



REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES & THE ARMED FORCES CHAMPION

SUPPORTING OUR ARMED FORCES STRATEGY REPORT – UPDATE ON PROGRESS AND FUTURE PLANS

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to update Full Council on the work being achieved to support the delivery of the Council's Armed Forces Strategy.

Information

2. The Communities Committee approved the 'Supporting Our Armed Forces Community Strategy' on 15 September 2021, which underpins the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant (signed in 2018). As a result, Nottinghamshire County Council were awarded the Defence Employers Recognition Scheme Gold Award in 2020.
3. The award is an acknowledgement of the Authority's commitment to recognising what is a truly a unique and challenging lifestyle, one which few people outside of the military community can always comprehend.
4. To support the delivery of this programme of work, the establishment of a dedicated Officer resource driving forward key actions and an annual Armed Forces Community Fund of £20,000, were approved in September 2021.
5. Councillor Girling as the Armed Forces Champion, together with Councillor Lee, and Councillor Henry in their Armed Forces Advocate roles, lead by helping to develop and drive the Armed Forces agenda forward. All three Members have previously served in the Armed Forces, and bring that insight, understanding and passion to the roles.
6. The Lead Members have been working hard with Officers to support the Armed Forces community in Nottinghamshire over many years. This work recognises not only those currently serving, but also their partners and families, those who have previously served, and reservists, who are all key members of the Armed Forces Community.
7. The Armed Forces Community Fund enables the development and expansion of this work and has been important in:
 - Supporting key events such as commemorations and anniversaries
 - Supporting a veteran's breakfast club 4 times a year
 - Promoting key information and links

Activities

8. Several activities have been supported during 2022 - 2023. These include:

- Supporting a veteran's breakfast club 4 times a year. The purpose of the club is to facilitate a face-to-face meeting for our armed forces family; reserves, veterans, cadet adult instructors and family members to relax in a safe and social environment and stay in touch. The benefits are widespread not least providing an outlet for shared experiences and being made aware of current defence issues, which are doubly important if a colleague, partner, or other family member has been deployed in operations around the world.
- Working in partnership with Thoresby Courtyard, the Lancers Museum, and the Limelight Orchestra to celebrate the Coronation on Saturday 6 May. Serving personnel not on duty as well as residents including veterans from across Nottinghamshire enjoyed tea and cakes whilst watching the live screening of King Charles III and Queen Camilla's Coronation.
- In addition, the Lancers Museum unveiled a restored 1950's – 1960's 65 tonne Conqueror Tank, one of only eight in the Country.
- The official launch of the Nottinghamshire World War I & World War II Roll of Honour during Armed Forces week commencing 19 June 2023. This updated and revised Roll of Honour now allows members of the public free access to family records of military personnel and civilians killed during both world wars. The site has attracted international interest and received over 500,000 hits. The link can be found: [Roll of Honour | Nottinghamshire County Council](#)
- The inaugural "Boots and Berets" Awards at the Robin Hood Suite, Nottingham Forest Football Club on 24 August 2023, sponsored by Arc Partnership, Via East Midlands and Scape, with over 150 guests gathered to celebrate and recognise the important work businesses, charities and individuals do in supporting the Armed Forces Community across Nottinghamshire. As Guest of Honour, The Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, Sir John Peace, made presentations in the following categories:
 - **The Employee Forces Hero Award** - acknowledging the outstanding commitment and performance within the workplace presented to Gillian Walsh, Ashfield District Council.
 - **The Employer Forces Hero Award** - acknowledging the outstanding commitment and performance within the workplace presented to both Experian and Newark and Sherwood District Council.
 - **The Community (Together) Award** - provides an opportunity to recognise collaborative approaches of engagement presented to Nottinghamshire Police
 - **The Legacy (Inspiration) Award** - given to an individual who has demonstrated excellence in leading practice, projects or tasks as well as

demonstrating leadership presented to Tim Richmond, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire.

- **Two special awards** – given to recipients who through the years have influenced the armed forces agenda presented to Sir John Peace, Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire & Councillor Keith Girling.

9. The Armed Forces Champion Councillor Keith Girling, on the evening presented the Reserve Force and Cadet Association (RFCA), a cheque for £1,650 to enable 22 cadets from low-income families from across the County to attend an annual camp or adventurous training, in August 2023. As a contribution to the cost of an activity, each £75 bursary enabled young people within the cadet movement who would otherwise not be able to attend. Most experienced being away from home for the first time, camping out and life-skill practices associated with a uniformed youth organisation.

10. During the evening £705 was raised in charitable donations for the Armed Forces Charity Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA). The Chairman of the Nottinghamshire SSAFA will be present at the next NCC Breakfast Club on 8 November 2023, for a cheque presentation.

Future Activities

11. As a result of the contribution made by Nottinghamshire County Council, the Armed Forces Champion has been invited by Nottinghamshire Army Cadet Force, (NACF), and Nottinghamshire Royal Air Force Air Cadets, (RAFAC), to attend open days to see in cadets at the Army Nesscliffe Training Camp, Shropshire, and RAF Station, Flying School, Syerston, Nottinghamshire.

12. Following on from successful away days to The National Arboretum and RAF Duxford, a coach trip is being planned to the home of the codebreakers in October 2023. 150 veterans from 3 pickup points across the County will travel to Bletchley Park in Milton Keynes. The trip in partnership with Nottingham Forest Community Trust, Nottinghamshire Healthcare Foundation Trust and Newark and Sherwood District Council and aims to work with veterans to tackle isolation, loneliness, mental health, and other health issues.

Other Options Considered

13. Not to support the County's armed forces community.

Reasons for Recommendation

14. To provide an update to Full Council on the 'Supporting Our Armed Forces Community Strategy' and the delivery of this programme of work.

15. That the County Council demonstrates its intention to continually support the county's armed forces community.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty,

safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability, and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

17. The financial implications are contained within the report.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the Full Council notes the updates and endorses the progress being made in relation to 'Supporting Our Armed Forces Community Strategy' and the delivery of this programme of work.

Councillor John Cottee
Cabinet Member for Communities

Councillor Keith Girling
Armed Forces Champion

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Mark Walker
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Constitutional Comments (EKH 18/09/2023)

18. Full Council can receive and consider this report.

Financial Comments (PAA29 19/09/2023)

19. As in 2021/22 and 2022/23, a budget of £20,000 has been allocated in 2023/24 from revenue contingencies to meet the cost of the programme of work on the Supporting Our Armed Forces Community Strategy as set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Supporting Our Armed Forces Community Strategy 15th September 2021
[Supporting our Armed Forces Community Strategy \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/Supporting-our-Armed-Forces-Community-Strategy)

Electoral Divisions

- All