

Meeting: Housing Sub Committee

Date: Monday 23rd September 2019

Title: The Role of the Armed Forces Officer

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Service: Housing

Directorate: Environment, Housing and Leisure

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

North Tyneside Council employed a permanent, full time Armed Forces Officer in October 2018. This report provides an overview of the support that is being provided to the Armed Forces Community in North Tyneside.

2. Recommendations

To note the information provided and to consider whether members wish to receive regular updates on the service provided by the Authorities Armed Forces Officer.

3. Details

The role of Armed Forces Officer was created to strengthen delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant across North Tyneside for the serving and veteran armed forces community. A major aspect of the role is to enable the direct provision of support to those who serve or have served in the armed forces, and their families.

The Armed Forces Officer works with services across the Authority and with partners to ensure that members of the Armed Forces Community are treated fairly and that North Tyneside Council continues to honour the commitment set out in the Armed Forces Covenant.

The Armed Forces Officer also acts as a single point of contact for all armed forces related enquiries into the Council and coordinates services in accordance with the objectives of the Armed Forces Covenant.

The following activities are undertaken to help achieve these outcomes (this is not an exhaustive list as other appropriate support activities may be undertaken if necessary):

Support for Council Residents

-SSAFA Case Working

Rent arrears for existing council tenants, potential council residents, at risk of eviction living in the area that have private tenancies, brown and white goods.

-Homelessness

Referring to military charity such as supported accommodation for veterans who have complex needs Avondale, SPACES, NCCP.

-Mental Health

Referring and signposting to specialised military charities TILS, Combat Stress, Veterans at Ease, Forward Assist.

-Substance Misuse

Establishing effective pathways with the local drug and alcohol service.

Armed Forces Forum

North Tyneside Council leads and maintains a large outward facing AF Forum with representation from the Local Authority, (Housing, Leisure, Adult Social Care, Public Health), AF charities and public sector (Northumbria Police & NHS NT CCG), private sector (Capita, Morrisons, and NT Business Forum) partners and the local military (RN, Army & RAF). Having signed the AF Community Covenant in 2012 the Forum pledged their support once again with a new AFC signing in October 2018 reinforcing our support to the AF Community Support for NTC Staff

Developing Policies

Guaranteed interview scheme being developed to including serving reservist. Recognising their barriers to employment.

Support for serving Armed Forces

Advertisement of local reserve units

Support for North Tyneside Council Employees Armed Forces Communities

Intranet Forum for Council employees.

4. Background Information

The definition of a veteran is anyone who has served in the military for 1 day. This definition is set out by the Armed Forces Covenant which North Tyneside Council signed in 2012. Previously, North Tyneside Council was previously affiliated to Armed Forces Outreach Scheme (AFOS) which relies on grants from the Armed Forces Covenant on a regular basis. North Tyneside Council recognised the need to support their Armed Forces Community and the importance of having continuity with this support, and decided to fund their own Armed Forces Officer in 2018.