

**MINUTES OF THE 17<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE EAST MIDLANDS VETERANS AND PENSIONS ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE HELD AT THE OFFICERS MESS, PRINCE WILLIAM OF GLOUCESTER BARRACKS,  
GRANTHAM ON MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2015 AT 11.10am**

Present:

Lt. Col. Peter POOLE (PP) Chair  
Larry HENSON (LH) Meetings Secretary  
David WILSON (DW) General Secretary  
Michael WHITEHEAD (MW)  
Paul DAVIES (PD)  
David DONOVAN (DD)  
Debbie BOWLES (DB)

Apologies:

Patrick RENDALL (PR) (Vice Chair)  
John BERRY (JB)  
Bill DIXON-DODDS (BDD)  
Terl BRYANT (TB)  
Charlie STREATHER (CS)  
Ray BOYFIELD (RB)  
David LOMAS (DL)

**ITEM 1 - OPENING REMARKS.**

The Chair welcomed all present and apologised for the slight delay due to urgent Combat Stress business with his Chairman. He gave a warm welcome back to the former vice chairman DD who had been absent for two years through illness but was now staging a good recovery. He said that he had interviewed four potential new members and that two would be invited to the next meeting as their appointment had been ratified.

**ITEM 2 - Declarations of interest.**

There were no declarations of interest that would conflict with business of this meeting.

**ITEM 3 - Minutes of the last meeting.**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19 January 2015 were checked for both accuracy and content and agreed as a true record of the proceedings.

**ITEM 4 – Matters Arising**

- Item 6. The Minutes of the meeting had specifically excluded the possibility of booking any function venue prior to further ideas that were to be expressed at this meeting. Despite this Leicestershire Cricket Ground had been booked. The Chairman accepted responsibility for this and also that LH had grounds to question the decision, but asked members to note **Afternote 2** in the minutes. LH reiterated that the minutes of the last meeting showed that all members were to submit ideas via him to this (the March

meeting) and he would collate them for a decision to be made. LH added that he, DW and CS had encountered considerable problems in organising December lunches and it had been agreed to go outside of this month. It was agreed that the matter would be further discussed at the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015 meeting. LH asked the Committee to note that he would be away in late November and thus unable to help.

- Item 7. Funding/fundraising. DB said that charities were looking carefully on their arrangements for the dispersal of money to ensure that funds are wisely spent, she added that the Charity Commission was looking closely at everything to do with service charities. PD was fairly confident that we could expect funding to about the same extent as the previous year.
- Item 8. PP said that further discussion at this time on the Chavasse Report should be closed as there was nothing further to add. It would be resurrected as and when.
- Item 9. The Covenant Report. PP asked the Committee to note that the 2014 report was available in draft form. Currently there is no Government response perhaps due to the “purdah” period prior to the elections. He added that there needs to be discussion in the Committee as to expectations from the Covenant/ Community Covenant. PD said his knowledge was that many sign up to the Covenant but then disregard it and do nothing.
- Item 11 and 12. PP said that in relation to the way forward and committees, PR is the lead on this and discussion to be held over until the next meeting.
- Item 10. Reservists. Nothing further to report on reservists.
- Item 13. Recruitment. Two new members have been recruited to the Committee, recruitment to the committee is an ongoing issue, particularly as some members are nearing the end of their time.

#### ITEM 5. - Function arrangements.

This item had been covered under Matters Arising in the main, but DD mentioned that “flyers” might be appropriate for getting the events publicised.

#### ITEM 6. - Fundraising for yearly function.

PP said to some extent this had been mentioned and he would ask PR to lead on this at the next meeting.

#### ITEM 7. - New member update / recruitment to committee.

We have two new members they are: Sukbir Bindra and Barry Smith.

#### ITEM 8. - The Covenant.

Further to the discussion already taken place under Matters arising, DB agreed to send the link to the Covenant to all members.

#### ITEM 9. - Any other business.

- DW Updated members on the case of “Mr G” which had been forwarded to the Committee for investigation by Veterans UK. There were several issues with regard to his assessment of his disability and he mentioned a 70 percent disability award which conflicted with a previous letter from Norcross. He was advised to contact Norcross for clarification, it was suggested he contact DB at RBL to attend a clinic.

- DB raised the issue of costs and logistics for veterans having to travel to appointments and that some were unable to afford these of time and cost travelling to and from appointments and for treatment and it was difficult to find funding for such expenses. DB thought that there was a strong need for “centres of excellence” and access to
- DW mentioned a welfare case where “mental health” had been turned down as “not physical”. There was no forces champion in Lincolnshire and he has plans to speak on this and will follow up.
- DB said that from April every widow/partner will get survivor benefits for life. PP asked DB to circulate fuller details on this giving fuller information.
- PD mentioned appraisals and the difficulties and it should be remembered we are volunteers and the system needs to be more user friendly.
- PP talked of the care after completion of sentence in the prison system helping people into the CJ system. Certainly there was no set system from prison to prison.
- MW said he sometimes felt inadequate on the Committee but can help with “enterprise support” if the committee needs help in this direction. PP will put him in touch with others doing this.
- PP to ask PR to update VAPC on the computer issues.
- At the next meeting it was agreed to discuss the dates of meetings.

ITEM10 date / venue of next meeting.

Grantham Barracks Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015 10.30am for 11am.

End of meeting 1pm.





