

**Foreword By, Councillor Keith Girling Armed Forces Champion:**

As a former member of the British Armed Forces I am immensely proud and honoured to be the Armed Forces Champion for Nottinghamshire County Council and represent our Armed Forces Community. Our Military constantly demonstrate values, skills, commitment and willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice for others. They continually provide a valuable contribution to our society, and the overwhelming majority of our Veterans flourish. I am keen that we should never forget the sacrifice and commitment shown by the men and women who serve and have served the nation, and to that end we are committed to achieving a shared vision of support and mutual benefit. We have a long history of doing this in Nottinghamshire, and it remains our duty to do so.

This strategy builds on that work and sets clear goals and the intent for the collaborative delivery of services that draws upon the wealth of experience of the public sector, armed forces charitable sector, businesses and other organisations in Nottinghamshire who offer skills and knowledge that are vital to make a difference in every part of the county.

By 2028, we aim that every Veteran feels valued, supported and empowered and, in accordance with the Armed Forces Covenant, will never be disadvantaged as a result of their service.

### Scope of the strategy

This strategy sets the vision and principles which wherever possible, works to enhance the welfare and wellbeing of the Armed Forces Community for Nottinghamshire. This strategy allows for special consideration in some cases to the Armed Forces Community of Serving Personnel. There are five cross-cutting factors that provide a backdrop to the overall co-ordination of service provision as well as six identified themes. These will form the basis of an action plan to be taken forward into the years ahead.

Cross-cutting factors;

1. Collaboration between organisations
2. Coordination of Veterans' services
3. DATA on the Veteran Community
4. Public perception and understanding
5. Recognition of the Armed Forces Community

Identified Themes:

1. Community and relationships
2. Employment, education and skills
3. Health and wellbeing

### Armed Forces Community

The Armed Forces Community consists of all people who are or have been regulars, reservists or cadets and cadet force adult volunteers and their partners and immediate families.

A **Veteran** is defined as anyone who has served for at least one day in Her Majesty's Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve), or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations. Under the definition, Veterans have already left the Armed Forces. **Service Leavers** are serving personnel who are planning to leave, who are still under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Defence. **Reservists** are an integral part of the UK Armed Forces, and this strategy applies to former Reservists. This strategy takes account of the fact that Veterans young and old exist within a wider community of family and friends. It also considers the partners and immediate families of those who have died whilst serving. Cadets and cadet force adult volunteers (CFAV) in the military sponsored cadet organisations are not eligible for recognition as Veterans.

### **The Armed Forces Covenant**

The Armed Forces Covenant, which was enshrined in law in the Armed Forces Act (2011), has at its core the principles that service personnel, veterans, and their families are not disadvantaged by their service and that special provision is made for those who have sacrificed the most, including the injured and bereaved.

### **Nottinghamshire County Council**

Nottinghamshire County Council supports the principles that we can share effective practices and success and that broad outcomes are tailored to local needs. The establishment of clearer, consistent principles and aims across Nottinghamshire will help ensure that those within the armed forces community experience a consistent approach with that of other citizens.

### **Armed forces charitable sector**

The Armed Forces Charitable sector, supplements the core essential services provided by the public sector, by providing additional custom-built support. Charities as a whole provide specialist services for Veterans and the bereaved on a range of issues, including: information helpline, healthcare, and housing throughout Nottinghamshire. Based on their own organisational eligibility criteria, Nottinghamshire County Council will encourage the charitable sector to work together and act as advocates and champions for the armed forces community.

### **Private sector**

An increasing number of private sector organisations across Nottinghamshire recognise the skillsets and experience that Veterans and service leavers can bring into the work place and the business benefits of employing them. Private sector employers are closely engaged with successful transitions to civilian life and employment, and have a pivotal role in providing training and employment. Nottinghamshire County Council will work with and support the work run by the Defence Relationship Management to encourage the private sector to sign the Armed Forces Covenant. Working with employers we will ensure that they establish a clear pathway with the **Career Transition Partnership** to ensure a consistent approach to recruitment.

**The Employer Recognition Scheme,** The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme encourages employers to support Defence and inspire others to do the same. The Scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support for the Armed Forces community, and align their support with the Armed Forces Covenant.

CROSS-CUTTING FACTORS	
<p>1. Collaboration between organisations</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide secretariat for and support to the activities of the Civil and Military Partnership Board – CMPB</li> <li>➤ Support the activities of the Veterans Information Network Nottinghamshire – VINN</li> <li>➤ Connect independent organisations and businesses to the wider armed forces partnership</li> <li>➤ Maintain working relationships with East Midland-Reserve Force &amp; Cadet Association, Defence Relationship Management and REED.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <p>Improved collaboration between organisations offers the British Armed Forces Community coherent support</p>
<p>2. Coordination of services</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Draw upon the expertise of all organisations to design and deliver consistent services throughout Nottinghamshire.</li> </ul>	<p>The coordination of the British Armed Forces Community service provision delivers consistent aims and principles over time and throughout Nottinghamshire, ensuring that members of the British Armed Forces Community are treated fairly compared to the local population.</p>

<p>3. Data on the Veteran Community</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Customer Service Centre to collect Data – project specific</li> <li>➤ Work with other organisations to collect Data targeting those in the criminal justice system and to address homelessness.</li> </ul>	<p>Enhanced collection, use and analysis of data across the public, private and charitable sectors to build and evidence base to effectively identify and address the needs of Veterans.</p>
<p>4. Public perception and understanding</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promote and support events/activities that project a positive image</li> </ul>	<p>That Nottinghamshire value the British Armed Forces Community and understand their diverse experiences and culture.</p> <p>That a positive image reflects the skills and attributes gained whilst serving in the Armed Forces.</p>
<p>5. Recognition of the British Armed Forces Community</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Commit to raising awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant throughout Nottinghamshire</li> <li>➤ Assist universities, schools, history and historical societies and museums to highlight the role of local men and women and their antecedents in service.</li> <li>➤ Organise and publicise commemorative events</li> </ul>	<p>That the service and experience of the British armed forces community is recognised, valued and recorded.</p>

KEY THEMES	
<p>1. Community and relationships</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Organise and publicise community events</li> <li>➤ Promote relevant service provision that tackles loneliness and isolation</li> <li>➤ Ensure all relevant strategies and policies reflect the needs of the British Armed Forces Community.</li> </ul>	<p>That members of the British Armed Forces Community are able to build healthy relationships and integrate into their communities</p>
<p>2. Employment, education and skills</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Internally and externally work with others to ensure that all key policies relating to recruitment, retention, training and deployment are fit for purpose and reflect the needs of the British armed forces community</li> <li>➤ Work with service providers and organisations to deliver relevant support</li> </ul>	<p>Service leavers and Veterans enter appropriate employment and can continue to enhance their careers throughout their working lives.</p> <p>That statutory provision with regards to Reservists, training and deployment is adhered to.</p>
<p>3. Health and wellbeing</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Share effective practice and support collaboration between organisations offering Veterans health and well-being provision</li> <li>➤ Ensure all relevant strategies and policies reflect the needs of the Armed Forces Community.</li> </ul>	<p>Veterans enjoy a state of positive physical and mental health and wellbeing, enabling them to contribute to wider aspects of society.</p> <p>Veterans benefit from better, safer, more effective patient care.</p>

DRAFT