



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Human Resources Committee

HER MAJESTY'S ARMED FORCES CORPORATE COVENANT

Report of Chief Fire Officer

Date: 17 July 2015

Purpose of Report:

To seek members approval to sign the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant.

CONTACT OFFICER

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Corporate Covenant is a voluntary pledge from organisations who wish to demonstrate their support for the Armed Forces community.
- 1.2 This Government initiative complements the Armed Forces Covenant, which sets out the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces.
- 1.3 The Corporate Covenant includes a core statement of commitment to the two key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant: that no member of the Armed Forces community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen; and that in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate, especially for the injured or bereaved.
- 1.4 The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme rewards employers for their varying levels of support for the armed forces in relation to the Corporate Covenant, with Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards.
- 1.5 In November 2014, the Service was awarded the Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers (SaBRE) Silver Recognition Award for our continued support of the Armed Forces Reserve. In order to achieve the Gold level of recognition, organisations must have signed a Corporate Covenant.
- 1.6 The Service currently has six employees who undertake secondary employment with the Armed Forces Reserve. These personnel serve in a variety of roles across the Royal Air Force, Royal Marines, Royal Navy and Royal Logistics Corps.

2. REPORT

CORPORATE COVENANT

- 2.1 The Corporate Covenant can be adopted by an organisation and in exchange for signing a Corporate Covenant pledge (Appendix 1), the organisation can display publicly their Corporate Covenant Logo; showing their support for the Armed Forces.
- 2.2 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service currently fulfil a significant number of the recommended areas of 'best practice' for organisations who wish to be recognised in this way. The majority of these areas are covered by current Service policies concerning equality and recruitment practices. The SaBRE guidance notes are available at the following website - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/corporate-covenant-guidance>

- 2.3 Since the Service has explored the signing of the Covenant, extra steps have been taken to enhance the Organisation's inclusion of ex-forces personnel. This includes the advertising of all external Service vacancies on specialist internet sites for ex-forces and injured personnel.
- 2.4 Once granted, the Corporate Covenant logo is valid for a period of five years before requiring renewal.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The only financial consideration from this recommendation is the printing of the Corporate Covenant logo on Service headed items. This could be managed through the phased implementation of the logo on stationery when it is reordered.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

Human resources implications are contained within the report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An initial equality impact assessment has been completed and did not highlight any areas for consideration.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The local government ombudsman has warned that local authorities which have signed the Armed Forces Covenant must make sure military personnel and their families are not disadvantaged.
- 8.2 This follows a challenge against Devon County Council (DCC) who were ordered to pay costs and compensation to a family who were required to move home due to working with the Armed Forces. DCC had signed a Corporate Covenant pledge however failed to fulfil this commitment and were found at fault.
- 8.3 The Service must therefore ensure that the Corporate Covenant pledge is fulfilled if adopted.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members approve the signing of the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



The Armed Forces Corporate Covenant

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

Signed:

Name:

Position Held:

Date:

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles Of The Armed Forces Corporate Covenant

1.1 We, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- *no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen*
- *in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service recognises the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- *promoting the fact that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation;*
- *seeking to support the employment of veterans, young and old;*
- *striving to support the employment of Service spouses and partners;*
- *endeavour to offer a degree of flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment;*
- *seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, including by accommodating their training and deployment where possible;*
- *offering support to our local cadet units, either in our local community or in local schools, where possible;*
- *aiming to actively participate in Armed Forces Day*

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community and our customers on how we are doing.