



Minutes: London Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee Meeting

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

Wednesday 13th June 2018

Time 11.00 – 15.00

Present	Apologies	Observers / Guests
Lynn Verity (LV) – Chairman	Jim Blake (JB)	Dave Luscombe – Area Welfare Manager Veterans UK
Alex Jablonowski (AJ)	Gill Grigg (GG)	Flick Drummond – Chair of SE Committee
Penny Long (PL)	Jim Evans (JME)	
Julie Thain Smith (JTS)		
Roger Hood (RH)		
Paul Clabburn (PC)		
Ken Courtenay (KC)		
Heather Nicholson (HN)		
Bob Money (BM)		
Andrew Ross (AR)		
Jules Eaton (JE)		
Marion Knight (secretary MK)		

ITEM 1: Introductions	ACTION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chairman welcomed Dave Luscombe, Area Welfare Manager from Veterans UK and Flick Drummond, the newly appointed Chairman of the South-East VA&PC Committee 2. The Committee extended congratulations to Heather Johnson on her recent marriage 	

<p>ITEM 2: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apologies for absence were accepted from committee members JB, GG and JME 	
<p>ITEM 3: DECLARATION OF INTEREST</p> <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 2. Declaration of interest – JE under agenda point 5 	
<p>ITEM 4: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Matters arising - item 5 draft Handbook/ Terms of Reference, point 3&4. LV has raised with Norcross the matter of the Chairman’s Governance document which was accepted at the Chairman’s conference in April 2015. There was no reference to this document agreed Chairman’s governance in the draft Handbook. Kerry Wright stated she had spoken to Tony Phillips and he has explained that he did not believe there was any such governance agreed by the Chairman, although the matter was discussed. LV has written to Kerry Wright and included the documentation which demonstrates that the governance was agreed and adopted by all chairman in April 2015. LV explained to the Committee that she is not currently clear of the outcome of this correspondence 2. London Committee asked for it to be formally noted that they are particularly concerned about this omission and therefore will not agree to the terms of reference 3. Item 6 – Quinquennial review – ongoing 4. Item 6 – Centenary – RH was going to speak to Johnny Mercer MP and he explained to date he had not managed to see him and therefore he accepted that this is an outstanding action which has to be addressed 5. JE had been missed of the list of those in attendance at the last meeting. MK to correct this omission 6. Minutes passed as a true and accurate record and MK will arrange for these to be passed to Norcross for publication 	<p>RH</p> <p>MK</p> <p>MK</p>
<p>ITEM 5: – UPDATE FROM VETERANS UK – DAVE LUSCOMBE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dave Luscombe has been the Regional Manager for Welfare for the South for 10 months. In his first 10 months he has been focusing on recruitment of welfare managers and ensuring that they are appropriately trained and mentored. He explained that he recognised the value of VA&PC’s and it was good to establish contact with London Committee 2. Currently a major focus is the single point of contact for the Veterans UK National Helpline and it was hoped that there would be a tiered approach to responses. The proposed “go live” date is the 2nd July 2018 3. For contact purposed for Dave’s e mail address is David.Luscombe365@mod.gov.uk 4. Dave was asked by JC about the importance of his relationships with VA&PC’s and Dave explained members of VA&PC’s are invaluable where a case needs support and 	

<p>negotiating with Norcross</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Dave explained that with the introduction of the Veterans Gateway there had been no visible increase in the numbers of Veterans asking for support but explained this may be the ways calls were being recorded 6. JE – asked Dave about the periodic assurance visits by committee members and how Committee members appreciated being engaged. Dave explained the visits are an important part of a welfare managers role. He explained that these visits are a rolling agenda item for his team. LV explained these visits are in the Statutory Instrument and therefore committee members are required to take part as is the Agency 	
<p>ITEM 6: REPORTS FROM THE SUB GROUPS:</p> <p><u>Policy and Government Affairs – Gill Grigg – report circulated prior to the meeting</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. JE declared an interest 2. Quinquennial review and report – JE raised concerns with regards lump sums being uprated. The reality is they are now only worth 89% of their value as at six years ago. He explained the interim awards are not being awarded from the point of injury but from point of claim. Veterans granted these awards have no right to appeal. JE explained that there needs to be more transparency with regards the scheme and making awards to veterans more promptly. JE explained he believes that VA&PC's should be raising these issue 3. JE explained that there has not been one single award at level 6 for mental health issues since the scheme was introduced and again this was not appropriate. He further explained this would mean an individual must go through a tribunal to have these issues addressed and there are no reported figures on the numbers involved 4. AJ suggested if the Committee felt strongly about this then we the Committee should write to the Minister. Agreed JE will draft the letter to the Minister. Flick Drummond suggested the Defence Select Committee might be another option and she is going to arrange an introduction for LV <p><u>Health and Welfare - Penny Long – report circulated by JTS prior to meeting</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. JTS has been working on gathering evidence for recognition scheme for GP's and will have an update the next meeting. She explained that she is looking at this from a National perspective 2. Health Education England has internal accreditation for GP's and information will be sought from them 3. Alex Paige will be at the next Committee meeting <p><u>Housing & Communication - Paul Clabburn – report circulated prior to the meeting</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PC talked through work the sub-group have been doing with regards establishing which Committee members would be contacting each borough and in particular the Armed Forces Champion for each of those boroughs. Some minor changes were made to the list circulated with the report regarding the boroughs each Committee member will be contacting 2. PC had drafted a letter of introduction and following discussion agreed he would make some changes and send letter to MK who would then circulate as a draft to all Committee members on headed notepaper for the members to use as a way of introduction to their boroughs 3. The sub-group will monitor active interest for a seminar as responses are received with the hope that interest will reach approximately 30% to make it a viable option 	<p>PC & MK</p>

<p><u>Employment – Alex Jablonowski - report circulated prior to the meeting</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AJ explained that RJE has joined him on this piece of work 2. There are two longer term concerns. Firstly, that the Bank decides that the costs £300K per annum are not viable. Secondly, the governance for the scheme as a whole 3. AJ explained that there is a steering group meeting in July and he will have a better understanding of the future of the scheme then 4. AJ & JME are keen to get other VA&PC's involved and AJ suggested to Flick Drummond that they have a talk to the SE Committee about this work and she accepted the invitation 5. AJ & JME are keen to approach Tobias Ellwood MP when he is in his constituency with regards this work <p><u>Centenary - Roger Hood</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RH gave a verbal report – the sub- group is focusing on recognition of the past century's achievements and looking forward to the next decade 2. No further work has been undertaken since March 2018 3. RH explained the sub- group will have a list of practical things to take forward by September 2018 and have prepared an action plan by December 2018 4. The sub-group are monitoring what has happened with RAF 100 and are looking at its successes and will try to learn from it 5. The sub-group are considering a TV documentary and will send some ideas to PC who has contacts in current affairs 6. RBL are also celebrating their Centenary and will be formulating their ideas after November 2018 7. LV wants to take the proposals to the Chairmans' meeting in March 2019 <p><u>Awareness and Communication</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PC still giving some support 	<p>AJ & JME</p> <p>AJ & JME</p> <p>RH</p>
<p>ITEM 7: RECRUITMENT OF NEW MEMBERS – LYNN VERITY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Members there were 4 applicants for 4 places, applicants have not been informed if they have been successful. Lynette Calame was one applicant as well as the 3 current co-opted members 2. Mandy Hope – co-opted to the Committee for this year has been invited to the September and Christmas meeting 	
<p>ITEM 8: – TREASURERS REPORT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. £30 is the balance in the bank account 	
<p>ITEM 9: – DATA PROTECTION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Protection - All forms need to be returned to MK. MK to recirculate the form for those members who have not returned their forms 	
<p>ITEM 10: – A.O.B</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AR & JME have applied to go on a training course in July 2018 but have not heard whether they have been accepted onto the course. MK will e mail Kerry Wright to find out if they have a place 2. Date of next meeting – 5th September 2018 	<p>MK</p>