

MEETING OF Y&H VAPC: 8TH MAY 2013 - RECORD & ACTIONS

Attendees:

Col (Retd) Tony Phillips MBE (Chair)
Mr John Topping (Secretary)
Mr Alex Bentley
Ms Alison Carter
Tim Cole
Maj (RTD) Duncan
Dr David Jolliffe
Mr Robert Mortimer
Mr Andrew Palmer
Peter Shields MBE, QGM
Mrs Helen Singleton
Mrs Zena Wynn-Jones

Apologies:

1. Alex Baxter
2. Gp Capt (Retd) Philip Rodgers MBE
3. Mr John Anderson

Absent: Nil

Observer/Guest:

Mr R Egan – SPVA VWS

Item

Discussion

1. Introduction

a. The Chairman briefed the members about the exciting times ahead with regards the Committees Action Plan and the great opportunities to assist veterans with emerging NHS Choices, Murrison, MoD Transition and NHS restructuring initiatives. **Action:** Chair

2. Administration

a. Minutes of Last Meeting: Apologies/Issues Arising.

- 2a1. Apologies were taken and are as indicated above.
2a2. Claim forms were gathered in and will be sent with Russ Egan to the SPVA.
2a3. Chairman still has to post standard slides on the role of the Committee on the Y&H VAPC web site– **Action:** Chair.
2a2. All issues arising will be covered on today's agenda.

b. Membership vacancies x 5 – Recruitment and canvassing/RFCA Vacancies:

2b1. A number of people have been contacted with regards membership of the VA&PC. Within the RFCA there are also a number of vacancies which may be of interest to VA&PC members. **Action:** Zena can provide details.

c. Annual Report: Inputs and Engagements.

2c1. Members are to e mail the Chairman with all their inputs and engagements together with dates/timings/etc.

3. VAPC Role and Mandate.

a. Role: Unifying objectives and tasks/ changes to plan and direction – required?

3a1. Chairman reported that AFF activity in the Leeds area had gone quiet.

Action: Zena Wynn-Jones: Zena will investigate what the present situation is.

3a2. VAPC responsible for the AFF's and the AFB's are normally populated by local Councilors.

Action: Chairman: will obtain points of contact for Members then to pursue

3a3. Chairman described how the VAPC is involved in the Appeals Procedure where we are in the position of appeal of last resort.

b. Mandate: Advocate/Awareness – Lead from behind (Gen, Health, Welfare)

3b1. Framework document protocols confirmed and certain areas highlighted for change.

Action Chairman: Will circulate proposed changes.

3b2. It was agreed that members of external organisations (Combat Stress, TRBL, LA's etc) would provide a short brief for members at all meetings about what concerns and constraints they experienced.

Action: All Members of external organisations will forward to the **Secretary** short briefs Which will be circulated prior to the meeting.

4. VAPC Positioning.

a. JSNA, Veterans single point of access (General, Health) - Views:

4a1. The VAPC needs to know where organisations are not succeeding or are having difficulties. This way we can become involved and use our channels to obtain help.

Action all Members.

4a2. Ease of access for Veterans. There need to be a single point of contact but care needs to be taken in how this is achieved. At present we would encourage all access points to continue until a proven method was developed and to collaborate with each other.

4a3. Veterans drop in points/offices was discussed and it was agreed that they should be listed and made available at a central point. The web site was mentioned but their location should be widely distributed by whatever channels.

Action Zena to examine possibilities with others and report back on recommendation.

4a4. Existing Best Practice should be shared and promulgated to other VAPC's.

Action: Chairman to bring it up again at the VAPC's Chairman's meeting and with senior officers within the SPVA.

5.

How do we wish to shape/influence services & support .

5a. Benefits Restructure: Threats – Veterans/Opportunities – VAPC Support MP?

5a1. To identify glitches/choke points/ delays etc., and feedback. A member to volunteer (?) to become subject matter expert (SME) on War Pension, AFCS, Welfare Credit system as VAPC point of contact. All available Power Point slides to be resent to all members.

Action: All: Volunteers as SME **Chairman:** Post slides to website.

5a2. Russ Egan SPVA provided the members with an overview of his Briefing Paper.

5b. NHS Restructure/Vets Services: Threats to Veterans/Opportunities – VAPC Support.

5b1. Key principles explain by the Chairman. Equality agenda, Local area teams responsible for Regular service personnel and CCG's for veterans families.

5b2. NHS Armed Forces Network becomes key. This VAPC needs to be represented here. Need to identify threats and avoid the Post Code lottery.

5b3. Passage of information and information protocols are non-existent – needs to be transparency.

5b4. NHS is not resourced to deliver welfare! NHS sole criteria to deliver health at the point of need.

5b5. NHS dialogue groups – you can just walk in and become involved.

5b6. AFN's have GP's champion.

Action: Chairman to e mail NHS Document.

5c. ATOS: Issues/How do we want service shaped to support veterans?

5c1. ATOS is the Government contracted disability assessment organisation. Duncan Bell sat in on an ATOS medical with the permission of the veteran. He highlighted some areas of concern. Peter Shields also commented on this and it was agreed that the Chairman, Duncan and Peter would produce a number of actual case studies with the agreement of the veteran to use in highlighting their concerns.

Action: Chairman, Duncan Bell, Peter Shields.

5c2. Chairman would try and obtain a copy of the Service Agreement/Contract between MoD and ATOS for the Secretary to look at the default procedures, non-conformance system, default notices and any retention contain within the contract.

Action: Chairman and Secretary.

5d. VWS: Relationship, how to support (Veterans and MoD/SPVA/VWS), Monitoring.

5d1. Briefing at Catterick on the 2nd July concerning WP and AFCS .

5d2. Waiting time is now at 7 – 8 months.

5d3. Peter Shields drew Russ Egan's attention to the fact that one veteran would be waiting for over 12 months for a decision and no interim contact from SPVA had been made.

Action: Russ Egan would look into this.

5d4. The monitoring role of the VAPC was confirmed and visits had been delayed due to staff changes. New dates were being agreed and visits would take place shortly. This would consist of a central briefing and two actual visits.

5e. Business: Covenant v Engagement, Regional support opportunities, MoD Transition.

5e1. The opinion was that the business community needs to be drawn in to the Covenant; higher level engagement (MPs) was discussed.

5e2. The plethora of organisations needs to speak to business through one voice in a language that they understand i.e. articulating transferable skills, match to existing regional opportunities and the growth agenda/regional growth.

5e3. Veterans should also communicate to business in the same language.

5e4. The importance of one point of contact from the military/veterans was emphasized to avoid duplication and confusing the business community.

5e5. A letter would be written to the 5 organisations agreeing principles to develop a coordinated strategy within the framework of the regeneration and growth agenda.

5e6. LEP's and the small business strategic plan was seen as an area where input could be provided.

ACTION: Chair, Andrew Palmer

5f. Information Operations: Evidence, website (links LA's etc.), YouGov, Media.

5f1. Armed Forces day was discussed and identified as an opportunity to engage the VAPC with the general public.

5f2. Each sub group would develop a key message.

6. Functional Reports

a. Governance/Local Authorities.

6a1. Covered in the main body of the meeting.

b. Welfare.

6b1. Duncan Bell highlighted the issues after a visit with a veterans case referred to us (MC) and a case study would be completed (Afternote: Case discussed in detail post meeting).

Action: Chair to complete report to SPVA.

c. Health.

6c1. Covered in the main body of the meeting.

d. Public Information.

6d1. CV's for use on the website to be forwarded to Zena.

Action: All VAPC members who have not yet submitted their CV.

Chair asked for volunteers as follows:

7. Any other

Business	. 23 May: NYCC CMI Group: Duncan Bell volunteered - Chair will forward details 27 Jun 13: 15 Brigade Transition Fair needs a couple volunteers; Alex Bentley volunteered, one or two more requested: ACTION: All
8. Dates of next meetings.	4th September 2013, 8th January 2014, 7th May 2014, 3rd September 2014

Originally Signed

J TOPPING
Secretary
May 2013

SUB GROUPS/VAPC APPOINTMENTS	
GOVERNANCE	HEALTH
Tony Phillips (Chair/Sub-Group Lead) Alex Bentley Tim Cole Andrew Palmer (Business Lead)	Alex Baxter (Vice Chair/Sub-Group Lead) David Jolliffe Alison Carter Robert Mortimer
INFORMATION OPERATIONS	WELFARE
Zena Wynn-Jones (Sub-Group Lead) Philip Rodgers (Journalistic Input) John Topping (VAPC Secretary)	Pete Shields (Sub-Group Lead) John Anderson Helen Singleton Duncan Bell