



COUNCIL – 13TH JUNE 2017

**SUBJECT: ROYAL BRITISH LEGION ‘COUNT THEM IN’ CAMPAIGN -
PROPOSED COUNCIL MOTION**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider a Notice of Motion, as set out in Paragraph 4.3 of the Report, in support of The Royal British Legion Campaign to include questions on the UK Census that capture information on serving and ex-members of the Armed Forces. In accordance with Rule of Procedure 11 (3) of the Constitution, the Mayor, Councillor J. Bevan, has agreed to allow the motion to be dealt with at Council, without first being discussed at an overview and scrutiny committee.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Royal British Legion ‘Count Them In Campaign’ requests that the next UK Census, in 2021, includes additional questions on the residence of members of the UK Armed Forces, both serving and veteran, to establish the size and needs of the armed forces community. The location of members of the armed forces community and their families is often difficult to track, particularly once service has ended. The Motion supports the local authority’s Armed Forces Community Covenant responsibilities to understand and support service personnel and their families. The County Borough formally signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant on the 28th of June 2013.
- 2.2 A Notice of Motion was received from Councillor D.V. Poole and is supported by the Mayor, Councillor J. Bevan, and Councillor Alan Higgs, the Armed Forces Champion.
- 2.3 The Notice of Motion meets the criteria set out in the Council’s Constitution and in accordance with the Council’s Rules of Procedure is now referred for consideration.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The proposed Motion supports the authority’s aim to maximise its contribution towards the national well-being goals for Wales under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and in particular contributes to:
- *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A healthier Wales*
 - *A more equal Wales*
 - *A Wales of cohesive communities*

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Royal British Legion (RBL) is the largest welfare provider in the Armed Forces charity sector. The council has been approached as part of the RBL's ongoing 'Count Them In' campaign to adopt a council motion in support.
- 4.2 The campaign calls for changes in the UK Census such that data can be captured at a local authority level regarding the size and needs of the armed forces community. The location of serving and ex-personnel, and their families, is not currently held on any central record. Allowing members of the armed forces community to identify their service through the Census is intended to allow better provision of public services to meet their needs.
- 4.3 The authority supported the campaign in June 2016 and appropriate media releases were produced at that time as part of the authority's Armed Forces Community Covenant responsibilities. The current request suggests that the proposed Council Motion could be adopted:

This council notes:

1. The obligations it owes to the Armed Forces Community within Caerphilly county borough area as enshrined in the Armed Forces Covenant; that the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantage in the provision of services and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most.
2. The absence of definitive and comprehensive statistics on the size and demographics of the Armed Forces Community within Caerphilly county borough. This includes serving Regular and Reserve personnel, veterans and their families.
3. That the availability of such data would greatly assist the council, local partner agencies, the voluntary sector, and national Government in the planning and provision of services to address the unique needs of the Armed Forces Community within Caerphilly county borough.

In light of the above, this council moves to support and promote The Royal British Legion's call to include a new topic in the 2021 Census that concerns military service and membership of the Armed Forces Community. We further call upon the UK Parliament, which will approve the final Census questionnaire through legislation in 2019, to ensure that the 2021 Census includes questions concerning our Armed Forces Community.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This proposed Council Motion contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that it involves a underrepresented section of the community to ensure that the full diversity of the population is recognised. The proposed motion indicates that the Council is minded to collaborate with other agencies that have an interest in securing the well-being of our population. Recognition of the armed forces community and the particular issues the face integrating into mainstream society seeks to identify potential problems and an early stage and consider appropriate services to assist. Collection of relevant data through the Census return will allow long-term planning for the needs of the armed forces community.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance. No potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact has been identified; therefore a full EIA has not been carried out.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications as a result of this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 There are no consultations that have not been included in the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That Council adopt the proposed motion.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 For the reason set out in the report the proposed motion relates to the Local Authority's stated support for the armed forces community through the Community Covenant Scheme. Identification of the needs of current and former military personnel and their families is at the heart of the Covenant.

12. STATUTORY POWER

- 12.1 None.

Author: Kathryn Peters, Corporate Policy Manager, peterk@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Councillor D.V Poole - Leader of Council
Councillor J. Bevan - Mayor
Councillor A. Higgs - Armed Forces Champion.
Chris Burns - Interim Chief Executive
David Street - Corporate Director Social Services
Rob Hartshorn - Head of Public Protection
Gail Williams - Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer