

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 21 MAY 2013
title: ACCESS TO DISCOUNT SERVICES BY SERVING OR EX-SERVICES MEMBERS
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: CHRIS HUGHES, HEAD OF CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To ask members to consider a suggestion that free/subsidised swimming should be included as part of its commitment towards the Armed Forces Community Covenant.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's Ambitions and Priorities:
 - **Council Ambitions**
This report contributes to Making People's Lives Safer & Healthier

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between the civilian community and the Armed Forces.
- 2.2 In terms of the Borough Council, the Community Covenant is seen as a means of using its knowledge and resources to provide help and advice to members, past and present, of the Armed Forces Community. More specifically, the intention is to ensure that individuals and families are not disadvantaged as a result of their service in the Armed Forces.
- 2.3 The covenant is due to be signed by the partner organisations on 24 June 2013.
- 2.4 Within section 4 of the Covenant, there are a number of activities that are already in place, a list of potential activities/interventions for the future, and the possibility of providing reductions at Council-owned facilities, in this case, admission to Ribblesdale Pool.
- 2.5 Attached at appendix 1 is a request submitted by Councillor White for committee to consider granting free swimming at Ribblesdale Pool.

3 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Armed Forces staff, past and present, can currently access a range of services / discounts if they have an MOD Defence Privilege Card (see appendix 2). This tends to include national brands, but can include local services / products.
- 3.2 The Council also offers concessions at Ribblesdale Pool through the Freedom Leisure Card for those Ribble Valley residents who are in receipt of some form of benefit or of pensionable age.

4 ISSUES

- 4.1 It would be possible for holders of an MOD Defence Privilege Card to be included within the Freedom Card Concession Scheme (see appendix 3) but we would have to amend the current leaflets / application forms.

- 4.2 Members should also be aware that holders of the MOD card would not all meet the criteria under the current Freedom Card.
- 4.3 It would also be difficult for us to assess how big the take-up would be, although we do not think that it would have a big impact on current admissions income.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- **Resources** – It is unlikely to have a major impact on income at the Pool.
- **Technical, Environmental and Legal** - none
- **Political** – The Covenant, although voluntary, demonstrates the Council's support to the Armed Forces.
- **Reputation** – Whilst most ex-services personnel will be already eligible for a Freedom Leisure Card, there will be some, although the figure is unknown, that would not meet the criteria and, therefore, may generate some concerns from the general community.
- **Equality & Diversity** - none

6 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

Considers whether to include MOD Privilege Cardholders within the Council's Freedom Card Concessionary criteria.

JOHN C HEAP

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HEAD OF CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES

For further information, please ask for Chris Hughes 01200 414479

Community Services 21.5.13 / Chris Hughes / Access to Discount Services by Serving or Ex Armed Services Members / IW