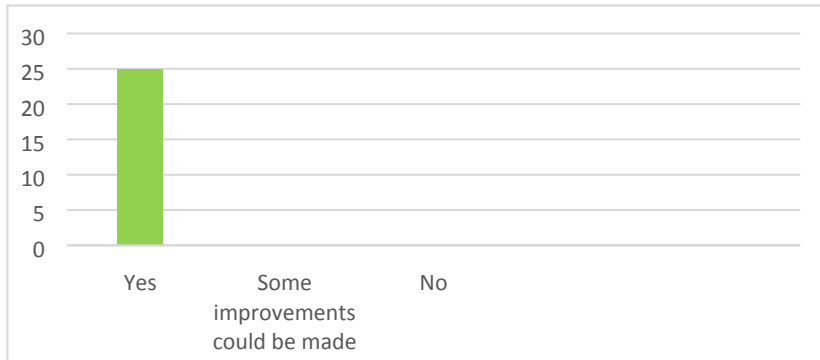


**COLLATED FEEDBACK**  
**SCMPB Armed Forces Covenant Conference**  
**Wednesday 6 February 2019, Army Training Centre (Pirbright)**

168 delegates registered to attend the Surrey Armed Forces Covenant Conference 2019 from a wide range of backgrounds and organisations. The response from those who attended has been extremely positive - verbally on the day, via social media and in terms of emails received. An online feedback form was circulated and 25 responses were received, the details of which can be found in the report below. Also included below are extracts from emails received as well as social media posts. Actions arising from this feedback will be discussed and taken forward as appropriate.

Online feedback form.

**1a Did you find the registration process straightforward?**

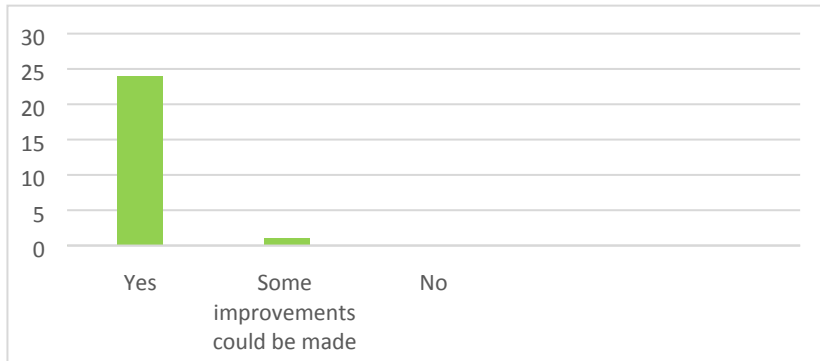


Yes – 25  
Some improvements could be made - 0  
No - 0

**1b - Suggested improvements to registration process:**

No suggestions were made.

**2a - Were the joining instructions and information provided ahead of the event adequate?**



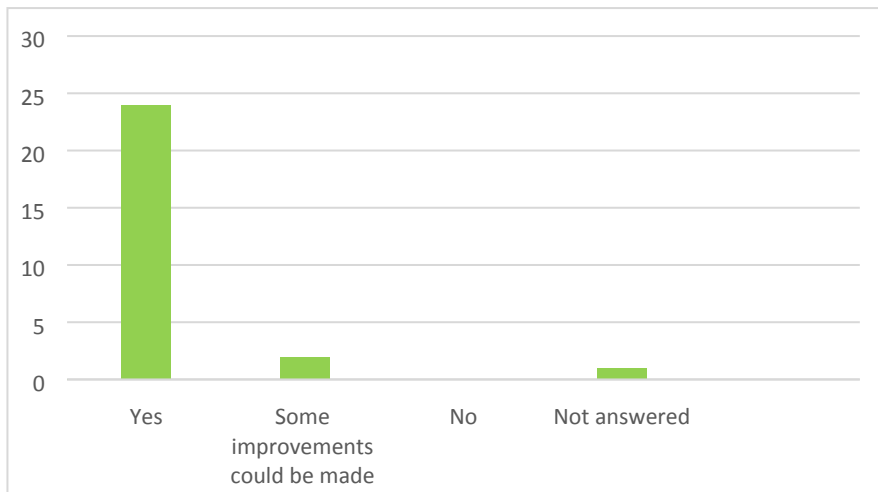
<b>Yes</b>	24
<b>Some improvements could be made</b>	1
<b>No</b>	0

**2b Suggested improvements to information provided ahead of event:**

Map of the location and map to show where the event would be helpful please.

Not having the conference at a military base where security is so tight

**3a - Did the morning session further your understanding of the work that is being done in Surrey, the needs of the military and how your organisation could help?**



<b>Yes</b>	22
<b>Some improvement could be made</b>	2
<b>No</b>	0
<b>Question not answered</b>	1

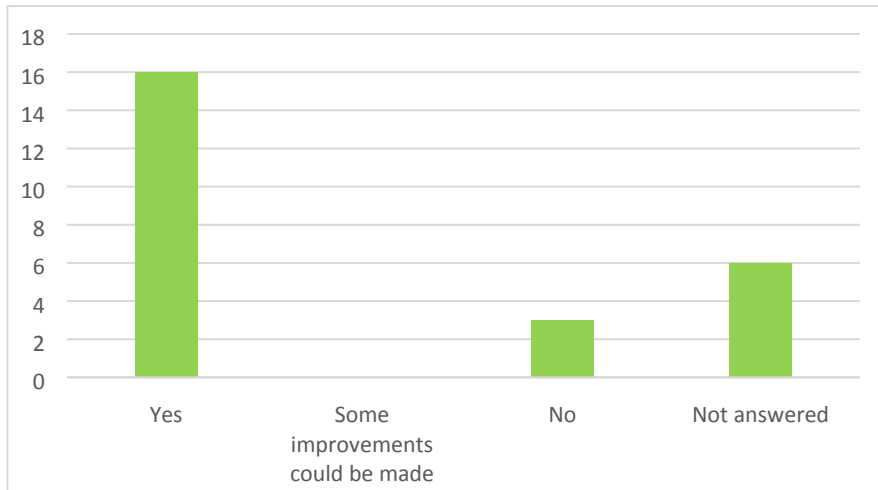
**3b - Comments and suggested improvements for morning session:**

- Very informative and set the scene for what is to be a Gold Award Holder

Suggested improvement:

- I would like the opportunity to be able to attend all the work shops that are held in the morning. May be this could be reduced down to 2 or 2 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon this may keep people from leaving after lunch.

**4a - Did the afternoon session further your knowledge and understanding of the challenges faced by service children and those supporting them?**



<b>Yes</b>	16
<b>Some improvement could be made</b>	0
<b>No</b>	3
<b>Question not answered</b>	6

**4b - Comments and suggested improvements for afternoon session:**

- This was the highlight of the event
- Yes it was good to hear from different departments their thoughts and ideas.
- We need to find out how many Armed Forces children in our schools in West Sussex
- Families perspective important
  
- Not really part of SSAFA's remit.
- I found the AFF presentation a bit abrasive especially as she had already heard and seen about the good work that is already being done.

## **5 - Please could you note below one key point that you will take back to your organisations as result of attending the conference**

- Get involved
- To share some of the schools best practice with West Sussex schools
- Need to relate to veterans
- Difficulties of young people as a result of the transient nature of belonging to a family with serving members.
- The need for your existence
- Good practice and how the covenant needs to be embedded in all service areas in the Council. A good insight into what a Gold award winner looks like and entails.
- The point about children 'fitting in' was well made.
- An exceptional event. Really worthwhile attending. Especially enjoyed presentation from Jenna and in the afternoon the three headteachers.
- How much schools are doing to support the children of military families.
- Setting up a brunch for veterans in Runnymede.
- The Holistic care for all of our Armed forces and the family.
- The many items of interest there are open for Veterans.
- #Veterans Hub Grants #Get a copy of "Veterans Strategy" #Benefit not Burden" paper
- Contacts and funding opportunity
- How we can ask the question "Did you Serve?"
- Collaboration is key
- The National Picture
- Government involvement in the Covenant
- Fantastic work of Forces Connect
- The Hub workshops

## **6 - Are there any issues or concerns that you would like help with?**

- How can we influence the MOD with the dates of their briefings etc? Holding an event 15 May is not appropriate as most D&B's won't have Champions in place by then.
- No, issues and topics covered well.
- I have made representation to Jenna Clare that I think a national recruitment campaign would be useful to try to get veterans to become involved in the various associations (RBL, RNA, RAFA etc). The more that Veterans associate themselves with these groups the less of a burden they become on the NHS (loneliness, mental & physical illness etc. We all tend to look out for each other and it does make a difference!
- Advertising events to veterans please.

- Getting SAAFA involved in this Borough (Epsom and Ewell)
- I am happy to help with communication (delegate known)

Suggested improvements:

- I felt the seminars were more for ex-military service groups rather than working with the military covenant groups
- It would be good to be able to share contact details.

**7 - Is there anything not covered at the event that you would like a briefing on, or included in next years' conference?**

- Work of the Cadet Forces
- How to engage with local government and NHS from 3<sup>rd</sup> sector perspective to ensure joined up delivery.
- The story so far.
- Probably, but it is difficult to fit everything in as it is!
- Who are all the Veterans Groups we see out there collecting money? Which ones can be trusted?

**8 - Any additional comments or suggestions.**

- I have none, well organised and informative.
- Unfortunately as always there is never enough time. I thought this was the best conference we have had and heartily congratulate all organisers. As we were not making notes (there wasn't time) and we are all busy people, a lot of the content gets lost or forgotten. If someone could send out an overview of the whole conference and topics covered that we could forward on to relevant parties that would be good. I'm not convinced that much will be passed on once the conference is over.
- THANK YOU for organising the event!
- Thoroughly enjoyed the workshops it helped understand how important this is and how we can reach out to them.
- We done another really good event, I look forward to next year.
- I thought the speaker from the government was excellent and should have had more time. The issue of programme timings arose again.
- It was a good conference but I would have liked more time to network at lunchtime.
- In the end I did not attend the conference. It is not local to me and public transport isn't that close. I would suggest laying on a minibus to collect people from the station. My team cannot fund taxi fares.

### **Email feedback (some edited for anonymity)**

Blue text indicates suggested improvement.

- ..thoroughly enjoyed our day at the Armed Forces Covenant Conference. I found it really informative and it definitely built my understanding of what we all have to do to help.
- xxx and I are arranging sometime together so we can share our experience with the whole Contact Centre to work out how we can help by asking the question "Have you Served" catching anyone that may come through to the Front House of Surrey County Council
- On a slightly different note, thanks to the conference, I have built more working relationships with other counties and services. I want to work on using a similar model to TILS for our officers. That isn't what you're about, I know, I just wanted to let you know that nice things are happening as a result of your hard work.
- Really enjoyed yesterday, well done on a smoothly run and thought provoking conference!
- There is always so much to learn and I really appreciated hearing from the three heads during the afternoon session although the opportunity to hear from the cadets themselves was really inspirational.
- The level of enthusiasm and engagement in Surrey – and across FCSE – always acts like a tonic and people come away more determined than ever to do their bit to make sure the Covenant really means something locally. I thought the focussing of the afternoon session on a single issue was very powerful and, once again your timing is spot on, as Education and Service Children chimes nicely with the Covenant Team's priorities for the year ahead
- It was good to have so many old friends in place and there were a lot of new contacts, ideas and thoughts.
- The loan of ATR Pirbright was excellent.
- The focus on service children was very helpful.
- The lay-out of the workshop room was not conducive for a workshop rather for "show and tell" but we can't work on that next time.

## Extracts from Social Media

- Great visit to #SAFCCConference19 many ideas shared and contacts made. Thanks @SurreyMilitary @BritishArmy 👍
- Saw this again today, 3 cadets speaking at @SurreyCouncil @SurreyMilitary conference @ashmanorCCF @AshManorSchool fabulous #cadets #youth
- Very worthwhile Military Covenant Conference. Good to see the armed forces making real efforts to integrate with the civilian community and of course vice-versa. @SurreyMilitary
- If the three head teachers we have had presentations from this afternoon are representative of school leadership in #Surrey then we are in great shape educationally. @LewistoryMary @SurreyMilitary @SurreyCouncil
- Gr8 video of 2 amazing service family children who explained brilliantly the impact of the transient nature of belonging to a military family. It certainly brought a tear to my eye and will make me hug my daughter extra tightly when I get home. @SurreyMilitary @LewistoryMary
- One element that struck a big chord with me and is something I have encountered as a councillor in a garrison village is the enormous impact the transient nature of military life has on the families of serving members of our armed forces. In particular on the children of those families. Just imagine what it must be like for those children whose parents may be redeployed every two years and therefore those children have to settle into a new school with each move. The impact is often heartbreaking for those children and this was highlighted with a video interview with two such children. I am not ashamed to admit it brought a tear to my eye. There are practical issues that come with this for the parents particularly with schooling matters. Military families should not be disadvantaged as a result of these issues and the Military Covenant was created to directly address these issues.

I was also blown away by presentations head teachers from three local schools on what extraordinary lengths they go to in order to support children from service families. My immediate thought was that if these three head teachers are representative of school leadership across Surrey then we can all be safe in the knowledge that our children are in exceptionally good hands. I was especially impressed with the recent creation of a CCF unit at Ash Manor School. Delegates received a presentation from the Head Teacher and three cadets from the unit all of which were very impressive.

It is absolutely right that families from service families are given priority treatment when it comes to their children and following today's conference I am satisfied all that can be done will be done to assist such families.

I also sat in on a workshop on support for Military Veterans and was delighted to see my good friend Roy Sellstrom from Surrey Heath Veterans and Families. Under discussion was the fact that the veteran community is quite hard to reach and I offered to talk to Roy on how this might be addressed. All in all a great conference and was very reassuring to know there are so many dedicated people and organisations committed to the best support for armed forces families in Surrey.

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