

# VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

19<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 15:00 to 16:30

## ATTENDEES

1. Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Rt. Hon. Johnny Mercer MP
2. Office for Veterans' Affairs and Ministry of Defence Officials
3. VAB Members: Alistair Halliday, James Phillips, Danny Kinahan, Prof Beverly Bergman, Lee Buss-Blair, Paul Findlay, Louisa Clarke

ITEM	MINUTES
1	<p><b>Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Rt. Hon. Johnny Mercer MP</b></p> <p>The Minister opened the meeting and welcomed the board members who attended in person and virtually.</p>
2	<p><b>Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) update</b></p> <p>The Deputy Director provided an update on recent OVA activity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The OVA has secured an underwrite of up to £26 million in the Spring Budget to support the bid to bring the 2027 Invictus Games home to the UK</li> <li>● This spring, the OVA will publish the UK's first ever Women Veterans' Strategy. We are working with other government departments to understand what priority areas can be delivered. We are also sense checking the content with groups of women veterans.</li> <li>● Veterans consultation now closed. There were over 4,000 responses to the consultation that are currently being analysed. We will publish an initial government response to this consultation in the spring. Since the last VAB, we have also seen the full launch of the Veterans Card - with tens of thousands of applications so far - and the opening of the Veterans Mobility Fund for applications.</li> </ul>
3	<p><b>Employment</b></p> <p>OVA Officials provided an update on Employment to discuss the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the role of stakeholders in shifting and improving perceptions, and how choice and enablement remains a key component for veterans in their careers after service, and in our approach toward addressing and overcoming underemployment.</li> <li>● The <a href="#">employers guide</a> which offers advice and guidance to employers on how to recruit, retain and support the career development of veterans.</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>Update from the NHSE Armed Forces Public Patient Voice</b></p> <p>Sue Liburd provided an update on NHS Armed Forces Public &amp; Patient Voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Armed Forces Public Patient Voice (AF PPV) group exists to represent the public and patient voice of the entire Armed Forces Community. This comprises of the Serving, the Reserves and the Veterans Community together with their families.</li> </ul>

## OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The AF PPV provides expertise based on the “lived experience” of issues that affect the Armed Forces community when services are being commissioned or reviewed to ensure their needs are met.</li><li>• The NHS is required to act fairly and inclusively when making plans, proposals and decisions in relation to the health services it commissions. In addition, they are required to make arrangements to ensure that individuals, to whom services are being or may be provided for, are consulted and involved in the development and planning of commissioning arrangements. The AF PPV plays a significant role in enabling this to happen.</li></ul>
5	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>There was no other business.</p> <p>Next Meeting: No confirmed date as yet</p>