

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (SPELTHORNE)

DATE: 28 SEPTEMBER 2015



LEAD OFFICER: CANON PETER BRUINVELS, SURREY CIVILIAN-MILITARY LIAISON ADVISOR

SUBJECT: SURREY CIVILIAN-MILITARY PARTNERSHIP BOARD UPDATE

DIVISION: ALL SPELTHORNE

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Surrey County Council signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant with the military on 13 March 2012. Following this the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board was established to implement actions under the Covenant.

This report provides an update of activities undertaken.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Spelthorne) is asked to:

- (i) Note the contents of this report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report is for information only.

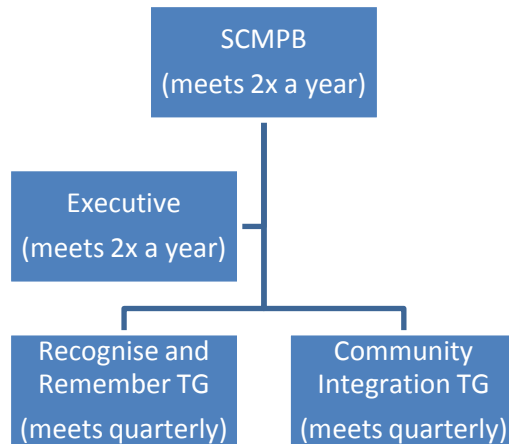
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Surrey County Council signed a Community Covenant with the military on 13 March 2012, and following this set up the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board (SCMPB).
- 1.2 A Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local armed forces community (serving personnel, their families and veterans). The aim of the Community Covenant is to ensure that no member of the armed forces community should face disadvantage in the provision of public services compared to any other citizen. However, in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate, especially for those injured or bereaved as a result of their service. The Community Covenant is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces.
- 1.3 The SCMPB has a high-level remit to ensure that the military community (serving personnel and their families, reservists, cadets, veterans, service charities and welfare organisations) are given appropriate recognition and

status within the county, and to maintain good relationships with the MoD and the military command structure within the county so that potential problems and frictions can be averted in good time and at the right level.

2. ANALYSIS:

SCMPB Structure



2.1 SCMPB operates with the full support of 11 Infantry Brigade, which took over responsibility for Surrey from 2 (SE) Brigade on 4 December 2014. The Board is chaired by David Munro in his capacity as Surrey County Council's newly appointed Armed Forces Champion. Previously, David Munro chaired the Board in his role as Chairman of Surrey County Council.

2.2 The Board has amended its structure and Task Groups to enable it to become more activity focussed. The SCMPB meets twice a year and considers strategic issues affecting the armed forces community across the county. In between the Board meetings the Executive Committee, made up of the Chairman of the Board, the Military and the Task Group Chairman, supported by officers from the Community Partnerships Team, meets twice a year. This group considers policy issues and funding bids, and makes decisions in between full Board meetings. The two Task Groups are action focussed. Recognise and Remember focuses on actions around co-ordinating remembrance events around the county, considering new initiatives to build connections between the military and civilian communities and works to increase the exposure of the community covenant in the media. The Community Integration Task Group considers actions around education, housing, health and welfare, and employment.

Surrey County Council Achievements:

2.3 Surrey County Council has undertaken a number of actions/initiatives in support of the Community Covenant. Some of these are set out below:

Human Resources

- Surrey County Council has been awarded a Silver Employer Recognition Award, which recognises the Council's support and commitment towards defence. This

was presented to the Council on 6 July 2015 at an awards ceremony on HMS Victory.



- Surrey County Council is working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) (who hold the MoD contract for helping service leavers find jobs), to advertise relevant vacancies on the CTP website from May 2015. The number of successful appointments will be monitored and this approach will be promoted to the Surrey Personnel Officers Group. Work is also being explored with the Recovery Career Service to look at work experience opportunities within the Council to help wounded/injured veterans back into the workplace.

Education

- Schools Commissioning and Admissions have built up excellent relationships with the Military enabling effective school place planning for service families coming into the area as a result of the Army's rebasing programme.
- At the request of schools, a termly newsletter for schools with service children has been produced. The aim of this is to share best practice and highlight current issues that schools may be facing in relation to service children.

Fire and Rescue

- The Surrey Fire and Rescue Borough Commander at Woking Fire Station has developed close working relationships with The Welfare Officers at ATC Pirbright and 1st Battalion Welsh Guards. This will help promote home fire safety visits on camp as the service has found that single adults living with young children can sometimes be at greater risk, plus historically homes where there are smokers, drug/alcohol issues, mobility or mental health related issues can often be at greater risk.

Funding

- Surrey has been successful in applying for funding for 12 projects (£400,000) from the MoD Community Covenant Grants Scheme. These have included two

www.surreycc.gov.uk/spelthorne

projects which have been jointly funded by Surrey's Community Improvements Fund. These are the Beech Grove Play area (Annex 1) and the Peace Garden at the Muslim Burial Ground in Woking, which has received national interest.



- Surrey History Centre was successful in winning a grant of £460,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a project to immortalise the experiences of Surrey residents on the front line and at home during the First World War. This was launched by David Munro on 18 May 2015 (<http://www.exploringsurreyspast.org.uk/themes/subjects/military/surreys-first-world-war/remembers/>)
- The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) funded the innovative Respect and Remember Project, which is a partnership between the PCC, Surrey and Sussex Probation Trust, Surrey County Council Youth Services and Surrey Police for offenders serving community sentences and in other restorative justice programmes to help restore Surrey's war memorials (Annex 2).

Armed Forces Champions

- A Job Profile (Annex 3) has been developed for the role of the member Armed Forces Champion, who will be key in taking forward the work of the Community Covenant within all Surrey local authorities. This role is being promoted through the Surrey Leaders by Cllr Kingsbury and we are hopeful that all Surrey authorities will appoint a Champion. This has also been sent to the MoD who are keen to use it as an exemplar for promoting to other councils.

SCMPB Achievements:

2.4 Set out below are some achievements of the Board and its Task Groups over the past year:

- May 2014 saw the final Surrey authorities sign up to the Community Covenant. Following this, a successful Community Covenant Conference was held at Pirbright in November 2014 looking at next steps in taking the Community Covenant forward in Surrey.
- 11 Brigade launched the concept of Task Force Commanders at the Surrey Community Covenant Conference in November 2014. These are Commanding Officers within Surrey, who will be responsible for building close links with three/four dedicated district/borough councils to see how they can work more closely together.

- Armed Forces Covenant Lead Officers have been identified within each of the local authorities in Surrey and an email network has been set up to facilitate networking and sharing of relevant information.
- The Board has a liaison role with DMRC Headley Court over the forthcoming relocation to the Midlands and the implications for the local community.
- A new @Surrey Military Twitter feed was launched in November 2014. In January 2015 the new armed forces pages on the Surrey County Council website were relaunched, with a direct link to the Twitter feed, the new Military Flickr account (shared photo library), useful information on settling in Surrey and the armed forces calendar. The new pages have seen a large increase in number of hits.
- Members of the SCMPB supported a number of events around Surrey to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War, Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day.

Employment

- Links have been created between Job Centre Plus and the Military to help ensure relevant signposting for vacancies to service leavers.
- Work has been carried out to identify skills shortages in Surrey (including engineers and caterers), with the aim of matching these type of roles to the skills of service leavers.
- The promotion of Reservists is a key priority for 11 Brigade. Board members, through their organisations, have been looking at promoting the benefits of employing reservists within Surrey organisations and businesses. Access has been given to promotional videos that can be shown at relevant events including Business Breakfast briefings.
- High level meetings have been held with the two Local Enterprise Partnerships covering Surrey (Enterprise M3 and Coast to Capital) with the aim of building closer links. 11 Infantry Brigade is represented on Enterprise M3, and Coast to Capital is considering military representation.
- SCMPB was represented at an employer engagement event promoting the employment of reservists to key local businesses at RAF Odiham in March 2015 and a Business Leaders Conference held at RMA Sandhurst.

Education

- SCMPB co-ordinated a response to the DfE consultation on Early Years Pupil Premium to raise the issue of military families. Linked to this, the issue of FEET (Free Early Education for two year olds) has been raised with the Children's Education Advisory Service at the MoD, who will in turn be raising it with DfE to see whether funding can be given to appropriate service families.
- Opportunities have been explored for promoting adult learning amongst service spouses through Surrey Care Trust Covenant Grant bid, which gave a number of taster courses with the aim of increasing uptake and establishing need.
- The Army's "I want to book a soldier" programme has been widely promoted to secondary schools in Surrey.

Housing

- A Surrey Housing Officers Group representative is leading the housing stream of the Community Integration Task Group work. This will help to ensure that all members of the armed forces community have the same access to housing options, advice and support as any other citizen across the county.

Health and Wellbeing

- Work is ongoing to identify key issues and needs in relation to health and welfare for the armed forces community (including access to NHS GPs and dentists as well as welfare issues) and providing relevant signposting through appropriate websites (including www.surreycc.gov.uk).
- The Community Integration Task Group is reviewing the implications of the Care Act for veterans and will make recommendation to SCMPB.

2.5

Next Steps for 15/16:

- Surrey companies are being encouraged to sign up to the **Corporate Covenant**. This work is currently being led in Woking and the following Woking companies have expressed an interest: Ambassadors, Woking Football Club, SAB Miller, Cap Gemini, Shield Security, Arcom, Woking Borough Council and Thamesway Group of Companies.
- Surrey County Council is looking at developing volunteering days for HR staff to work with service leavers on **mentoring, interview skills and CV preparation**.
- Surrey is considering appropriate staff to be put forward for the **Sandhurst Leadership Challenge** in September. This is a Leadership and team building development for organisations employees under the expert guidance of Military personnel at the world renowned Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.
- Potential **projects with the Military** that benefit the community and the local authority, as well as being a training opportunity for the Royal Engineers are being investigated. These include options around drainage, ditches and culverts, Flanchford Bridge in Leigh and a footpath in Pirbright to enable the children from the camp to walk to school.
- Officers are encouraging OFSTED to help ensure that the **Service Pupil Premium** is being spent appropriately within schools and reported on publically via the school websites.
- Officers working on the **University Technical College** in Guildford are liaising with the Military to ensure appropriate links are made at an early stage. This includes consideration of a Combined Cadet Force at the college.
- Closer links will be developed between the **Service Charities** in Surrey and relevant Surrey services including Adult Social Care and the Fire Service to help ensure relevant signposting and referrals.
- Surrey will continue to maintain close relationships with the MoD and develop relationships with surrounding councils to **share best practice** and learn from each other.
- SCC coordinated the SCMPB stand **National Armed Forces Day** in Guildford on 27 June 2015.
- A briefing is being prepared for **MPs** and their offices so that they recognise the particular attributes of ex-military people if they ask MPs for help in individual cases.
- Officers will continue to **maximise MoD funds** brought into Surrey through successful Armed Forces Covenant Grant bids.
- The second **Surrey Community and Corporate Conference** will be held on 10 November 2015 at RLC Deepcut and will look to focus on front line staff.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 This report is for information.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

4.1 A similar report has been considered and discussed by the Local Committee Chairmen on 16 June 2015.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 There are no financial implications as this report is for information.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The aim of the Community Covenant is to ensure that the armed forces community are not disadvantaged by their service.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 11 Infantry Brigade have implemented the concept of Task Force Commanders, where a Commanding Officer of a Surrey Regiment are linked with a particular borough or district council area to work closely together on issues of mutual concern. Spelthorne Borough has been linked with 1st Battalion Welsh Guards based at ATC Pirbright.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 Members of the Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 Members are asked to act as ambassadors locally to help promote links to the armed forces community, including local bases, and to promote the Corporate Covenant with local businesses.
- 10.2 Officers from the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board will support the Spelthorne Armed Forces Champion (Cllr Robin Sider BEM) to further promote the work of the Community and Corporate Covenant within Spelthorne.
- 10.3 The second Surrey Community and Corporate Covenant Conference will be held on 10 November 2015 at RLC Deepcut. Invitations to this conference, which will focus on front line staff will be sent out shortly.

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Consulted:

Local Committee Chairmen

Annexes:

None

Sources/background papers:

- None
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