

MINUTES OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EAST  
MIDLANDS VETERAN'S ADVISORY AND  
PENSIONS COMMITTEE HELD AT PRINCE  
WILLIAM OF GLOUCESTER BARRACKS,  
OFFICERS MESS, ON MONDAY 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2012  
at 11.00 AM.

Present.

Peter POOLE (PP) Chair

David DONOVAN (DD) Vice Chair

Larry HENSON (LH) Secretary

John BERRY

Bill DIXON-DODDS (BDD)

Ray BOYFIELD (RB)

Keith MEAKIN (KM)

David HARDING (DH)

Debbie BOWLES (DB)

Mark CROSSLEY (MC)

Apologies.

Terl BRYANT (TB)

ITEM 1 - WELCOME AND APOLOGIES.

The Chair welcomed all present and especially welcomed two new members DB and MC, and that he had received apologies from TB and one of the

two other new Members. He was happy that DB and MC had managed to come along at short notice and hoped to welcome all at the next meeting in September.

He invited all Members, not just new ones, to submit to him a short CV of just one paragraph of their current situation.

## ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest.

## ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 5<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2012.

LH apologies to RB and CS for showing them present with incorrect names. PP said it was his fault for not checking more thoroughly and LH reluctantly agreed it was the case!

BDD pointed out he was not a Commissioner of Ashfield and Mansfield NHSCG but was in fact Vice Chair.

## ITEM 4 - MATTERS ARISING

There then followed with a discussion on COBSEO. PP said that it was small, run by an Admiral and

Debbie Whittacker. It was unlikely to get around to us but we should continue to contact them. There is in effect an umbrella organisation but not to the British Legion, SAFA or Help for Heroes. There would be no implant into that organisation for EMVAPC but none the less we should continue to be in touch with COBSEO. DB said that originally they did not wish to be in control, but rather to steer and focus on areas. The idea was to pull together rather than adopt the MOD's strategy of divide and conquer. PP said COBSEO will never be a big player until everyone knows their dividing lines.

PP concluded by saying that we can only support organisations that are sustainable.

#### ITEM 5 - RELATIONSHIP WITH SVPA.

DD said in short that we should be addressing this and PP said that this will be looked at.

BDD said reservists will replace regulars and the SVPA will need to address this. PP said the number of 80K will be supplemented by 25K reservists and will included in that work that needs to be done on pensions.

PP said we had talked about this a great deal. Whilst we are independent they look after us. He added that our clerical support is Charlotte and Carol.

We were reminded we will need to provide an end of year report and PP will send last years to new members. The report needs to be completed by 26<sup>th</sup> July 2012 and needs to be factual but not lengthy. PP will send all members the new draft asking us to check and update. PP said he will send this out as soon as possible.

## ITEM 6 – SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

DD asked about the Lincolnshire NH Trust and whether we could get involved.

PP said he had sent an invitation to the East Midlands NHS Trust for our September meeting and mentioned that he was quite patient orientated.

DD mentioned that the DWP had deployed armed forces champions in each JCP District.

DD mentioned he had been tasked by PP to attend an Armed Forces Community Covenant Presentation at Chesterfield on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at the Tigers Stadium. The day is being led by Lt Colonel DAWBER and he has made contact with DD. DD said he will need leaflets and PP said that he would obtain these for DD.

DD mentioned that at the December meeting now booked at the Masonic Hall, Leicester we should

arrive early for a short meeting. PP said this should only last one hour with no minutes but rather notes kept. The deposit for the meal is prepared. PP said he wanted to encourage more and the figure of 80 was agreed. In effect that was 40 couples at a nominal £5 per ticket. Regimental Blazers and medals or smart dress was the order of the day and potential names should be forwarded to him. DD thanked those who had donated prizes and said the Masonic Hall had been generous with prizes also. We are capable financially of funding this meal.

RB said he had recently circulated a report to all members and asked them to ensure they had read it closely.

DD was to obtain and circulate Parachute Organisation details.

DD said he had set up a hotmail account but at this stage he only had four accounts and was seeking more. It was agreed that we must ask clearance and need authority and must ask for permission.

KM mentioned that the blue badge scheme is to change but JB did not think this was the case. KM said for instance single amputees were no longer eligible. JB said they were working to a criteria and working with ATOS.

PP said he had received contact from an individual wanting him to sign a petition to remove ATOS. DB said they need to address their methods and that individuals need to be told how the information is used.

## ITEM 6 – CHAIRMANS REPORT

PP mentioned the Veterans Welfare Service which he wanted to improve. He had just received two referrals and one he had replied to with a holding response and the other had been given to CS as part of his group.

DB asked for more information and PP ran through the list of Committees with Additions.

1. JB BDD DH
2. DD RB
3. TB CS KM DB
4. LH MC.

PP said it was good to get referrals as it showed we were on radar.

LH said, as Secretary, he knew nothing of these referrals and asked their nature. PP said one related to a complaint that there was no doctor involved and the second related to Seven Trent Water UTILITY not

being helpful to the disabled and we need to check the criteria. Comparisons were made with other water utilities such as Anglia who were helpful. DH would ask TB to find out and assist.

PP said the SVPA are our masters but however we were open to criticise i.e. the 40 week matter, but we need to illustrate the problem.

DD mentioned the 40 week problem and PP asked DB to look into this. Apparently the British Legion says 40 days. Apparently the targets cannot be found. The Web sites of SVPA and Veterans UK are not clear – in fact confusing. It was thought we could ask the chair of the War Widows Committee?

KM suggested we need to ask directly and remarked how greatly things had changed. The War Pensions Claims Department had been greatly reduced. AFCS is different and can make advanced payments and the interim payment is made if the injury changes. However the advanced payment under Boyce does have strict criteria.

PP said that under KM, DD and DH we need the statistics and set up a small working group to look at TB's complaint.

Items to cover would be –

- a. What is the problem?
- b. Is there a problem?

- c. What should we do with the problem?
- d. LH said there was a need to check with other chairs and PP undertook to do this.
- e. PP said the timescale should be two weeks.

PP said the numbers of claims under War Pensions are rising. DB said a number of people claiming are being pushed by relatives confusing age related problems.

DD drew attention to a mention in a website about claiming an upfront AFCS payment – and added that it must be submitted within six months on an application form. There were two criteria

1. the injury (or injuries) occurred in service and were clearly caused by service,
2. at least one injury sustained would be awarded with tariff levels 1 – 8 upon full claim consideration. If all was clearly documented and proved £60K can be made and taken into account at a later date.

KM said this only related to AFCS and not war pensions. DB said some are being pressed to claim too early but that they need to be made fairly soon as when in Headley Court it is too late.

KM mentioned an advanced payment made for a two year case who was now in Headley Court.



From 12.30 to 12.40 there was a comfort break.

#### ITEM – 8 – RECRUITING UPDATE.

PP said recruiting had taken place with four new members and was to be regularly updated and co-opted members would be shortly confirmed. LH said he had recently been told by Charlotte that confirmation would be deferred until the Autumn as some Chairs had been slow to respond and the new names would be submitted in bulk when all collated.

DD asked if the minutes could be speeded up. PP agreed to this.

SVPA courses had been requested but not for new members until confirmed. Several present expressed an interest to attend.

#### ITEM 9 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

KM mentioned the ‘help line’ issues which were just recordings and calls were not returned. It was agreed this would be discussed at a future date.

#### ITEM 10 – DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING.

The date for the next meeting is set at Grantham on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at Grantham. \_ \_

Dates for next meetings at Grantham unless Otherwise stated.

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at Leicester.

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013

There being no other business the meeting closed  
at 1.30pm.