

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**THE COMMUNITY COVENANT****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report proposes that the County Council establishes a Community Covenant.

Information and Advice

2. The Armed Forces Covenant expresses the general principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces community. It was set out in law in November 2011 as part of The Armed Forces Act 2011.
3. The Community Covenant complements the Armed Forces Covenant and encourages local communities to develop a relationship with the service community in their area. This includes both serving members of the armed forces and veterans.
4. The Community Covenant is based around signing the Community Covenant pledge. The pledge sets out what a Community Covenant seeks to achieve in a particular area and is signed by representatives from all parts of the Community.
5. The Ministry of Defence is encouraging the Armed Forces Community to be involved in the scheme and to take a proactive approach to forging links with Local Authorities in their area. The County Council has been invited by representatives of the Royal British Legion to consider establishing a Community Covenant.
6. Guidance issued to Local Authorities by the Ministry of Defence sets out that Community Covenant Pledges may look quite different from one location to another. It is proposed that the Policy Committee develop a Community Covenant Pledge for Nottinghamshire in partnership with the local armed forces community.
7. Nottinghamshire has many current and historical connections to both regular and reserve forces. Within the county are the Chetwynd Barracks and several former RAF bases. Many veterans have also chosen to live in the county.
8. The development of a Community Covenant Pledge provides the County Council with an opportunity to further develop its relationship with the armed forces in Nottinghamshire and to record the important contributions that it already makes in respect to the armed forces, including events on Flag Day and Armistice Day.

Other Options Considered

9. The County Council is not a required to establish a Community Covenant and could decline the invitation to do so.

Reasons for Recommendations

10. The County Council's Strategic Plan sets out commitments to improve the co-ordination, integration and accessibility of our services with other agencies and to work with other agencies to ensure information, advice and access to services is as easy as possible.

11. The establishment of a civil/military partnership through a Community Covenant is consistent with these commitments, demonstrates support for the Armed Forces community and helps build an understanding of the needs of the Armed Forces.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

13. It is recommended that County Council agrees

- i. to establish a Community Covenant and
- ii. that the Policy Committee develop a community covenant pledge.

Councillor Kay Cutts
Leader of the Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Tim Gregory, Corporate Director

Constitutional Comments (NAB 8.05.12)

14. Council has responsibility for approving and adopting the Council's policy framework and is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Background Papers

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.

Armed Forces Community Covenant Guidance

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All