

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:-	Cabinet
2.	Date:-	4th September 2013
3.	Title:-	Armed Forces Community Covenant
4.	Directorate:-	Resources.

5. Summary

This report is to seek Cabinet approval to support a bid by the Military Community Veterans' Centre (MCVC) to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Armed Forces Community Covenant Fund.

The bid is for £22,088 to provide an outreach service to meet ex-service personnel and their families who may need assistance under the remit of the Armed Forces Community Covenant (AFCC).

As lead organisation for the Rotherham AFCC, any grant money awarded will be paid to RMBC to manage and administer.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet supports the submission of the bid and the management and administration of any financial grant approved by the MoD.

7. Proposals and Details

Background.

In January 2012, Rotherham MBC as the lead organisation, arranged an official signing event for the AFCC. Twenty one other organisations signed the covenant, the ethos being that no ex-serving personnel (and members of their family) should be disadvantaged in any way for having served in HM Armed Forces, along with assisting with the transition into civilian life.

Since January 2012, work on this initiative has continued under the guidance of Cllr Doyle, Cabinet Member for Adult and Social Care, as Chair of the AFCC Strategic Group.

One of the success stories is the creation of a constituted community group, the MCVC who are working with the ex-service community in Rotherham.

Proposal

The MCVC Group wishes to submit a bid to the MoD AFCC Fund and requires the support of the local authority to do this.

The bid is to purchase a mobile trailer and associated equipment to provide a Rotherham-wide outreach service, run by volunteers. In providing this service and working with the MoD, the MCVC will assist with the transition from military to civilian life, through signposting to organisations within the AFCC, who can help them with information and services about housing, employment and health.

The number of ex-service personnel is not known definitively; the best estimate from the MoD is the 1:6 ratios which out of a population of 254,605 would mean a focus population of approximately 42,000 in Rotherham.

Through a series of planned visits to different locations or events in Rotherham, using established networks such as Parish Councils, Area Assemblies, local libraries and VAR, the aim is to identify as many of the ex-service personnel as possible and through signposting to relevant services, begin to assess the needs of the of this client group.

If awarded funding, work on the project will begin in October 2013 with the outreach programme beginning in January 2014. Information gathered throughout the year long project will be used to inform service providers, via the AFCC Strategic Group, of the needs of ex-service personnel and their family members.

8. Finance

The bid to the MoD AFCC Fund is for £22,088.

No direct financial contribution from RMBC is required toward supporting the bid.

If a grant is awarded, the contribution from RMBC will be staff time for a lead officer to support the AFCC and administer the grant, along with assistance from staff in Financial Services.

Appropriate systems will be established within Financial Service along with management and administration arrangements with the MCVC group.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The MCVC group are currently working on policies and procedures to assist with the running of the outreach service. These include Health and Safety, Volunteer protocols and staffing protocols when the outreach service is out on location. If the full amount of funding requested in the bid is not approved, then a scaled down version of the project will be implemented.

Appropriate management and administrative systems will be put in place with the group to ensure regular financial monitoring occurs which will link to Financial Regulations.

Without an understanding of the needs of ex-service personnel, it is difficult to meet the obligations of the AFCC.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Armed Forces Community Covenant contributes to the Priority 2 of the Corporate Plan, "*Protecting our most vulnerable people and families, enabling them to maximise their independence*" by ensuring that no ex-service personnel is disadvantaged for having served in HM Armed Forces.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Reports to

Improving Places Select Commission 7th September 2011

**Cabinet Member for Community Development, Equalities & Young People's Issues
12th September 2011**

LSP Board 29th September 2011.

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