



Minutes: London Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee Meeting

Venue: - RAF Benevolent Fund, 67 Portland Place, LONDON, W1B 1AR

Wednesday 7th June 2017

Time 11.00 – 14.00

| Present | Apologies | Observers / Guests |
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| Lynn Verity (LV) – Chairman | Roger Hood (RH) | Bob Money (BM) |
| Jim Blake (JB) – Deputy Chairman | Paul Clabburn (PC) | Andrew Ross (AR) |
| Gill Grigg (GG) | Ken Courtenay (KC) | |
| Jules Eaton (JE) | John Prichard (JP) | |
| Alex Jablonowski (AJ) | Heather Nicholson (HN) | |
| Penny Long (PL) | | |
| Julie Thain Smith (JTS) | | |
| Marion Knight (secretary MK) | | |

| ITEM 1: Introductions |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chairman welcomed, Julie Thain Smith and Jules Eaton newly appointed member of the committee, and observers Andrew Ross and Bob Money 2. The Chairman explained that there was only one interview date set and that the Minister had appointed Jules Eaton [JE] and Julie Thain Smith [JTS] as full members of the committee. Other prospective interviewees have been invited to attend the committee meeting as observers with the possibility they may be co-opted onto the Committee. The third prospective observer Robert Evans had not been able to attend today’s meeting but it is hoped he will attend the next meeting |

| ITEM 2: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | ACTION |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apologies for absence were accepted from Committee members PC, KC, HN, JP and RH | |
| ITEM 3: DECLARATION OF INTEREST | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chairman reminded Committee members that they must declare any interest arising out of their personal/business life which could conflict with VAPC business. | |
| ITEM 4: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chairman had not approached Baroness Sue Garden at this point due to the General Election 2. The Chairman asked for a formal note of thanks been given to JB for his work in recruiting new members for the Committee and arranging the interviews etc. 3. JB had raised concerns with regards to item 9 and asked whether there had been any response by the Forces Pension Society, GG explained that there were no current answers. JB informed the Committee that he was attending an FPS meeting in June 2017 and he would raise the issue. The Chairman asked that GG continue to monitor any communications with regards to this topic 4. GG stated that she had been in contact with Bill Sykes, (Honorary Committee member) and he was doing well 5. Minute's passed as a true and accurate record of 8th March 2017 meeting. MK to send to Norcross | <p style="text-align: right;">JB & GG</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MK</p> |
| ITEM 5: – LEGISLATIVE UPDATE- CHAIRMAN | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chairman gave a summary of the work relating to the draft Statutory Instrument for the benefit of new members and observers 2. The Chairman explained when the General Election was over she would consult with her two colleagues on the Chairman's Legislative Committee who are working with her on this subject and suggest other amendments 3. The Chairman to communicate with Tom Brake if he is re-elected and Baroness Garden | <p style="text-align: right;">LV</p> |
| ITEM 6: REPLIES TO LETTERS OF 27TH MARCH 2017 – JIM BLAKE | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chainman wrote to the Mayor of London and Mark Lancaster with the first draft of Kent University report 2. A response from Mark Lancaster was received on 10th May 2017 in which he commended the 2 London Boroughs for the action they had taken 3. JB received a response from the Mayor on 17th May 2017 and he is supportive of VA&PCs | |
| ITEM 7: TREASURERS REPORT – CHAIRMAN | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We still have £10.00 in the bank account. We might run a seminar in the future about housing and may need sponsorship and this is where the bank account will come into effect | |
| ITEM 8: – CHAIRMAN'S CONFERENCE | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chairman thanked KC for attending the recent conference on her behalf | |
| ITEM 9: - KENT UNIVERSITY UPDATE – JIM BLAKE | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A discussion was had with regards to a possible Housing seminar and it was agreed that the Awareness sub group should continue with their work with the view to holding a seminar in January 2018 | <p style="text-align: right;">Awareness Group</p> |

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| <p>The Chairman asked for the Committees thanks to be passed to Kent University for their work</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> JB informed the Committee that RBL and Reserve Forces and Cadets Association have arranged a conference and have asked Kent University to speak. The Chairman asked that the London VA&PC be represented at the conference as they have supported the project and that the London VA&PC was very much a partner in the work on housing. JB agreed to find out the date of the conference | <p>JB</p> |
| <p>ITEM 10: BARCLAYS BANK PROGRAMME – ALEX JABLONOWSKI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> AJ gave a brief overview of this programme to new members and observers AJ explained the aim was to have 1000 veterans “on the books” by the end of the year, but this limited by the number of mentors currently available There are further plans for Barclays to update the website Eventually Barclays will want to hand over the running of this programme and find an alternative source of funding | |
| <p>ITEM 11: – REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE SUB-GROUPS</p> <p>AWARENESS & COMMUNICATION: JIM BLAKE – (refer to the sub group’s report to the Committee)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> JB went through the Awareness sub group report with the Committee which had been circulated prior to the meeting with a detailed discussion on certain points in relation to health and pensions JB explained there was an opportunity to send congratulatory messages to elected MP’s – PC/KC plan to do this and introduce the London VA&PC and its committee RH keen for guidance on medium to longer term objectives of the Committee’s Business Plan – committee agreed to fully discuss this topic at the September meeting <p>ADVOCACY - GILL GRIGG: (refer to the sub group report)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> GG went through the Advocacy sub group report with the Committee which had been circulated before the meeting with specific reference to Gateway, Families in Stress, Armed forces bereavement scholarship scheme and the change to state retirement Pension legislation for war widows <p>ASSISTANCE: - PENNY LONG AND JULES EATON (refer to the sub group report)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> PL went through the Assistance sub group report with the Committee with reference to the NHS forum, end of life hospice care report and reference to the fact that NHS England have made it easier to access mental health support (with a waiting list of 2 weeks) for Veterans as opposed to the 18 weeks for ordinary NHS patients JTS to join this sub group The chairman asked for the sub group to decide by the next meeting, on a topic for a health project for the Committee | <p>PC and KC</p> <p>PL, JE and JTS</p> |

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| <p>ITEM 12: PROTECTING INFORMATION – THE ONLINE COURSE AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES INFORMATION AS SENT IN E MAIL 9TH MAY 2017 – GILL GRIGG</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GG raised some concerns with this course and personal computer storage and that the Chairman needs to report who has completed it 2. JE has circulated a synopsis and shared the summaries prior to the meeting 3. The Committee agreed a plan of action for completion | <p>LV</p> |
| <p>ITEM 13: DATE AND VENUE OF THE DECEMBER MEETING – GILL GRIGG</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committee agreed it would be good to have the Naval Club as the venue. GG to liaise with JP with regards date etc. | <p>GG & JP</p> |
| <p>ITEM 12: - A.O.B</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Several Committee members could not make the date planned for the next meeting. GG to liaise with the RAF Benevolent Fund with regards availability of a room during September 2017/early October 2017 and circulate dates to Committee members and current observers (Next Meeting subsequently confirmed for Thursday 28th September 2017 (11.00-15.00) at the RAF Benevolent Fund offices | <p>GG</p> |