

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee



EAST MIDLANDS VETERANS' ADVISORY AND PENSION COMMITTEE **(EMVA&PC)** **END OF YEAR REPORT – JULY 2011**

Introduction

Geographical Area

The EMVA& PC encompasses the counties of Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland and Northamptonshire. The service and ex service population reflects the preponderance of Royal Air Force in the area. That said, North Nottinghamshire is a noted recruiting area for the Army and the bases at Grantham and Chillwell provide training and operational support for the Reserve and Territorial Army.

Committee Membership

Recruiting to EMVA&PC reflected the difficulties experienced by its predecessor the East Midlands War Pension Committee. There were a total of eleven applications for the Committee, of these seven were available for interview, one was not selected and three were accepted later as co-opted members. This was a disappointing exercise in terms of numbers, with the only explanation being the widely dispersed population and the lack of service units in the catchment area. Since the end of the recruiting period members have been tasked with attempting to increase the numbers with some success. It should also be noted that one very longstanding member, Mr C Harrison, has reluctantly retired.

Current membership comprises:

Mr Peter Poole – Chairman
Mr D Donovan – Vice Chairman and Raising Awareness Sub Group
Mr R Boyfield - Raising Awareness Sub Group
Mr K Meakin – Advocacy/health
Mr D Harding – Raising Awareness Sub Group
Mr W Dixon Dodds - Recognition Sub Group
Mr C Streater – Advocacy Sub Group

Co-opted Members:

Mr T Bryant – Advocacy Sub Group
Mr L Henson – Secretary and Capability Sub Group
Mr J Berry - Recognition Sub Group

The membership represents a wide range of experience and capability which includes;

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee



- The Prison Service
- The Police
- Local Government
- Royal British Legion
- BLESMA
- Combat Stress

Meetings

The Committee meets four times a year in January, March, June and October. An extra meeting was held in January 2011 to agree the Strategic Plan for the year 2011-2012. In addition there will be a Christmas event for veterans and their families in December.

Strategy

The detailed strategy for the EMVA&PC is attached at Annex A. With a relatively small committee, most of whom are in full time employment, the strategic aims have been designed to be achievable and sustainable. To summarise the Committee seeks to:

- To be instrumental in ensuring that the expectations outlined in the Service Personnel Command Paper and the Armed Forces Welfare Pathway(2010) are met in the East Midlands
- Raise Awareness of the support available to veterans and the Armed Forces community in the East Midlands and to assist serving personnel, their families and veterans in accessing services in the East Midlands.
- Through advocacy provide an independent position to the Service personnel and Veterans Agency complaints process.
- Enhance Committee capability.

Outcomes for the period November 2010 to July 2011

To be instrumental in ensuring that the expectations outlined in the Service Personnel Command Paper and the Armed Forces Welfare Pathway(2010) are met in the East Midlands.

Health

- The Chairman has represented the Committee and been involved with the steering group for the East Midlands NHS/Armed Forces Regional Network. To date there have been two meetings of the main committee and two sub group meetings.
- Presentation given to EM NHS/AF Network.
- Contacts have been established with Nottingham University Hospital Trust and Leicester Mental health Trust.

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee



- Contact established with the AF lead for the East Midlands.

Midlands Region To Raise Awareness of the support available for Serving Personnel, Veterans and their Families in the East Midlands.

Prisons

- Several meetings with Prison-In-Reach for the East Midlands leading to **closer working service organisations and better co-ordination.**
- **Involvement with recruitment of health workers who will liaise both internally and externally with veterans to provide a support service.**
- **Involvement with development of a mentoring service to support veterans both in prison and once they leave. All East Midlands probation services are signed up to the initiative.**
- **Links being established with veteran service officers in prisons.**
- **Training for in reach workers being developed and delivered in the Autumn enabling the service to be fully deployed by the end of the year. (Coord by John Berry)**
- **Through Probation and In-Reach contact with courts to ensure that veterans who find themselves in the Court system are identified and where requested offered appropriate support.**

Local Authorities

- Contact established with three County Councils. Chair to address Northamptonshire in December.
- Members involved with councils in professional capacity.

Ex Service Organisations

Close links are being developed with ex service organisations in the East Midlands either through committee members or via other activities.

Through advocacy provide an independent position to the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency complaints process.

Disappointingly there has been little opportunity in this area for the Committee as a whole. In fact there have been no referrals. Individual members, in line with their professional responsibilities, have however represented veterans from the region at Pension Appeal Tribunals and appeals with the DWP. This despite several members of the Committee making specific contact with the VWS.

Enhance Committee capability.

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee



Active recruiting has resulted in a number of expressions of interest from well qualified members of the community to become members when/if there is a further recruitment exercise.

P M POOLE MBE
Chair EMVA& PC
30 July 2011

Annex A – EMVA&PC TORs
Annex B - Activities Proforma.

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee



ANNEX A to EMVA &PC
DATED 30 July 2011

EAST MIDLANDS VETERANS ADVISORY AND PENSION COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY **2010 –2011**

VISION

To be recognised as the focal point in the East Midlands for assistance to veterans, their families and the Armed Forces community.

OUR FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF

That veterans and the Armed Forces community in the East Midlands deserve access to prompt, specialised and appropriate advice from understanding professionals and volunteers who reflect the maxim that service in the armed forces should not lead to disadvantage when that service ends.

OUR VALUES

We believe that the East Midlands Veterans Advisory and Pension Committee should provide:

- First class, first choice advice to both veterans and providers of veterans services.
- A “can do“ attitude from members of the Committee.
- Exhibit respect towards the veterans and families we serve.
- Seeking excellence in everything we do.

STRATEGIC AIMS - SUMMARISED

- To be recognised as the regional focus implementing improved cross-Government support, based on the services and expectations outlined in the Service Personnel Command Paper and the Armed Forces Welfare Pathway.(2010)
- To Raise Awareness of the support available to veterans and the Armed Forces community in the East Midlands and to assist serving personnel, their families and veterans in accessing services in the East Midlands.
- Through advocacy provide an independent position to the Service personnel and Veterans Agency complaints process.
- Enhance Committee capability.

Strategic Aim 1

To be recognised as the regional focus implementing improved cross-Government support, based on the services and expectations outlined in the Service Personnel Command Paper and the Armed Forces Welfare Pathway.

- By developing, within the East Midlands, effective networks and communications with statutory sectors that link to the lives of the Armed Forces Community and veterans.

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee



- Seek close working relationships with these regional statutory and non statutory organisations – Councils, NHS, CAB etc.
- Further development of our relationships with other Ex Service organisations in the East Midlands.
- Develop closer relationships with regional “in service” organisations, particularly those working in the welfare and transition to civilian life areas.
- Contribute to consultation documents issued by government.

Strategic Aim 2

Midlands Region To Raise Awareness of the support available for Serving Personnel, Veterans and their Families in the East.

- Create and deliver a comprehensive regional promotion plan using the full variety of the Media.
- Determine and meet key partners (funders, veterans and families).
- Increase links with Veterans (Vets) and their families by developing an East Midlands Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee (EMVAPC) /Client Engagement Plan.

Strategic Aim 3

Through advocacy provide an independent position to the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency complaints process.

- Identify and constitute a knowledgeable sub committee capable of examining information and providing advice.
- Support this sub committee through suitable training.

Strategic Aim 4

Enhance Committee capability.

- Continue development of the committee and its culture, attract and retain skilled members.
- Utilise available technology to support the Committee and to reduce the volume of paper documents whilst ensuring confidentiality.
- Identify, resource and empower sub committees.
- Audit and review the Committee members skills and competencies in order to provide development opportunities.
- Provide a safe working environment. (Risk Assessments, CRB etc)

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee



ACTIVITIES	NUMBERS (FIVE BAR GATE)	NOTES/DETAILS/ OUTCOME
Raising Awareness		
Distribution of posters/leaflets		
Attendance at PR Events	2	NHS/AF Forum
Delivery of presentations/ participation in local veterans forums	3	Councils, DoH, Prisons
Press articles to local free papers		
Letters of introduction or providing advice/info to LAs, PCTS, ex-service associations etc	3	
Providing info to or being interviewed Local Radio /TV	1	Radio Derby – yet to be followed up by RD
Advising and representing		
Obtaining case specific information from SPVA	0	
Response to general enquiries from veterans	2	
Response to enquiries from veterans re WP	3	By virtue of some members employment
Response to enquiries from veterans re AFCS	3	See above
Response to complaints from veterans re WP	0	
Response to complaints from veterans re AFCS	2	As above
Assistance re overpayments		

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee



Involvement with ICPs	0	
Involvement with panel cases (other than ICP)	0	
Supporting the MOD with the implementation of cross government support to veterans by highlighting gaps or issues	4	See written report
Welfare Pathway		
Assisting veterans and their families to access local services	2	
Referring cases for welfare support	1	
Monitoring the Veterans Welfare Service (VWS)	0	No real contact
Others		
Providing SPVA with feedback to forms/leaflets	0	
Consultation on papers	2	
Home visits with the VWS	0	
Facilitating presentation of veterans badges	0	
Notes/Details/Outcome (continued)		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a need to have another recruitment exercise to both maintain interest of co-opted members and to bring the committee up to strength. 2. The EM Committee needs to have a much closer relationship with the VWS, certainly the committee - and also the VWS need to work harder to develop this. 		

East Midlands Veterans' Advisory and Pension Committee

