

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING - 24 JUNE 2010

PROVOST'S OFFICE SUPPORT FOR COMBAT STRESS

Report by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the support which the Provost's Office has given to Combat Stress during 2009/2010.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Council, at its meeting of 26 June 2008 received a report which outlined the intention of the Provost to establish a protocol whereby the Provost of the Council would, each year, support a particular trust/charity within the area. For 2008/09 the chosen charity was East Ayrshire Carers.
- 2.2** The Council, at its meeting of 25 June 2009 received a report on the outcome of the support which the Provost's office had given to East Ayrshire Carers Centre during 2008/2009 and also indicated that for 2009/2010 the Provost intended to focus on Combat Stress, the leading charity specialising in the care of British Veterans who have been traumatised profoundly by harrowing experiences during their service career and who are suffering from poor mental health as a result.

3. SUPPORT TO COMBAT STRESS DURING 2009/2010

- 3.1** The Provost, from the outset, advised that her goal was to raise £25,000 over the course of the year to help the facility at Hollybush House. Combat Stress has three residential centres located in Surrey, Shropshire and at Hollybush House in Dalrymple. The Ayrshire facility has 25 beds and can accommodate a small number of accompanying carers. The money raised would be used to build a new facility for the psychologist support service. Facilities at the centre must be specially built or adapted to provide for those who are physically disabled.
- 3.2** The Provost began fundraising activities on Friday 6 November where she hosted a Remembrance Concert at the Grand Hall to mark the 90th Anniversary of Combat Stress. The concert showcased a variety of performers including Dunaskin Doon Band, Ayrshire Youth Voices and Kilmarnock Pipe Band. Una Ailsa McNab and Rob Matheson also performed excerpts from Combat Stress's highly successful production "Voices of War". Also during the performance the prize winners from the Ayrshire wide Combat Stress War Poetry Competition were announced. Eleven year old Robyn McCluskey from Patna Primary School was presented with her certificate for her prizewinning poem "Poppies" while the father of Jay Conning from Stewarton Academy aged 13 collected his certificate for his moving piece "War Heroes". Both East Ayrshire pupils won a prize of £125 for their classes.

- 3.3** The following evening, on Saturday 7 November, Kilmarnock Amateur Operatic Society (KAOS) held their annual 50-50 concert again in the Grand Hall, Kilmarnock. KAOS matched the funds raised on the Friday night and added a further £200 making a grand total of £4,500 collected over the weekend. KAOS have indicated that they are going to give this year's proceeds from the concert to Combat Stress.
- 3.4** During December, East Ayrshire Council employees decided to forego sending Christmas cards to each other and instead donated their Christmas card money to Combat Stress. East Ayrshire Schools also joined in making cards to send to serving soldiers helping them to know that they were not forgotten in the midst of their operations. Some of the funds raised by Council employees were used to buy presents for those currently undergoing residential care at Hollybush House. The rest of the money went towards the Combat Stress appeal which, by December had raised in excess of £12,000. Also, Rob Brady, war veteran, accompanied the Provost at the Christmas lights switch on in Kilmarnock on Sunday 29 November 2009.
- 3.5** In March the Provost visited St James Palace for a reception in honour of Combat Stress and Robyn McCluskey, from Patna Primary School was also invited in recognition of her prizewinning poetry. Robyn was the only child at the reception and HRH Prince Charles spent some time speaking to both the Provost and Robyn about her poem and the work of Combat Stress. The Provost was also delighted and overwhelmed by the number of people who came to tell Robyn that they had read and loved her poem.
- 3.6** Local businesses and individuals have also made huge contributions to the charity appeal over the year. The Kilmarnock Standard assisted the fundraising effort by erecting a totaliser in the window of the newspaper's new headquarters in Kilmarnock, to allow progress of the campaign to be shown.
- 3.7** A huge boost was given in December when Klin Group Managing Director Marie Macklin handed over a cheque for £5,000 during a visit to Hollybush House.
- 3.8** Jim Colvin and Friends, a singing group which provides traditional entertainment to lunch clubs, nursing homes and church guilds, managed to raise £1,000 at the "Touch of Tartan" concert held at St Columba's Church in Ayr on 13 January. Provost Young and Provost Sloan from South Ayrshire Council also attended the event. And after reading about the work of Combat Stress in the Council's "Headlines" publication, a generous ex-serviceman anonymously donated a further £1,000.
- 3.9** Land Engineering based in Fenwick celebrated 30 years in business in March and John Ronald, Managing Director handed over a cheque for £1,000 to the Provost during a tour and cake cutting ceremony to mark the celebration.
- 3.10** The Provost on 18 March joined over 100 walkers and runners for a special 5K run and mile walk at Glasgow Green in aid of Combat Stress. The Provost was joined by Provost Pat Reid of Falkirk Council: Depute Lord Provost Alan Stewart from Glasgow City Council and Depute Provost Anne Jarvis from East Dumbarton Council on the walk. This was the third year that the event

had been held and the 2010 run managed to raise £1,000. Avril Ingram, school janitor at Kilmaurs Primary School also took part in the run and through sponsorship from family, friends and colleagues, Avril raised £500 for the charity.

- 3.11** On 8 April KAOS held their production of "Oliver" and at the show's finale KAOS presented a cheque for £4,500 from the proceeds of this concert to the Provost and Clive Fairweather, Chief Fundraiser for the charity.
- 3.12** Easter at Hollybush House saw Alyson Holden from Fenwick based company Cameron Confectionery presenting gifts of beautifully parcelled tablet to the residents.
- 3.13** On Friday 18 May East Ayrshire Council employees and some Elected Members were sponsored to take part in the "Boot Camp" which was run and organised by the Council's employees. Led by Warrant Officer 2 Stewart Finlay and Colour Sergeant Chris McKimb the recruits started the day with a welcome meet in the staff canteen with bacon and sausage rolls kindly donated by Fergusons the Baker. The parade was started by Provost Stephanie Young with permission to proceed being given by Colonel Clive Fairweather. Lord Lieutenant John Duncan QPM was also there to watch the drill exercises in the Council car park before the two teams travelled to the Dean Castle Country Park to take part in an orienteering exercise, camp building and field cooking demonstrations. Sponsorship money from the Boot Camp raised over £2,000.
- 3.14** The Grand Masonic Lodge Memorial Bowling Tournament was held at Riccarton Bowling Club on 22 and 23 May with the final played on Sunday 30 May 2010. The tournament commemorated the life of PPGM John M Ralston. The money raised, was £900, which was increased to £1,000 by a £100 donation from Jonathan Oliver. Mrs Ralston, the widow of Mr Ralston, requested that the money be donated to Combat Stress.
- 3.15** The Provost hosted an afternoon tea reception on Thursday 3 June at Dumfries House, near Cumnock. HRH Prince Charles attended in his capacity of Patron for Combat Stress and met with those individuals and organisations who had been involved with the charity this year along with staff and residents from Hollybush House.
- 3.16** The Provost's Charity Ball was held on Friday 4 June in the Park Hotel. Lord Lieutenant John Duncan QPM, Chief Fundraiser Clive Fairweather and staff from Hollybush House were among more than 280 guests who attended on the night. Pipers Willie Gilmour, Murray Philp and Stewart Allan welcomed guests as they arrived at the hotel. Jen McGinlay of West FM was MC for the evening and a String Octet comprising pupils and teachers from local schools played throughout dinner. Entertainment was provided by "The Rogues" and "The Deep End". Local businesses and individuals donated fantastic gifts for both the raffle and auction which took place during the course of the evening. Funds raised from the raffle and grand auction totalled £15,800.
- 3.17** Hollybush House Fete took place on Sunday 5 June 2010 where they raised an impressive £3,494. Performing on the day were Dunaskin Doon Band,

Cadet Pipe and Drums while the fete stalls were hosted by Hollybush staff and veterans, Gardening Leave, Patna Primary School and Madame Zia. Also there to lend support were representatives from the Army Cadet Force and Air Training Corps while prizes for the raffle were provided by twelve local businesses.

3.18 Clive Fairweather gave a presentation to the Scottish Provosts Association on Monday 7 June 2010, and the Association then agreed to donate £500 to the charity.

3.19 The amount raised for Combat Stress during 2009/10 will be announced by the Provost at the Council meeting.

4. SUPPORT FOR THE PROVOST'S CHARITY 2010/2011

4.1 To increase awareness of the effects of Dementia the Provost has chosen to support Alzheimer's Scotland as her Charity for 2010/11. In particular, the Provost is keen to support the launch of 'Musical Minds' which is a new and innovative initiative to support people with dementia, their carers and the wider community.

5. FINANCIAL/POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The support given to Combat Stress supports the aims of the Community Plan in terms of improving health and wellbeing.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Council is asked to:-

- (i) acknowledge the efforts of everyone involved and congratulate them for the support given and money raised through the Provost's Office during 2009/2010 for Combat Stress; and
- (ii) recognise and endorse the approach being taken by the Provost for 2010/2011 to focus on raising awareness of and supporting people with Dementia.

Alex McPhee
Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support

8 June 2010
JMcG/SC

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPER - NIL

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services on Tel No (01563) 576135)

Implementation Officer: Julie McGarry, Administration Manager