



COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

WEST LOTHIAN ARMED FORCES COVENANT

REPORT BY HEAD OF AREA SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks agreement from Council Executive to support the West Lothian Armed Forces Covenant along with representatives of seven key partner organisations/agencies. The report further seeks consent to have the Covenant signed at the Civic Centre prior to 1st April 2012 and for West Lothian Council to host a lunch for the key partners attending on this date.

B. RECOMMENDATION

Council Executive agrees to:-

- a) the Chief Executive signing the Armed Forces Covenant on behalf of West Lothian Council and the future development of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Action Plan.
- b) hosting the signing of the Covenant at the Civic Centre prior to 1st April 2012 and provide a lunch for those attending.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The duty of Best Value as set out in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	N/A
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	N/A
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	N/A
VI Resources - (Financial,	Within the existing resources.

Staffing and Property)

VII Consideration at PDSP

Timescales have not allowed consideration at PDSP.

VIII Other consultations

D. TERMS OF REPORT

A new, reinforced Armed Forces Covenant was published in May 2011. This is the basis of the moral obligation between the country, the Government and the Armed Forces. To complement this Covenant the Ministry of Defence has, in August 2011, launched a parallel Community Covenant, which reciprocates the relationship between the nation and the Armed Forces by building a code of understanding and support between the Armed Forces and the communities in which they are based.

The stated aims of this scheme are to:

- Encourage local community support for the armed forces in their area
- Promote understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues that affect the armed forces community
- Recognise the sacrifices made by the armed forces
- Encourage any activity that will help further integrate the armed forces into community life

To underpin the Armed Forces Community Covenant the MOD has allocated up to £30 million for the UK over the next four years to a Community Covenant Grant scheme. Local communities where formal Covenants exist will be able to apply for funding grants of between £100 and £250,000 to run projects that strengthen the bonds between the Armed Forces and the local population including service personnel, their families and veterans.

Edinburgh Garrison and Mid Lothian have successfully completed their respective Covenants and the Brigadier Commander has requested that Covenants be signed by 1st April 2012

E. CONCLUSION

In signing the Covenant West Lothian Council takes a lead responsibility to work with partners to promote understanding of the needs of the Armed Forces, their families and veterans; and in doing so provide support to meet their needs where feasible.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Draft West Lothian Armed Forces Covenant attached

Appendix : Appendix 1 - Covenant

Contact Persons:

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