

VAPC Meeting 12th September 2018 Record & Actions

Attendees:

Col (Rtd) Tony Phillips MBE (Chairman)
Alex Baxter (Vice Chairman)
John Topping (Secretary)
Lt Col (Rtd) Alan Skidmore
Maj (Rtd) Duncan Bell
Tim Cole
Alex Bentley

Apologies:

Sqn Ldr (Rtd) Mike Chambers MBE
Mr Andrew Melville
Alex Baxter
Capt Peter Mason
Andrew Palmer
Ms Helen Singleton
Gary Collins
Craig Gadd
Dr David Jolliffe CB
Lt Col (Rtd) Peter Shields MBE QGM
Rick Short

Observer/Guests:

Maj Anselm Allen

Absent

Dan Isherwood (VWS)

Item

Discussion

1. General Items.

a. Introductions, apologies and minutes of last meeting/matters arising. - The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies confirmed. Guest speaker, Major Anselm Allen was introduced to the committee by the Chairman. He would be addressing Item 3.

Minutes of last meeting/Matters arising. - The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated.

- i. Homelessness Narrative. It appears that this does not seem to be a big issue with MOD. There is a need to promote a study but this has not been executed yet. There is still a requirement to search for accurate evidence as opposed to anecdotal examples
- ii. Business Engagement/Seminar. Alan Skidmore will lead this initiative once the Chairman has agreed the main principles and detailed Terms of Reference agreed. This will be tied in the Barclays Serve scheme which Andrew Palmer has first and experience and contacts.
- iii. SWOT/Stakeholder Analysis. The previous items need to be actioned before this can take place with any degree of accuracy.

Action Point; Chairman to arrange a meeting with Alan Palmer and Alan Skidmore to confirm the Terms of Reference (ToR) before the 20th October which is the Chairman's end date.

b. Recruiting 2018/19.

i. Members were encouraged to source at least one new members as in the next few years many members would be reaching their final terms of office. The Chairman's last day of office is the 20th October. Alex Baxter as vice chairman, will continue to run the committee until a new Chairman is appointed.

ii. There had been 3 resignations from the committee, Andrew Melville, Alison Carter and Mick Walters. With authorised headroom of 20 this leaves us 8 vacancies although, historically, we have never been larger than 16, which should be our aim.

Action: All requested to try and recruit one potential member

c. Reports: Members external events; Quarterly Newsheet items.

i. The Ripon Drop in initiative had met twice at the RAFA Club in Ripon with no success. There is a vital requirement to know what is happening at the grass roots and what they are doing etc

ii. Alex Bentley had attended RNA and RAF Association meeting and the Keighley breakfast club which is very well attended.

iii. There are still many myths that abound. Falkland suicide is a current one and it is expected that Iraq 1 will be the next myth. The quarterly Newsletter mentions this.

2. NHS Medical Support.

Alex Baxter had met with the CCG Chief Executive and the Director of Public Health and both were on board with regards to supporting ex-service personnel and their families.

NAVIGO had totally refused to engage with him and was unable to meet with anyone even a purely of the record meeting.

The TILS needs some attention but it appears that the return of certain personalities should improve matters.

Combat Stress – their approach is very positive.

a. GP Services and Data recording. This is being pushed by the CCG but databases are not being fully utilised. Training is taking place with several authorities to encourage them to use it. Alex explained RCGP initiative: Veteran Friendly Hospitals & Surgeries.

b. Mental Health Services and referrals between agencies. In some cases, this is very good but in others a total nightmare.

Action: Health Sub-Group will continue to pursue this initiative.

3. Developing Collaboration in our Region.

a. Presentation by Major Anselm Allen SO2 Transition 4 Inf Bde and HQ NE.

i. Major Anselm made a PPP presentation which will be circulated to all members. Would Members please note that this should not be circulated any more widely.

ii. A healthy living initiative had been launched which is being rolled out to all service personnel.

iii. Gateshead Council – NE VAPC area has done some very good work and used some accurate data planning with information acquired. This could be used by ourselves.

iv. An agenda item for the next meeting will be the GP Surgery survey and Brigadier Robin Simpson will be invited as guest speaker; Tony already asked him and he has it pencilled in his diary.

Action Point: Chairman.

v. All service personnel should be encouraged to obtain a full copy of their medical records prior to discharge.

vi. There is a quagmire of bureaucracy which needs to be simplified

Action Point. Chairman - An Agenda item for the next meeting.

vii. DWP should be the Armed Forces Champion as the central organisation that has the expertise and facilities of coordinate these matters, especially regarding early service leavers (ESL).

4. Government Initiatives.

a. Veterans Gateway.

i. The Royal British Legion (TRBL) is the lead charity with this initiative and funding had been provided to set this up. The Chairman briefed members as to developments and it appears that TRBL is going to apply for MoD funds to continue this which is contrary to what was initially agreed.

ii. The Chairman briefed members as to several other Govt. initiatives.

Duncan Bell highlighted a case he was involved with concerning soldiers with PTSD who had had to resort to common law to obtain compensation. He had received a reply via his local MP from the Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood and these will be circulated separately to these minutes.

Action Point: Any more amendments to Chair ASP please.

b. Veterans Strategy 2018.

i. we know that MoD are developing this and Major Anselm said one would be being issued in the near future.

5. Various.

a. Veterans Recognition.

i. Alex Bentley provided some details of a veteran's number plate initiative. He is preparing a paper for the next meeting which will be forwarded to the Minister.

Action Point – Alex Bentley.

b. Best Practice - Promotion,

- i. Joining up the dots is paramount for success. The level playing field for service personnel is the goal.
- ii. Project NOVA is an example. North Yorkshire police identifying service personnel coming to their attention and involving support agencies.
- iii. The Hull grouping is an example of this type of collaboration which is essential when dealing with large disparate Local Authorities.
- iv. Several other examples of this collaboration were highlighted. York City sharing with Durham was one.
- v. Alan Skidmore highlighted what appears to be a classic example of discrimination against ex-service personnel's wife's. His paper was discussed (distributed prior to the meeting) and it was agreed that this would be escalated through the channels to the minister.
- vi. Alan also highlighted various problems with Harrogate Borough Council which would be brought back to the committee once the ombudsman had finished dealing with the matter.
- vii. It appears that Chief Executive of the Council is not in favour of the Armed Forces Champion being of any significance. The CO Army Foundation College, Harrogate is to be approached to try and ascertain what the actual situation is.

6. VWS Monitoring & Welfare Items

Nothing to report as we had no representative for VWS.

Votes of thanks.

7. Any Other Business

i. A vote of thanks was proposed, seconded and carried unanimously for our Chairman's sterling work and leadership during his long spell as our Chairman.

ii. A vote of thanks was proposed, seconded and carried unanimously for Comd 4 Inf Bde for the continuing support he is providing for our VAPC.

Action Point: Alex Bentley.

8. Dates of next meetings

9th January 2019, 8th May 2019 (provisional) and 11th September 2019 (Provisional)

SUB GROUPS/VAPC APPOINTMENTS	
Policy & Governance	HEALTH
Tony Phillips (Chair/Sub-Group Lead) Alex Bentley Tim Cole Andrew Palmer (Business Lead) John Topping (VAPC Secretary) Pete Mason Gary Collins	Alex Baxter (Vice Chair/Sub-Group Lead) David Jolliffe Rick Short
	Direct Support
	Pete Shields (Sub-Group Lead) Helen Singleton Duncan Bell