Monday 9th November 2026
Agenda 18 – Armed Forces Covenant
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1. Purpose of the Report

To consider Covingham Parish Council's commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community by signing the Armed Forces Covenant and exploring the opportunity to work towards bronze recognition under the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme, where applicable.

2. Background

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, together with their families, should be treated fairly and should not face disadvantage when accessing public or private goods and services.

The Covenant recognises the contribution made by serving personnel, veterans, reservists and their families and encourages organisations to demonstrate their support for the Armed Forces community.

Signing the Covenant is voluntary and is open to organisations of all sizes, including parish councils. By signing, Covingham Parish Council would publicly demonstrate its support for the Armed Forces community and its commitment to the principles of the Covenant.

The Council can also consider how it can promote awareness of the Armed Forces community within Covingham and support relevant local initiatives.

3. Suggested Commitments

Should Covingham Parish Council agree to support the Armed Forces Covenant, the following commitments could be considered:

Covingham Parish Council will:

- Promote the Armed Forces Covenant and demonstrate support for the Armed Forces community within the parish.
- Recognise the contribution of serving Armed Forces personnel, veterans, reservists and their families.
- Seek to ensure that veterans and members of the Armed Forces community are treated fairly and are not disadvantaged when accessing Council services and opportunities.
- Consider the needs of the Armed Forces community when developing relevant Council policies, services and activities.
- Support and promote local initiatives and events that recognise the contribution of the Armed Forces.
- Where reasonably practicable, support local Armed Forces charities, veterans' organisations and community initiatives.
- Use the Council's website, noticeboards and other communication channels to promote the Armed Forces Covenant and relevant information.

- Recognise important national occasions, including Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday and VE and VJ Day commemorations.

4. Bronze Accreditation

The Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme provides recognition to employers who demonstrate their support for the Armed Forces community.

The Bronze Award recognises organisations that have demonstrated their commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community and taken positive steps to promote themselves as an Armed Forces-friendly employer.

The key expectations for bronze recognition include:

1. Signing the Armed Forces Covenant.
2. Demonstrating that the organisation has communicated its commitment to its employees.
3. Being supportive of the employment of veterans and reservists.
4. Taking a positive stance towards the Armed Forces community.

As a parish council, Covingham should first establish whether its employment arrangements and organisational structure meet the relevant Bronze Award requirements.

5. Proposed Next Steps

Subject to Council approval, the following actions are proposed:

- **Armed Forces Covenant:** Arrange for Covingham Parish Council to formally sign the Armed Forces Covenant.
- **Communication:** Publicise the Council's commitment through its website, social media and parish communications.
- **Website information:** Consider creating a dedicated Armed Forces section on the Council's website, providing information about the Covenant, local support organisations and relevant events.
- **Local engagement:** Explore opportunities to engage with local veterans, serving personnel, reservists and Armed Forces families to understand how the Council can offer support.
- **Community recognition:** Consider how the Council can support Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday and other relevant commemorative events.
- **Bronze recognition:** Investigate the eligibility requirements for the Bronze Employer Recognition Scheme and report back to Council with recommendations.
- **Ongoing review:** Review the Council's commitments periodically to ensure that its support remains relevant and meaningful.

6. Financial Implications

There are no anticipated significant financial implications arising from signing the Armed Forces Covenant.

Any future costs associated with promotional materials, website development or supporting community events would be considered separately and managed within the Council's existing budget, subject to approval.

7. Officer's Recommendation

1. Note the information contained within this report.
2. Agrees in principle to Covingham Parish Council supporting the Armed Forces Covenant.
3. Approves the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant.
4. Agrees that the Clerk investigates the eligibility and requirements for bronze recognition under the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme.
5. Agrees that appropriate information is made available to residents through the Council's website and communication channels.
6. Requests that a further update on progress and any accreditation opportunities is brought back to Council.

8. Proposed Resolution

That Covingham Parish Council agrees to demonstrate its support for the Armed Forces community by signing the Armed Forces Covenant, and that the Clerk investigates the requirements and eligibility for bronze recognition under the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme, reporting back to Council with recommendations.