

**MINUTES OF THE 18th MEETING
EAST MIDLANDS VETERANS AND PENSIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 15th JUNE 2015**

Date: 15th June 2015
Location: Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, Grantham

Present: Patrick Rendall Deputy Chairman (Chairman)
Larry Henson Meetings Secretary
David Wilson General Secretary
Michael Whitehead
Debbie Bowles
John Berry
Ray Boyfield
Charlie Streater
David Lomas
Sukbir Bindra

Apologies: Peter Poole Chairman
Bill Dixon-Dodds
Terl Bryant
David Donovan
Paul Davies
Barry Smith

Item	Notes	Action
1.	Opening Remarks	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed a new member Sukbir Bindra to the meeting. She works for the RBL. In addition Group Captain Barry Smith had also joined the committee but was unable to be present at this meeting.	Note
1.2	The Chairman said that Peter Poole was unable to attend owing to an engagement in his capacity as Interim Chief Executive of Combat Stress. Combat Stress was recruiting a new Chief Executive, which hopefully would ease his work pressure.	Note
1.3	The Compensation Scheme Defence Team had informed us that the tenure of 6 members appointment to the Committee was due to expire in July 2015. After note: This was dealt with outside the meeting and all the members wished to extend. The Compensation Scheme Defence Team had been informed.	Note
2.	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	There were no declarations of interest	Note
3.	Minutes of the Meeting	

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3.1	It was agreed that the minutes were a fair reflection of the discussion held at the previous meeting.	Note
3.2	Picking up from those minutes, the Chairman mentioned that Launde Abbey a retreat house for the Diocese of Leicester and Peterborough was ideal for people who needed to 'get away from it'. Launde is a country house located in rolling countryside, with good accommodation, conference facilities and a peaceful ambiance. It had been used by a number of organisations including Leicestershire Police. The Chairman wondered whether charities supporting Service personnel might wish to use it and if that were the case he could arrange for contact to be made with the Warden.	All
4.	Christmas Function Arrangements	
4.1	As had already been agreed the Christmas Function this year would be held at Leicester County Cricket Ground, Grace Road, Leicester at 12 noon on 4 th December 2015.	Note
4.2	The Chairman said he would encourage all members to invite veterans to join us for lunch on that day. In particular we should try and encourage those who might be on their own at Christmas. However, to guard against people 'crying off' at the last moment it was agreed that a charge of £5 should be made. We should aim to entertain 50 veterans. There was further discussion about approaching two welfare managers from Kidderminster (the 'two Therasas') who may be able to help a number of veterans to attend. Charlie Streather was invited to follow this up.	All Charlie Streather
4.3	There was a discussion about inviting local dignitaries – Mayor etc. The Chairman said he would leave that decision to Peter Poole!	Peter Poole
4.4	In closing this item it was agreed that Patrick Rendall and David Wilson would lead on the organisation of the event (After note: Visit to Grace Road arranged for 4 th August). A decision on the raffle was deferred until the next meeting.	Patrick Rendall David Wilson
5	Fund Raising for the Christmas Function	
5.1	In a discussion about funding, the Chairman agreed to approach the RAF Benevolent Fund for £400 (after note approach has been made) and Debbie Bowles would approach the Not Forgotten Association. It was expected that Paul Davies would be able to obtain some funding from the RAF Association. Michael Whitehead also agreed to approach local companies (after note: approaches being made). John Berry said his company would donate £100 and he was thanked for this.	Note

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5.2	Obtaining funding to support this event was becoming more difficult. The ABF was unlikely to donate this year. Suk Bindra had agreed to approach TRBL (approach made, but funding would not be forthcoming). Finally David Wilson briefed the meeting about a 'Grass Roots' initiative for funding worthwhile events, but suggested it would be more appropriate to try next year. The Chairman stressed he needed the support from all members to obtain funding.	All
6	Discussion on Meeting Dates	
6.1	A question had been posed about whether Monday was a popular day for our meetings. Larry Henson and Terl Bryant had not always found it easy to attend on this day. After a short discussion it was agreed that our meetings would continue on Mondays and at Grantham.	Note
6.2	After note: forthcoming dates have been agreed as: Monday 21st September 2015 Monday 18th January 2016 Monday 7th March 2016	All
7	The Armed Forces Covenant	
7.1	Discussion on the Armed Forces Covenant was held over to the next meeting.	Note
8.	Strategic Plan – The Way Forward	
8.1	Patrick Rendall referred the meeting to the Strategic Plan, which had previously been circulated and agreed. The issue now would be to appoint committee members to the various tasks identified in the plan. It was emphasised that there was no intention to appoint people to areas where they did not feel comfortable and also individuals should not feel that they could not interact and comment across the strategy where appropriate. 'Stove Pipe thinking' would be detrimental and individuals should feel engaged in all committee work.	All
8.2	Attached at Annex A are the Chairman's intentions, which include the names of members alongside their suggested sub-group. The leaders have been identified in their sub-group.	All
8.3	It is realised there is an inequality of individuals to each sub-group and it was suggested this should be discussed further at our next meeting with an intention of evening up the workload.	All
8.4	In the meantime team leaders were asked to co-ordinate	All

Item	Notes	Action
	work within their teams to identify key areas (KPIs) they could take forward in time for a discussion at our next meeting. Much of this could be found in the detailed priorities listed in the intentions.	
9.	Hip and Knee Replacement for Veterans	
9.1	Bill Dixon-Dodds had circulated advice where veterans were able to obtain a priority for hip and knee replacements. This was known to Charlie Streather in his work with BLESMA. Members would be able to obtain further details from Bill and Charlie should they require.	Note
10.	Veterans in the Criminal Justice System	
10.1	This report had been circulated for discussion. John Berry said he was awaiting details of cuts in veteran support in prisons. He said support across the board was variable with some prisons allocating more funds to it than others. Veterans were identified on arrival in the criminal justice system, but little else was done unless staff were funded to support them.	Note
11.	Any Other Business	
11.1	Michael Whitehead said he knew someone who made models. Model making had some therapeutic benefits. He also wondered whether this would be of interest to war gamers. If members wished to take this opportunity forward they should contact him. He also advised that there could be a business opportunity.	Note
11.2	Debbie Bowles raised an issue, which had been discussed before, where there was no NHS support for veterans who had non-freezing cold injuries. Medical support within the Services was satisfactory, but on leaving the Services veterans were finding that there was a lack of knowledge and funding in the NHS to treat these injuries. It was agreed this should be raised to the Chairmen's meeting with a view to informing Minister. (After note: The chairman has been informed.)	Patrick Rendall
11.3	The Armed Forces Act had not changed since our committees were called War Pensions committees. The act would be enacted within the next 3 months, which would 'legitimise' our committees.	Note
11.4	The new MOD ministers had now settled in. Those having been appointed are: Michael Fallon – continuing as SofS Penny Mordaunt – MinAF – a Lieutenant Commander RNR Mark Lancaster - Minister of State for Defence Personnel,	Note

Item	Notes	Action
	Welfare and Veterans – a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Engineers Reserves Bomb Disposal	
11.5	Veterans UK is part of the Defence Business Service and this service has gone out to tender again.	Note
11.6	A reorganisation of Veterans UK was also underway. John Parkin remains as lead, but the two assistant heads had changed. Their names would be brought to the next meeting.	Note
12.	Date of the Next Meeting	
12.1	The next meeting would take place in the Officers Mess at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, Grantham at 11.00 am on Monday 21 st September 2015.	Note

25th June 2015

Distribution - Those listed above