
**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Economic Development and Community
Engagement (Deputy Leader)**

16 June 2016

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities, Culture & Public Realm)

Refresh of the York Community Covenant

Summary

1. This report provides an update in relation to the Council's work with York's local armed forces through the Community Covenant. The establishment of a York Armed Forces Forum is proposed.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - a) Agree to a re-signing of the Covenant as part of events surrounding Armed Forces Day
 - b) Designate the Council's Executive Member and lead officer who will be responsible for and oversee the Council's commitment to the covenant work as the Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement and the Assistant Director (Communities, Culture & Public Realm respectively)
 - c) Agree York's Community Covenant action plan to be managed by a new York Armed Forces Forum

Reason: To reconfirm City of York Council's commitment to the York Community Covenant.

Background

3. In May 2011, The Government published the Armed Forces Covenant, which encouraged the adoption of Community Covenants between local communities and the local armed forces community in order to:
 - Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces Community in their areas
 - Nurture public understanding and awareness of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community

- Recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces Community
 - Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces Community into local life
 - Encourage the Armed Forces Community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement
4. The Community Covenant was launched in December 2011 with representatives of City of York Council, The Army, Navy, Royal Air Force, veterans, charities and other key figureheads joining together to sign a scroll to mark the launch.

Progress since the last review

5. Successes since 2011 include:
- Formation of a York Community Covenant Task group which has representatives from all the key organisations
 - Local projects have accessed funding from the Community Covenant Grant Scheme, including:
 - Strensall Youth and & Sports Association – refurbishment of community facilities and the addition of a MUGA
 - Fishergate and Robert Wilkinson Primary Schools – for play equipment on the schools site
 - Soldier On Project – a social enterprise offering training, employment, advice and advocacy for both forces veterans and the wider community.
 - Army Welfare Service – Play based project for services families
 - Annual Armed Forces Day celebrations have been held in the City

Proposals

6. The latest Community Covenant Task Group was held on 15th March 2016 after a period of hiatus and it was agreed that York should re-affirm its commitment to the Community Covenant work through :
- A public re-signing of the Community Covenant as part of the events surrounding Armed Forces Day

- Naming an Executive Member to act as Armed Forces champion who will be responsible for overseeing the council's commitment to the Covenant work. It is proposed that this be the Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement. It is also proposed to name the Council's Assistant Director for Communities, Culture & Public Realm to act as the senior officer point of contact.
 - Recognising and signing off a Community Covenant Action Plan for York which has been developed and endorsed in conjunction with the York Community Covenant Task Group (attached at Annex 1)
7. It is proposed that the Community Covenant Task Group be constituted as the York Armed Forces Forum.

Options

8. It is open to the Executive Member to:
- Propose any amendment to the covenant action plan
 - Decide whether to sign the refreshed covenant

Analysis

9. The report reaffirms the Council's commitment to the Community Covenant. The action plan provides further details of the projects and work areas that the Council is committed to deliver, working in partnership with the York Community Covenant Task Group.

Council Plan

10. The Community Covenant contributes to the following Council Plan priorities:
- All York's residents live and thrive in a city which allows them to contribute fully to their communities and neighbourhoods
 - All children and adults are listened to, and their opinions considered
 - Residents are encouraged and supported to live healthily
 - Focus on the delivery of frontline services for residents and the protection of community facilities.
 - Focus on cost and efficiency to make the right decisions in a challenging financial environment.

Implications

11. **Financial:** Funding for projects identified through York Armed Forces Forum will seek to draw down external funding via the Community Covenant national fund.
12. **Equalities:** An EIA screening has been completed. The Community Covenant action plan will address equality issues within this community of identity.
13. There are no **Human Resources, Crime and Disorder, Legal, Information Technology, Property** or **Other** implications.

Risk Management

14. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified associated with the proposals contained in this report are those which could lead to the inability to meet business objectives and to deliver services, leading to damage to the Council's reputation and failure to meet stakeholders' expectations. The level of risk is assessed as "Low". This is acceptable but means that regular monitoring is required of the operation of the new arrangements.

Annexes

York Community Covenant Task Group – draft action plan

Abbreviations

EIA- Equality Impact Assessment

MUGA- Multi Use Games Area

Contact Details

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	Report Approved	✓	Date 6 June 2016
Specialist Implications Officers: Not applicable			

Wards Affected:	All	✓
For further information please contact the author of the report		

