SECTION 4 OF THE RIBBLE VALLEY ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

What we have done and are doing

a. In 2009 RVBC awarded the Duke of Lancaster Regiment the Freedom of the Borough.
b. Appointed an Armed Forces Champion 2012.
c. When considering claims for benefits, a military pension is discounted.
d. Being an ex-service person is taken into acount when considering a Disabled Facility Grant.
e. The Draft Community Covenant 2012 was approved by Council in December '12.
f. Community Covenant signed 24 June 2013 with partners.
g. RVBC takes part in Armed Forces week with the annual Flag raising ceremony.(actioned June 2013) – Annual event
h. Coordinate RVBC veterans attendance at LCC Evening Reception in November 2013.
i. RVBC Mayor attends Annual Service of Remembrance and Regimental Reunion at Warrington.
j. Ribble Valley Homes now include in their allocations policy reference to the Armed Forces.(Actioned 2012)
k. Tourist advice and information is given to the main Units at Fulwood Barracks, Kimberley Barracks and Weeton Camp - sell Ribble Valley to the local Military Community.(Actioned June 2013) To be repeated yearly.
l. Encourage local event organisers to consider military involvement in their community events eg field days/steam fairs – through Parish Liaison committee.(Feb 2013)
m. Parish and Town Councils informed of the Covenant and encouraged to get involved. (Feb 2013)
n. Set up webpage on RVBC website dedicated to Armed Forces Covenant.(release date 24 June 2013)
o. Members of the Covenant are invited to Civic events ie Mayor-Making-ongoing (OH to lead)
p. Letter published in the Clitheroe Advertiser and Longridge News explaining the defence forces discount card and requesting local business's to get involved and offer reductions to veterans and serving personnel.(May 2013) to be repeated later in year.
q. In line with the Localism Act, reasonable preference will now be given to housing applicants who have served in the Armed Forces within the last 5 years (Housing Committee May 2013).
r. RVBC in partnership with East Lancs Councils have been successful in obtaining a grant for an armed forces co-ordinator to work across East Lancashire. (Feb 2013)
s. Community committee have agreed that the MOD Defence Card can be incorporated into the Freedom Leisure Card so that discounts apply in council facilities.(to be announced on 24 June 2013) Possible press release to follow post June 24 2013

What is ongoing?

a. Continue to attend and arrange meetings with members and representives of the Covenant.-Ongoing several meetings throughout 2013. (JW to lead)
b. Individual Councillors and Council continue to Support Armed Forces events, charities and acts of Rememberance.
c. Train Contact Centre staff in respect of sign posting and advice with service charities and agencies. Outside agencies to attend Information Session on 'signing day'.

d. Encourage local businesses and tourist attractions to offer reductions in their services/facilities.(press article released May 2013)
e. Armed Forces Champion to forge closer links with Ribble Valley Cadet forces (emails sent to Army and Air Cadets, contact with Lancs Army Cadets made June 2013)
f. Support the Mayor with his fundraising for SSAFA 2013-2014

What else can we do?

a. Encourage local businesses to advertise (for free) employment vacancies in the Ribble Valley through the RFEA (Regular Forces Employment Agency).
b. Consider amendments to other council application forms in respect of adding an Armed forces section if applicable.
c. Consider applications for grants and advise on possible grant applications from military organisations.
d. To consider if we as a Council need to bid for any of grant monies available from the service personnel veterans agency (£30 Million plus available). Note change in grants is now a regional matter!!
e. Engage with the Armed Forces Community living in Ribble Valley and with their representative organisations and other stakeholders to work towards maintaining the health of veterans and their families.
f. Investigate use of Stan the Van to promote Mil Charities and assistance availability- (raised at CMT June 2013 ongoing-CIA briefed)
g. Support the process of GP / Dental Registration for the Armed forces Community following military discharge.
h. Raise awareness and encourage training within primary care staff of the needs of the Armed forces Community, identification, coding and the principle of clinical prioritisation.
i. Consider the implications at a locality level of the Murrison report on veterans Mental Health and work with commissioned service providers to meet the needs of the Armed Forces Community.
j. Ensure armed forces issues are raised at the Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board.
k. Support Simon Wallis Head teacher Barnacre Rd School and Longridge Cluster schools with Remembrance project at the Guildhall Preston 11.11.13 - 42 Bde Informed- DOL informed, H4H and RBL informed all agree to make contact (24 June 13)

=NHS Led and responsible for: