

**Scotland Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee (VAPC) Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday the 27th of August 2024 (15:30-17:00), Held at Poppy Scotland, New Haig  
House, Logie Green Road, Edinburgh EH7 4HQ**

**Present:** Carolyn Caddick, Chair (CC); Huw Sherrard, Committee Secretary (HS); Kate Thomas (KT); Sue Raw (SRa); Jim Wilson (JW); Gordon Michie (GM). Present Virtually: Bill Lindsay (BL); Benjamin Cox (BC); Alec Rose (AR); Audrey Cuthbertson (AC); Alan Hamilton (AH); Don Young (DY); Mike McCourt (MMcC); Iain Findlay (IF).

**Apologies:** Andrew Ward (AW); Stuart Roberts (SRo); Donald Prentice (DP). Also in Attendance: Dr Beverly Bergman.

### **1. Welcome, Apologies, & Introductions**

CC welcomed members to the meeting, and thanked those present in-person and virtually for attending. CC also thanked GM for organising the tour of the Poppy Factory that had taken place prior to the meeting. HS noted apologies he had received.

### **2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

No member raised a conflict of interest.

### **3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising:**

The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting. CC noted that the work on the proposed Female Veterans Conference had been postponed until 2025. The Committee noted that the position of Vice Chair remained vacant. KT volunteered to stand for the role. The Committee unanimously elected KT as Vice Chair for a term of three years. The Committee noted that the matter of co-opting Helen Brindle to the Committee was due to be raised, but it was decided to postpone the decision until she could attend a meeting. CC noted the deadline for the Committee's report to the Minister was now March 2025, and that a working group of CC, KT, and JW would meet in the near future to discuss it. CC reiterated that members should seek reimbursement for their travel costs, and other relevant expenses, and asked HS to distribute the claim and reimbursement form.

### **4. Presentation by Dr BB, of the University of Glasgow's Scottish Veterans Health Research Group**

Dr BB gave a presentation to the Committee on her work and research with the Scottish Veterans Health Research Group. Members shared their experience as veterans and members of the Armed Forces community in relation to Dr Bergman's work. CC and the Committee thanked Dr Bergman for her presentation, and CC agreed to distribute the report Trends in Scottish Veterans' Health to members who asked for a copy but were not present in person.

### **5. Chair's Update**

CC updated the Committee on a number of matters stemming from the UK VAPC Chairs Group. CC had met with the Committees' Sponsors regarding IT provision, and ongoing developments regarding Mesothelioma and Hearing Loss. A questionnaire for use across the UK was awaiting approval from the MOD, which would provide valuable context for the VAPCs' Annual Report to the minister next year. CC noted AH's membership of the Criminal Justice Special Interest Group, and shared that the Finance and Debt, Housing, and Education Special Interest Groups were

seeking members from Scotland. CC shared an overview of the last meeting of the Scottish Parliamentary Cross-Party Group on Armed Forces and the Veterans Community, which she and JW had attended. The Committee discussed the potential for a change in the sponsorship of the VAPCs, from the Office for Veterans Affairs to the MOD.

#### **6. Member Recruitment, & Reappointments**

CC noted that there was currently no plan to recruit further new members of the Committee, and that the primary focus was on candidates for co-option.

#### **7. Vets UK Performance Update**

Due to time constraints, CC suggested that this agenda item be postponed for discussion at a future Committee meeting. The Committee agreed.

#### **8. Updates from Members**

The Committee agreed to discuss this agenda item at a future meeting, due to time constraints.

#### **9. Members' Coverage**

The Committee agreed to discuss this agenda item at a future meeting, due to time constraints.

#### **10. AOCB**

CC informed the Committee that a letter had been received noting AW's resignation as a member. The Chair thanked AW for his contributions to, and support for, the Committee during his term as a member.

#### **11. Date of Next Meeting**

The Committee discussed the dates and times for future meetings. The next meeting was to be held on the 19th of November 2023, virtually, and a subsequent meeting in-person was to be held on the

**18th of February 2025. Signed as true on 19/11/24, by Carolyn Caddick as Chair:**



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Carolyn Caddick", is written above a long, thin horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.