



Thursday, 27 February 2025

Report of Councillor Ashley Baxter
Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member
for Finance, HR and Economic
Development

Appointment of Lead Member for Armed Forces

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

This report examines the role and responsibilities of the Council's Lead Member for Armed Forces and provides the Council with an opportunity to make an appointment to the role.

Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- 1. Approve the proposed schedule for appointment to the role of Lead Member for Armed Forces**
- 2. Approve the proposed role description for the Lead Member for Armed Forces**
- 3. Appoint a Member to the role of Lead Member for Armed Forces 2025-2027**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?

No

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

Connecting communities
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 and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no specific financial comments 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, Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council has had a lead Member, or Champion, for Armed Forces since it first signed the Armed Forces Covenant in 2012. Initially, the role of Champion was held informally and not facilitated through formal appointment by Full Council.
- 2.2 The affirmation of the Champion was formalised in May 2019 when the appointment to the role was announced and minuted as part of the Full Council meeting. This is outlined in the background papers as set out at paragraph 6.1 of this report.
- 2.3 Unlike appointments to outside bodies, the term of the Armed Forces Champion has, historically, been a rolling remit and usually only ends when the Member voluntary steps down or is not re-elected at District Council elections.
- 2.4 The role has always been filled by an Elected Member who has served in the Armed Forces. It is extremely helpful for the post-holder to have personal experience of being a veteran.
- 2.5 The title of Champion was changed to Lead Member for Armed Forces in September 2022 when the current incumbent, Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren, was formally confirmed at the Council's Annual General Meeting.
- 2.6 The role of the Lead Member for Armed Forces is to advocate for the Armed Forces Community of South Kesteven and to represent the Council at meetings such as the civilian/military partnership. This advocacy role helps ensure the voice of

veterans and their families is considered as the Council works to meet its commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.

- 2.7 The Council is a Gold Award holder under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, recognising its work in support for defence and carrying a responsibility to advocate for the military community wherever possible. The current role of the Lead Member for Armed Forces, therefore, carries with it a level of responsibility not previously expected.
- 2.8 As part of the role Councillor Dixon-Warren currently chairs the resurgent Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership with membership comprising local authorities, health, military establishments, veteran organisations and charities.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 In order to provide a structure to the role and its responsibilities and, to further formalise the appointment by Council of a Lead Member for Armed Forces, it has been suggested that a document be produced to outline the role and its re-appointment be added to the Council's agenda on a biennial basis.

Key duties and responsibilities

- 3.2 The main areas of responsibility for the Lead Member for Armed Forces are:
 - To raise the profile and needs of the Armed Forces Community, internally and externally within South Kesteven District Council and wider County as appropriate
 - To be an advocate for the Armed Forces Community to ensure their voices are heard and taken into consideration in all aspects of the Council's business
 - To provide a vocal presence for the Armed Forces Community within the Council where this is necessary.

- 3.3 The proposed role description is provided at Appendix A of this report.

Appointment of the Lead Member for Armed Forces

- 3.4 Currently, the appointment of a Lead Member for Armed Forces is not reviewed unless and until the appointed Member steps down or is not re-elected.
- 3.5 It is proposed that an appointment be made at the February meeting of Full Council for a term of two years. Appointment will be also reviewed following the Local Elections in May 2027 (if necessary).

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The appointment of a Lead Member for Armed Forces falls within the requirements of the Armed Forces Covenant, last signed by South Kesteven District Council in 2022. Therefore, no other options were considered as part of this report.
- 4.2 Full Council could agree amendments to the key duties or responsibilities of the post and process for the appointment.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. To ensure the Council has an identified and agreed timetable under which it will appoint a South Kesteven District Councillor to the role of Lead Member for Armed Forces.
- 5.2. To ensure consistency and efficiency with the appointment of a named Lead Member for Armed Forces 2025-2027.

6. Background Papers

6.1 [Council Minutes 23rd May 2019 – Appointment of Armed Forces Champion](#)

6.2 [Council Minutes 22nd September 2022 – Appointment of Lead Member for Armed Forces.](#)

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix A – Lead Member for Armed Forces – Proposed Role Description