



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1 February 2024

Report of Councillor Rhea Rayside
Cabinet Member for People and
Communities

Armed Forces Covenant Update

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on the council's actions to meet its responsibilities under the Armed Forces Act and the Armed Forces Covenant, achievements under the Council's Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award engagement and advocacy agendas and plans for the coming year.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Notes the Annual Armed Forces Engagement Report and comments on the content.

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities? (delete as appropriate)	Connected Communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling Economic Opportunities Housing Effective Council
Which wards are impacted?	All wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance

1.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Armed Forces Covenant update is a retrospective of work carried out within 2023/24. The document also contains actions for delivery during 2024/25 and is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2 The report is provided as detailed background to, and information on, how the Council is meeting, and exceeding, its responsibilities relating to the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

- 2.3 The actions for delivery are referenced throughout Appendix A, and detailed further within the Community Engagement and Development Strategy which was presented to Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 December 2023. The strategy will be presented to Cabinet on 6 February 2024 for approval.
- 2.4 The report further illustrates the work of the council's Armed Forces Officer, backed by the authority's Armed Forces Champion, to deliver the council's advocacy and engagement commitments of its Gold Award status within the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 Key areas for Members to consider are contained within the accompanying appendix.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 This report is for information therefore no other options were considered.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 To ensure Members are kept up-to-date with actions taken to meet the requirements of the Armed Forces Act and to inform on progress relating to engagement and advocacy activity.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Armed Forces Covenant Update 2022 can be found at:
[Armed Forces - Advocacy and Community Engagement.pdf](https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/Armed%20Forces%20-%20Advocacy%20and%20Community%20Engagement.pdf)
(southkesteven.gov.uk)
- 6.2 Community Engagement and Development Strategy which was presented to Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 December 2023 (agenda item 9): [Agenda for Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Thursday, 14th December, 2023, 2.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/Agenda%20for%20Rural%20and%20Communities%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Committee%20on%20Thursday,%2014th%20December,%202023,%202.00%20pm%20%7CSouth%20Kesteven%20District%20Council)

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Armed Forces Engagement Report