

Subject:	Armed Forces Covenant	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Council	Date:	22 March 2023
Report of:	Director of Communities	Lead Member:	Communities Health and Well-being
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: N/A
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: N/A
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1. RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Armed Forces Covenant in full.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- To adopt a new Armed Forces Covenant.

3. BACKGROUND

In 2012, RBC and partner organisations adopted an Armed Forces Community Covenant that agreed we would work and act together to honour the Armed Forces Community Covenant. In November 2022 a new Armed Forces Duty came into being and Community Covenants have now been replaced with covenants adopted by individual local authorities and statutory organisations.

4. DETAILS

4.1 The principles of the Armed Forces Covenant are:

- No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen
- In some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.

4.2 By committing to the covenant, RBC would need to demonstrate agreement to a number of commitments, these are:

- **Promoting the Armed Forces:** promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation to our staff, customers, suppliers, contractors and the wider public.
- **Veterans:** supporting the employment of veterans, recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process; working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to support the employment of service leavers;
- **Reserves:** supporting our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces; granting additional paid/unpaid leave for annual Reserve Forces training; supporting any mobilisations and deployment; actively encouraging members of staff to become Reservists;
- **Cadet Organisations:** supporting our employees who are volunteer leaders in military cadet organisations, granting additional leave to attend annual training camps and courses; actively encouraging members of staff to become volunteer leaders in cadet organisations; supporting local military cadet units; recognising the benefits of employing cadets/ex-cadets within the workforce.
- **National Events:** supporting Armed Forces Day, Reserves Day, the Poppy Appeal Day and Remembrance activities;

- **Armed Forces Charities:** supporting Armed Forces charities with fundraising and supporting staff who volunteer to assist;
- **Commercial Support:** promoting the Defence Discount Service and the Defence Privilege Card and offering a discount membership for members of the Armed Forces community at Rossendale Leisure Trust facilities
- **Housing:** giving due regard to the armed forces community as we strategically plan and deliver housing services to the people of Rossendale.

4.3 All local authorities are expected to provide information on their website on the support organisations available for members and ex members of the armed forces, and to promote our covenant. A new web page detailing support for members and ex-members of the armed forces has been developed and is available at <https://bit.ly/3xMXvY8>

5. RISK

Currently Rossendale is the only East Lancashire district without an updated Armed Forces Covenant following the new guidance. As such, we are not listed on the Lancashire Armed Forces Hub website.

6. FINANCE

No financial implications, all activities will be financed through existing budget provision.

7. LEGAL

No legal implications.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

HR Policies will be adapted to include the changes outlined.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

The principles of the Armed Forces Covenant are in line with the Council's core values. Putting customers first and meeting the emerging needs of our communities is at the heart of Rossendale Council's values and the Covenant is a mechanism to assist in meeting the needs of armed forces personnel, their families and veterans wherever practicable and feasible.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Rossendale Armed Forces Covenant 2023	<i>Attached</i>



Rossendale Borough Council

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of:

Rossendale Borough Council

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Rossendale
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between
The People of the United Kingdom
His Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown
And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles of the Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We, Rossendale Borough Council, will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen*
- in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 We recognise the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business and to our country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- **Promoting the Armed Forces:** promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation, to our staff, customers, suppliers, contractors and wider public.
- **Veterans:** supporting the employment of veterans, recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process; working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to support the employment of Service leavers;
- **Reserves:** supporting our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces; granting additional paid/unpaid leave for annual Reserve Forces training; supporting any mobilisations and deployment; actively encouraging members of staff to become Reservists;
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- **Housing:** giving due regard to the armed forces community as we strategically plan and deliver housing services to the people of Rossendale.

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community and our customers on how we are doing