

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 23 SEPTEMBER 2010

EAST AYRSHIRE VETERANS' CHAMPION

Report by the Executive Director of Finance & Corporate Support

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request the nomination of an Elected Member to act as a local Veterans' Champion for East Ayrshire, who will, thereafter, represent the interests of Armed Forces Veterans.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council has been requested to nominate an Elected Member to fulfil the role of East Ayrshire Veterans' Champion, in a letter dated 20 May 2010 from the Secretary of the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Supporting Veterans, Mr Bob McFarlane. Mr McFarlane is also General Secretary of Veterans Scotland.
- 2.2 The Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Supporting Veterans was established to consider devolved areas affecting the lives of veterans and the group recognises the partnership role that can be fulfilled by Local Authorities as well as the strategic priorities shared at both levels of government in relation to these issues.
- 2.3 With the full support of all the veterans' bodies in Scotland, the purpose of the local Champions is to help develop better services to, and support for, those people who have served in the United Kingdom's Armed Forces.
- 2.4 The suggested responsibilities of Local Authority Veterans' Champions are in a draft format and include:
- i. ensuring that the interests of the Veterans' Community are well represented in terms of the development and operation of the Council's policies and activities;
 - ii. liaising, as appropriate, with Armed Forces and Veterans' organisations to discuss matters of concern to the Veterans' Community; and
 - iii. helping raise the profile of the Veterans' Community and to help facilitate support for recognition events.
- 2.5 It is anticipated that these responsibilities will be discussed at a future meeting of the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Supporting Veterans. A full list of the draft responsibilities of Local Authority Veterans' Community Champions, as they currently stand, can be found at appendix 1.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Minimal, in respect of any related travel expenses necessarily incurred as the East Ayrshire local Champion makes representation at national meetings.

4 LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS / COMMUNITY PLAN

- 4.1 Nil.

5 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 It is recommend that Council:

- i. nominates an Elected Member to act as Veterans' Champion for East Ayrshire; and
- ii. otherwise notes the contents of the report.

Alex McPhee
Executive Director of Finance & Corporate Support

23 August 2010
BW/MO'N

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Letter dated 20 May 2010 from Mr Bob McFarlane, the Secretary of the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Supporting Veterans.

Members wishing further information should contact the Implementation Officer: Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services, on (01563) 576135.

Local Authority Veterans' Champion

The responsibilities for the Local Authority Veterans Champion include the following:

To ensure that the interests of the Veterans Community are properly represented, considered and prioritised within the Council's policies, strategies, plans and operational activities.

To consider the impact on the Veterans Community of Council Decisions and policies.

To hold the Executive to account, either singly or with the support of other members, in terms of the delivery of Council services to members of the Veterans Community.

To liaise as appropriate with Armed Forces', Veterans' and Service Families' organisations and representatives to discuss matters of concern to the Veterans Community.

To monitor complaints against Council services and actions which have an adverse effect on the Veterans Community.

To help to raise the profile of the Veterans Community and to facilitate Council support for:

Homecoming parades.

Remembrance parades and events.

Armed Forces Day.

Fund-raising events undertaken by Service charities.

To engage with Scottish Ministers and, as appropriate, UK Defence Ministers and others in relation to Veterans Community requirements.

To provide regular reports to all Council members of activities in relation to the Veterans Community which have taken place in the Council area.