



Patron Her Majesty the Queen

The Royal British Legion  
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5<sup>th</sup> December 2013

To:  
Local Authority Leaders  
Local Authority Chief Executives  
Community Covenant teams

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to you regarding your Council Tax support scheme, specifically in relation to members of the Armed Forces community.

The National Assembly approved the draft Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2013 on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November.

You will know that under the previous Council Tax benefit system, local authorities were required by law to disregard the first £10 of War Disablement Pension, War Widow's Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) payments when means testing for Council Tax benefit. Under the previous system we believe that all local authorities in Wales, using their discretionary powers, went further by disregarding in full all such payments from the means test. This was greatly welcomed by our beneficiaries and the sector.

The Legion is now calling for all local authorities to continue to maintain this position under their own schemes, by maintaining the full disregard. This will recognise the fact that War Pensions and AFCS awards are not an income support payment, but are paid as compensation for injury, illness or loss as a result of service in the Armed Forces.

We believe that by maintaining this full disregard, local authorities will be demonstrating their commitment to their local Armed Forces community. Local authorities across Wales have now signed Armed Forces Community Covenants and maintaining the full disregard will further highlight a real local commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community.

The Legion fully appreciates that new schemes must operate with a funding shortfall across Wales, which places authorities under major pressure to meet existing need. However we feel that failing to fully disregard these compensation payments would be a failure to recognise the commitment and sacrifice made by these individuals to the nation.

Shoulder to Shoulder with all who Serve

Registered Charity: The Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London, SE11AA

Registered charity number: 219279

We ask for your support on this matter and thank you for your ongoing commitment to the Armed Forces community.

Yours Sincerely,

Peter Evans – Public Affairs Manager Wales  
Phil Jones – Wales Area Manager