

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES ADVISORY BOARD

7 March 2012

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

To endorse the Armed Forces Community Covenant Pledge between Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and the Armed Forces Community at the Royal British Legion Industries Village, Aylesford.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Members will be aware from the previous Communities Advisory Board that the adoption of a Community Covenant Pledge was being considered as a way of supporting the Services community in the local area. The most appropriate local link was with the RBLI Village at Aylesford who indicated that they would be keen to work in partnership.
- 1.1.2 The aim of the Pledge is to encourage partnership working with local charities, voluntary groups and business to consider what steps can be pledged to support Service people in the area both in active service and the veteran community. We suggested that an RBLI representative become a member of the Tonbridge & Malling Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) to help build an understanding of the work at the RBLI Village and to ensure they are considered in planning local services.
- 1.1.3 A meeting has now taken place and Liz Rikaby, the Director of Business Development at RBLI, has accepted the invitation to attend the next LSP where she will be invited to become a member. We have also adapted and developed the Armed Forces Community Covenant Pledge to reflect some local measures which we will be able to progress in partnership (attached as Annex 1 to this report).

1.2 Local Measures

Much of the Pledge document is a set template provided by the MOD, however in addition to membership on the LSP; the following local measures have been put forward:

- There is regular and open communication between local community leaders and the RBLI Community
- Greater understanding and awareness of the work and ambitions of the RBLI Community are promoted amongst the public and local communities
- The importance of social enterprise activities undertaken by the RBLI in support of their wider work with Armed Forces personnel are recognised and promoted
- Full support is given to RBLI in supporting and meeting the needs of Armed Forces veterans and their families and their integration into local community life
- RBLI and TMBC will work together to identify and progress suitable, specific projects to support the Armed Forces Community residing in Tonbridge and Malling
- Sacrifices made by the local Armed Forces Community are fully acknowledged and remembered

1.2.1 The measures above will provide a basis to begin partnership work and can be added to or amended as and when required.

1.3 Next Steps

1.3.1 The next LSP is due to take place on 15 March 2012, where members will hear a presentation on the work of the RBLI Village at Aylesford and hopefully will endorse the decision for a representative of the RBLI to become a permanent member on the LSP.

1.3.2 Subject to Member approval, we then need senior representatives from both organisations to sign the Community Covenant Pledge.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is entirely voluntary and it is expected that Community Covenants are led at Local Authority Level.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 It is recognised within the Covenant that budgets are stretched and support can be low cost. Any initiatives will need to be developed to suit local need and capacity. There is also the possibility of grant funding via the Community Covenant Grant Award, for any potential project work.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 N/A

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.8 Recommendations

- 1.8.1 That the Community Covenant Pledge between Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and The Armed Forces Community at the Royal British Legion Industries Village, Aylesford **IS SIGNED** to pledge support for service personnel in the Borough.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Gill Fox

Nil

David Hughes
Chief Executive

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The recommendations are in place to positively contribute towards promoting community cohesion.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	See above
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		N/A

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.