

London Borough of Barnet Action Plan: Armed Forces Covenant

Aim

To train and prepare staff to enable the Borough Council to meet its Armed Forces Covenant obligations

Objectives

- To ensure all policies are reviewed and adjusted accordingly to deliver our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC)
- To provide a training programme for managers and Armed Forces Champions in the Council, specifically those who have responsibility for main Covenant policy areas
- To deliver ongoing awareness training to all frontline staff and Councillors to enable them to 'ask the question' when engaging with residents
- To establish an AFC partnership meeting with relevant stakeholders
- To renew our commitment to the Armed Forces Community by re-signing the AFC
- To raise awareness of the Armed Forces Community in the borough

Benefits

- Public awareness of the commitment / support provided by the council to an under-represented community group (~10-15% of the population)
- Continuous Professional Development for staff
- Improved efficiencies in service provision through use of support pathways and external providers
- Improved customer satisfaction through knowledgeable customer service of how to support / signpost Armed Forces community (via training, e-learning and signposting app).
- Gain a better understanding of local demographics by staff regularly "asking the question" and recording how many of this community are accessing services.
- Improved visibility and reputation as a 'forces friendly' employer through the Employer Recognition Scheme. Gain benefits of employing service leavers and reservists.
- Use of Armed Forces Covenant Grants to support the community and reduce spending requirements on Council.
- Closer partnership working with neighbouring Boroughs and military stakeholders to potentially reduce burden of support and avoid duplication of effort on events or community initiatives.

Timeline

Date	Action	Description	Stakeholders	Comments
March 2019	Armed Forces Champion Approval	Discussion with Project Manager and Council Armed Forces Champion to look at military footprint, local need, what project can deliver and benefits to council	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion	Completed 04/04/19 AR
+ 1 week	Approval	Project approved/rejected	Council Armed Forces Champion	Approved 04/04/19
June 2019	Meet with Senior Managers to outline the proposal in more detail	Discuss in more detail how to deliver this initiative across the council. Discussions to include policy reviews, training of both senior managers and frontline staff, installation of e-learning package, establishment of partnership meetings and re-signing AFC	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Armed Forces Champion Chief Executive Officer Leader of the Council Council Policy Lead Council Training Lead Council Communications Lead	Completed 06/06/19 at Hendon Town Hall Attendance by Council AFChampion Head of Governance Head of Comms Leader of the Council Councillor AFChampion CEO – Community Barnet Rep – NHS Barnet Hosp Rep – Middx Uni Director of Customer Experience – Barnet Homes
Oct – Nov 2019	Deliver senior training	Deliver two-hour training to Armed Forces Champions, senior staff, department leads and line managers to upskill them on the AFC, the unique needs / issues of Armed Forces Community and how their staff can support.	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Armed Forces Champion Extended Leadership Team Line Management Team	Delivered on 04/11/19

<p>Nov 2019 – April 2020</p> <p>Proposed new date 02 Nov 2021</p>	<p>Re-sign AFC</p>	<p>Organise a re-signing of AFC by council with local Military Leaders with a renewed and developed action plan in place to publicly deliver that commitment</p> <p>Potential to combine with presentation of ERS Award</p>	<p>Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Armed Forces Champion Senior Management Team Mayor Partners Council Communications Lead HQ London District (Army) Local Military Units GL RFCA Local military partners / charities</p>	<p>Has been on hold due to Covid 19 Lockdown</p> <p>Signed on 2 Nov 21 at HTH with an Armed Forces reception</p>
<p>Jan 2020</p> <p>All training is now delivered online via the e-learning portal</p>	<p>Deliver frontline staff training</p>	<p>Hold multiple 1-hour training events to upskill as many frontline staff as possible.</p>	<p>Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Frontline Staff</p>	<p>Barnet Homes arranged but room evacuated due to fire drill – no resume due to Covid 19 Lockdown</p> <p>Difficulty with arrangements with Adults and Childrens services to get dates.</p> <p>All training now available via new e-learning portal called POD for current and new starters. Once course complete it is not compulsory to re-complete however, will be available for reference</p>
<p>Mar 2020</p>	<p>Launch e-learning package</p>	<p>Install e-learning package into Learning Management System, roll out to frontline staff who interact directly with residents and then wider council staff for awareness</p>	<p>Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London district Council Training Lead</p>	<p>Slightly delayed due to Covid 19</p> <p>26/06/20 rolled out to Adults and Health (323)</p>

				<p>29/06/20 rolled out to Family services (690)</p> <p>30/06/20 rolled out to Members (63)</p> <p>22/07/20 rolled out to Barnet Homes (48)</p> <p>10/08/20 rolled out to Communications (12)</p> <p>10/08/20 rolled out to Assurance (64)</p> <p>Total 1200 in LBB plus Gurkha Community</p> <p>2021 transferred to new LBB E-Learning portal</p> <p>A larger audience will now be reached.</p> <p>Figures:</p> <p>Family Services: 1160</p> <p>Adults & Health 385</p> <p>Adults & Communities 74</p> <p>Assurance 111</p> <p>Commisioning 2</p> <p>Resources & Finance inc HR</p>
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				<p>99 Growth & Corporate 118 The Barnet Group 1082 Elected Members 63</p> <p>Totalling: 3104 plus the Gurkha community</p> <p>All other audiences are non mandatory but have access to the course:</p> <p>StreetScene Environment Education & Skills</p>
Any time	Review Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Status	Review status of council as an employer from Armed Forces Community. As a signatory of AFC you can self-nominate for Bronze ERS Award via Greater London Reserve Forces and Cadet Association (GL RFCA). If already held, review next steps to progress to Silver / Gold. Presentation of award to CEO / Councillors can be arranged	Council Officer Armed Forces Champion GL RFCA	<p>Bronze award granted June 2019</p> <p>Silver award granted June 2022</p> <p>Application for Gold submitted – Jan 2023</p>
On-going	AFC Partnership Meeting	<p>Partnership meeting to be facilitated by Project Manager Londist to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review council commitment to AFC ii. Understand any issues raised since start of initiative iii. Discuss best practice with partner organisations iv. Plan and deconflict events with local 	<p>Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Armed Forces Champion HQ London District (Army) Local Military Units Partner Organisations</p>	Renewing the Covenant Project Manager London District to arrange

		<p>military units / neighbouring Borough Councils</p> <p>v. Build relationships for collaborative working</p> <p>Standing agenda to be provided to ensure continuity and consistency for future meetings</p>		
Ongoing	AFC Partnership	Networking events arranged throughout the year to include Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday and an Armed Forces Reception hosted by the Mayor	Civic All military units reps, veteran associations and all council partners who have signed the covenant	Continuing Opportunities Should the need arise additional meetings can be arranged
Ongoing	AFC Partnership	Hybrid or F2F Information sharing Job Fairs Veteran welfare	Council Officer Armed Forces Champion Council Partners	
Complete - now all training is on e-learning portal	Sustainable awareness training	Embed e-learning package into new joiners routine and regular annual online training Frontline staff training package to be provided by for service heads / line managers / Armed Forces Champion to be able to deliver to staff on an ongoing basis	Council Officer Armed Forces Champion Council Training Lead	
Jan 2023	Policy Updates	HR review and additions to include Reservist Mobilisation policy	Council Officer Armed Forces Champion HR department	Completed Feb 2023
Pending	HR Recruitment	HR to ensure tick box applied to Barnet Council job applications – Are you a member of the armed forces community? This is to ensure that a guaranteed interview is given to the individual if they meet the requirements of the job criteria	HR Recruitment All service department recruiting managers	
Pending	Communications	Internal and External Communications to be	Comms	

		proactive recognising the Armed Forces Community promoting Armed Forces community activity through press releases, social media platforms and website		
Pending	Communications	All staff and members given the opportunity to display the Armed Forces Covenant Defence Employer logo on email signature blocks	All staff and members	

Completed

Pending

Ongoing