

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

19 JUNE 2013

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek members approval to the sign up to the Community Covenant Pledge.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **Members note further work to progress actions which will support the delivery of the principles contained within the Community Covenant Pledge.**

2.2 **Members approve the sign up of the pledge and for a network group to progress with the key areas of focus identified in paragraph 3.6 of this report.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

3.1 Background

3.2 A Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level, more details in Appendix A.

3.3 The aim of the Community Covenant is to encourage local communities to support the Service community in the area and nurture understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community.

3.4 Many people have become involved in supporting the Service community, through Service charities or more recently by participating in Armed Forces Day. They have shown their support in a variety of ways including fundraising, military celebrations, open days and family fun days. The Community Covenant scheme aims to build upon this support.

3.5 Melton has the Army Defence Animal Centre as well as a few surrounding service bases with a number of families and personnel likely to be living in the Borough. In addition, it would be a good opportunity to sign up in order to build partnerships with the Armed Forces, so that come 2015 and the celebration of 70 years since the end of World War 2, we can promote and celebrate the good work Melton Borough Council and other partners have done as well as commemorating those who have served their Queen and Country.

3.6 To ensure that once we sign up to the pledge we are committed to make a difference and support both the civilian and armed forces communities, members are asked to consider the establishment of a Networking Group with the terms of reference as follows: 'To deliver key actions that deliver the principles set out in the Armed Forces Community Covenant', with specific key areas of focus:

- Consider ex service personnel for housing
- Consider the mental wellbeing services available
- Encourage organisations to support with the employment and skills of the ex service personnel
- Offer incentives/discounts for current and ex service personnel.

Councillor Simon Lumley has advised officers that he would wish to Champion the pledge, the activity participate in the Network Group and its programme of work. The network group would provide an annual update report to this committee.

4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Melton community covenant statement relates to the Melton Corporate Plan. Some of the clear priorities that relate to this strategy are:

People

- Supporting people and businesses through the economic downturn
- Encouraging people to take an active role in their communities

Place

- Increasing public confidence & pride in neighbourhoods.
- Help provide a stock of housing accommodation that meets the needs of the community.

Well Run Council

- To provide high performing services that are efficient and meet customers' needs

5.0 **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 At this stage there are no financial or other resource implications as a direct result of this report. As the action plan is proposed to be developed in conjunction with the Armed Forces and other relevant agencies there may be the requirement to request a supplementary estimate to provide resources to help deliver on the pledge.

5.2 Once signed up to the Community Covenant Pledge there are financial resources from the MOD that can be accessed by the Network Group in support of the programme of work.

6.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

6.1 There are no other legal implications directly arising from this report.

7.0 **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

7.1 There are no direct links in this report; however, links within the Corporate Plan and community safety have been identified in 4.1, 7.1 and 7.3.

8.0 **EQUALITIES**

8.1 No initial equalities issues have been identified.

9.0 **RISKS**

9.1 The risks are considered in the table below:

Probability

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| | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Very High A | | | | |
| High B | | | | |
| Significant C | | | | |
| Low D | 2 | 1 | | |
| Very Low E | | | | |
| Almost Impossible F | | | | |
| | IV Negligible | III Marginal | II Critical | I Catastrophic |

→
Impact

| Risk No. | Description |
|----------|--|
| 1 | Community Covenant is not signed. |
| 2 | Funding requirements needed to support extra provision of services or campaigns. |
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| | |

10.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 There are no climate change issues directly arising from this report.

11.0 **CONSULTATION**

11.1 Consultation was held with the Strategic Management Team on 14 January 2013. The pledge is in alignment with current policies and priorities:

- Melton’s Corporate Plan 2011 - 2015
- Melton Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2013

The network group will be charged to lead on any further consultation as and when required.

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 All wards affected.

Contact Officer: Emma Trahearn - Community (Policy) Officer
Harry Rai – Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Date: 16/01/2013

Appendices: Appendix A - Armed Forces Community Covenant, Guidance Notes.
Appendix B - Community Covenant Pledge

Background Papers: Agenda and minutes of Task and Finish Task group meetings

Reference X:/Cttee, Council & Sub Cttees/CSA/2013/14/HR Community Covenant....