previous meeting & matters arising	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record of events.</p> <p>Post-16 Service Children – JS liaised with the MCC Youth Enterprise Team and currently they don't ask questions on their forms to identify this cohort.</p> <p>ACTION: JS/LR to find out further details and ascertain why this isn't being asked and whether it could be added</p>
4. Update – Armed Forces Liaison Officer	<p>LR provided an update on her areas of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Award ceremony was held to celebrate those organisations achieving Gold on the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme ▪ Across Gwent, Caerphilly CBC, Newport CC and ABUHB achieved Gold ▪ Housing – Exploring the possibility of a Wales Homes for Veterans in Gwent. Asked the housing teams to look into the STOLL project. There are currently 17 homeless veterans on Pobl caseloads. ▪ Employment – Guaranteed Interview Schemes now implemented in 4 out of 5 local authorities. Now need to check effectiveness and stats from usage. ▪ Education – The HMF Education Support Officer is now in place for Newport and Monmouthshire and is proven to be very effective. There are currently 155 service children in the Caerphilly borough that we know of.

	<p>Emma’s role will be extended to cover Gwent from April to Jul 20 with further funding currently being sought for a 2-year project that will cover Gwent and Powys. A weekend for service children has been planned in Woody’s Lodge to bring together children to build their friendship groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drop – ins – Aiming to have one in each LA. Currently one in Tredegar Library (Blaenau Gwent, Toby Carvery (Caerphilly), Blaenavon (Torfaen) and Bar Amber (Newport). Currently scoping locations in Monmouthshire, potentially in Abergavenny
<p>5. Update – Cross Party Group Meeting / Welsh Government Armed Forces Team</p>	<p>As an addendum to the above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It’s been discussed elsewhere whether to convert to one Gwent-wide meeting per health board instead of 5 LA’s as many attendees have to attend many with often same agenda items. It was agreed to place this as an agenda item at the next meeting ▪ Covenant Local Grants applications – applications submitted by 9 am on 2nd December 2019 will be decided before the end of February 2020 (www.gov.uk/government/collections/covenant-fund)
<p>6. Update – HMF Education Support Officer</p>	<p>Three schools’/school clusters were successful in Monmouthshire (Chepstow Comprehensive School with surrounding primary schools as a cluster, Kymin View/Overmonnow/Raglan as a cluster and Gilwern Primary School individually).</p> <p>Over 100 Service Children have been identified and are now being recorded on the schools SIMS system. This allows us to be able to track and monitor their progress as the Service Children cohort is now seen as a ‘vulnerable group’ within Estyn’s categorisation.</p> <p>SCiP Alliance have undertaken research which claims that <i>“four out of ten Service Children who have the ability to progress into higher education are unlikely to do so”</i>. Further information can be found here: https://www.scipalliance.org/research/scip-alliance-research-group</p> <p>Other notable pieces of work taking place across the county to look at children & young persons’ emotional well-being and mental health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Through the CYP Strategic Partnership a data cross-checking exercise to analyse those individuals known to multiple services and look at case studies to determine their life journeys (where could intervention have taken place sooner, is it necessary to change services etc.) ▪ Physical mapping of assets and youth support service groups/organisations on a place-bases and overlaying this with data available on mental health, drug and alcohol issues, anti-social behaviour, social housing etc. to build a rich picture of an area and make targeting resources more effective
<p>7. Guest Speaker – Sarah Brown (Community Psychology)</p>	<p>A joint-pilot project has been established between Dr Sarah Brown and Emma Ashmead to support service families with skills based activities/clinical psychology.</p> <p>The offer will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development and delivery of co-produced ‘well-being workshops’ for service families to support the emotional and psychological needs of children and young people. This will include working with parents to consider what has helped or what they think might help other families to

	<p>navigate the particular circumstances of military life. This might include experiences like moving home or school, and separation from parents and friends. The development of the workshop is likely to include initial consultation to a group of parents and young people and regular meetings to develop the materials and content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint assessments (home/school visits) to develop psychological formulations and plans for intervention ▪ Joint intervention where this cannot be signposted to alternative therapeutic services <p>The outcomes expected are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of military families reached (where there has been psychology involvement directly or indirectly) ▪ Partnership Officer reporting an increase in feeling supported to work with military families’ presenting needs from a psychological perspective ▪ Families reporting that the psychology consultation/joint assessment was helpful to them and contributed to decrease in child/family distress ▪ Partnership Officer feeling supported to progress their participation work and develop a wellbeing workshop with children and families ▪ Number of families accessing the wellbeing workshop ▪ Families reporting an increase in understanding of their children’s emotional and psychological needs in the context of military life (as a result of the workshop) ▪ Families and military community reporting an increase in confidence around supporting their children’s wellbeing <p>This pilot will run for 1-year between September 2019 – September 2020 with reviews being undertaken in January and March 2020.</p>
<p>8. Terms of Reference & Draft Action Plan</p>	<p>The Terms of Reference (ToR) were agreed at the previous meeting and this has now been published and available on the Armed Forces section on the MCC website.</p> <p>The Draft Action Plan will remain on the agenda and be regularly reviewed to ensure delivery against identified priorities. The group discussed potential additions to the identified pieces of work already included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ My Monmouthshire App – addition of Armed Forces support/signposting – could this be added? ▪ Discussion around other apps available to support Armed Forces – could there be a potential covenant grant to develop an all-encompassing app?
<p>9. Update – Partner Organisations</p>	<p>James Cooke – Pen-y-Graig Woodland Centre (http://www.pen-y-graig.org/) [Booklet Attached]</p> <p>Partner support group – ambition to create this. The Centre is supported by many volunteers but will benefit from further volunteer recruitment and development opportunities.</p> <p>ACTION: JS to link James up with appropriate support in this area</p> <p>Capt. David Bell – RMRE(Militia) (https://rmonrem.com/) DB has very kindly been given an additional year in service and has begun the process of transition and handing over elements of his role to other colleagues.</p>

	<p>DB has been touring around breakfast clubs to raise awareness of the Service Directory and offer further support as necessary.</p> <p>Gino Parisi – ABUHB ABUHB has secured the Gold in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme and has also signed up to the Step into Health Campaign. This was initiated by the NHS in England and we have agreed to undertake a range of actions to promote employment opportunities for service leavers. https://www.militarystepintohealth.nhs.uk/</p> <p>We have recently agreed to support the British Training Board with a WG funded pilot. This aims to work with existing service personnel who are in transition toward civilian careers. We have identified twenty individuals who want to retire from the military into South Wales. The project will map the training they have received in the military to civilian careers. ABUHB has agreed to support the pilot as a proof of concept. People are being recruited specifically because they may be interested in one of our roles within our Facilities and Estates Division which offers both a wide choice and an opportunity to create some clear focus for the project. If successful, the project will look to roll out to other organisations and across different career options. Because of the wrap around support with CVs, Interview training etc. we have branded this under the banner of Guaranteed Interview Plus.</p>
10. AOB	<p>DEWIS JS presented the DEWIS website to the group and gave an overview of its purpose. There seems to be a lack of opportunities on DEWIS locally for Armed Forces support (there were no armed forces breakfast results returned when searched during the meeting).</p> <p>ACTION: JS to look into a Monmouthshire launch and the progress/intentions around this</p>
11. Date of Next Meeting	<p>The dates for 2020 have been scheduled for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May 2020 @ Beachley Barracks ▪ September 2020 @ TBC