

CAERPHILLY ARMED FORCES FORUM (CAFF)

14th June 2018
Penallta House (Rhymney Room)

PRESENT

Kathryn Peters (Chair)	CCBC (Armed Forces Lead)
Cllr. Andrew Whitcombe	CCBC (Armed Forces Champion)
Lisa Rawlings	Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer
Keith Sutcliffe	SSAFA (Gwent Area)
Ken Terry	Royal British Legion
Julianne Newsham	Regular Forces Employment Association
Axel Rees	Hire a Hero
D Sparey	Royal Welsh (Caerphilly Branch)
David Lancaster	Royal Welsh (Caerphilly Branch)
Kirsty Gronow	Poppy Factory
C Ashley	Poppy Factory
Ceri Pritchard	DWP Partnership Manager
Anthony Metcalfe	Royal British Legion Area Manager
Abi Wrigley	Army Families Federation
Sarah Stafford	Career Transition Partnership
Sgt Sarah Blackford	RAF Specialist Engagement Team
John Martin-Jones	Alabare – Wales Homes for Veterans
Alison Griffiths	Help for Heroes
Nick Vanderpump	Help for Heroes
Tom Hall	Blesma
Jason Suller	Blesma

APOLOGIES

Shelley Elgin	Help For Heroes
Captain Huw Williams	203 (Welsh) Field Hospital
Brian Tansley	SSAFA (Gwent Area)

KP welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for brief introductions.

1.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

- The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

2.0 UPDATES OF ACTIONS

- Invite to SSCE conference sent to CAFF Members
- Still awaiting confirmation of next meeting of Gwent ABUHB
- Unable to send Prevent Presentations due to security issues – members were advised to individually request presentation and an abridged version will be sent
- Sponsorship link sent to CAFF members

3.0 UPDATE FROM WLGA –

KP advised the forum of the following:

- Commissioning of the e-learning package designed to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant and to provide training to local authority staff and elected members – Still waiting for the platform to which it will be based. Face to face training has began
- The training packages are complete and currently being put onto branded USBs (should be with us next week) and they are hoping to launch the pack by the end of the month. The website containing good practice/info films is ready and will be launched alongside the training pack.
- Bid being placed to create a toolkit for the local authorities front line staff – no update
- Next WLGA Network meeting – 4th July
- Armed Forces Conference – held in Cardiff Diary Marker 17th October

4.0 UPDATE – ARMED FORCES LIAISON OFFICER

LR advised the forum of the following:

- Housing – Policy change almost at completion for Caerphilly. Cross Party Group would like to support this via the WG. This has been sent and awaiting response
- No Alabare Homes in wider Gwent – potentially a house being offered by United Welsh? We hope to have this come to fruition within the next 6 to 9 months
- Education –SSCE Conference – started presenting to Head Teachers. Covered 86 in Caerphilly.
- I have supported several applications to the Armed Forces Covenant Trust. BTM community council has applied for a Peace Garden, Caerphilly LA bid for funds to hold an event around the end of the First World War and there was a bid for an individual organising an Armed Forces Day. The results will be announced at the end of June. During the next round (29th July) I will be making an application for a Gwent Directory, Silhouettes and supporting Cymru Creations for their Fact or Fiction Videos
- All Wales Awards The Armed Forces in Wales Awards are looking for suitable nominations for each of the four categories, these will be presented at a prestigious Awards Ceremony to be held in Cardiff on 22 November 2018. The four categories are:
Armed Forces in Wales Award
Covenant Award
Youth/Cadet Award
Sports Award
The cut off date for nominations is 10th September
- There not there –silhouettes campaign applications close 30th September
<http://www.covenantfund.org.uk/>
- There is now a Twitter and Facebook account for the Gwent Armed Forces Community
- Caerphilly Armed Forces Day Celebrations will be held in Bargoed 23rd June 18
- A Marquee has been secured for the Caerphilly Armed Forces Forum Members for the two days of the Caerphilly Big Cheese event

5.0 UPDATE FROM GWENT (ABUHB) ARMED FORCES FORUM

LR advised the forum that despite numerous requests for an update and/or at least a date for the next meeting this has not been actioned by the health board. Keith Sutcliffe who is the secretary for the forum has also tried to no avail.

Action: KP to investigate via PSB

6.0 PRESENTATION FROM ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Anthony Metcalfe gave a brief presentation outlining the RBL Thank you Campaign

Over the past four years we have been marking the Centenary in ways that have been largely solemn, silent, and focused on the dead.

- It is right and proper to honour the sacrifices made in defence of the freedoms we enjoy today.

- It's time to say 'thank you' for all they did for us.
- The presentation highlighted all that worked tirelessly during world war one and how we can get involved with the Thank You Campaign.
- The members were encouraged to highlight this campaign to their networks

Action: A copy of the presentation to be sent to members

7.0 PRESENTATION FROM DWP – UNIVERSAL CREDIT

- Ceri Pritchard (DWP Partnership Manager) gave a presentation outlining the roll out of Caerphilly Universal Credit Full Service 8th September 18
- The current 6 benefits will be under one umbrella of UC
- There will be a triage approach – customer, work coach and case manager
- Work with key partners to support vulnerable customers
- Ex Service Personnel are placed in the tier two of vulnerable customers
- There is a useful video on you tube on UC

Action: CP was asked to circulate the JCP leads to the forum

8.0 UPDATE FROM CAFF MEMBERS

8.1 SSAFA

- Remains busy with a spike in Council Tax and housing arrears
- Continue to cover prisons. Problems arise on prisoner release
- Funded a lay-back bike – raised £10000 of £12000 required
- Funded a ice trike £4500
- Increase in cases from the Welsh Guards
- Continues to have many requests to help pay for funerals
- All staff are required to hold a DBS and complete training every 3 years
- GDPR compliant

8.2 BLESMA

- Introduction of Blesma to the Forum members. Tom Hall is the lead Rep for Blesma (The Limbless Veterans) in Wales and he is now joined by Jason Suller, the new Blesma Outreach Officer.
- The Blesma Outreach programme in Wales is for Veteran to Veteran activity, events, community and covenant projects and volunteer work. Also includes fundraising, using volunteers and Blesma members.
- Tom Hall updated forum members that there is now strong Blesma Support in Wales and this is open to any serving or ex-serviceman who has lost a limb, or the use of a limb, use of sight, and for cases in-service: hearing or speech. Please refer anyone you find who could be entitled to Blesma support. Contact for Blesma support is through Tom Hall at bsowest@blesma.org or on 07780 165085.
- Blesma has launched a radical new approach to get the best for veterans and their families who are trying to cope with the wide-ranging impacts of limb loss. Findings from the **Blesma Families Project** have identified the need for significant changes in the way support is given to both Members and their family carers. The study interviewed and surveyed Blesma Members and their families to get a unique insight into how families live with limb loss. Please find the Blesma Families Project report which can be read on the Blesma Website here: www.blesma.org/familiesproject
- Tom also asked for any advice or information on appropriate care homes that could be used for Blesma members in Wales for respite or convalescence.
Tom Hall thanked Lisa Rawlings for her initial introduction and for welcoming Blesma into the CAFF.

Action: Research possible partners to support with convalescence locations

8.3 Hire a Hero

- Continues to work with companies regionally and nationally

- There is a boost in the construction industry and there is training available with CITV
- Works with veteran prisoners in South Wales – additionally arranging for corporate partners to visit the prisons to discuss options with the incumbents

8.4 Royal Welsh (Caerphilly Branch)

- Nothing to report

8.5 Army Families Federation

- This month's theme –Housing Specialist Kath Calder
- Highlighted their Facebook Live events
- They are targeting married unaccompanied, particularly younger spouses who do not live on base and therefore lose a community support network

8.6 Regular Forces Employment Association

- Based in the pop in RBL office in Cardiff and in Maindy Barracks
- Provide life-long, life-changing support, jobs and training opportunities to service leavers and veterans
- Introduced Sarah Stafford new Regional Manager for CTP

8.7 Help for Heroes

- Finally moved into their new premises in Nantgarw. There will be a Bake Sale 'Bake for Heroes' 27th June
- Supporting the National Armed Forces Day and the evening Gala
- They continue to run the Band of Brother hub and Sports Development
- They continue to support with welfare cases – current issues social housing

Action: Book a meeting with RAFCLO to discuss housing issues

8.8 The Poppy Factory

- Support ex-service men and women with health challenges into fulfilling careers
- Work with businesses across the country to provide bespoke opportunities and ongoing employment support for hundreds of disabled veterans of all ages and from all Services, helping to restore their financial independence through sustainable and rewarding work
- New Director of Operations Sarah Casemore
- State they need to build awareness and referrals through media and merchandise

8.9 Royal British Legion

- Reminded the forum of all the services that are provided by the RBL which includes support with benefits, debt advice, and handyman services
- The new Admiral Services has been launched with a dedicated MH Nurse allocated to South Wales
- Caerphilly Branch are proud to be attending GP90 this year

8.10 Alabare Wales Homes for Veterans

- Currently have supported homes in Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil and Pontypridd
- 3 incumbents of those homes are from the Gwent area as there is currently homes in the area
- JMJ will work with the RAFCLO to conduct a feasibility into a home within Gwent

8.1 Royal Air Force Specialist Engagement Team

- Nothing to report

8.12 DWP

- CP advised the forum that the Job Centre in Blackwood has move to a larger premises and Bargoed will move in July
- Several branches (non customer facing) will merge to Nantgarw in the future
- CP offered the use of the premises to the Forum to meet clients if required

9.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

KP reminded the CAFF that a marquee has been acquired at the Big Cheese Festival on the last weekend in July. Forum members who are not able to attend have been asked to supply the RAFCLO with their promotional materials at least one week prior to the event

Action: LR to issue reminders

11.0 DETAILS OF NEXT MEETING: 10 am 13th September 2018, Ty Penalta.