

Cross-Party Group on The Armed Forces and Veterans Community

19 June 2024

Minute

Present

MSPs

Jackson Carlaw MSP, Maurice Golden MSP and Paul Sweeney MSP.

Invited guests

Non-MSP Group Members

An attendance list is attached

Apologies

Apologies had been received in advance of the meeting from: Jackie Bailey MSP, Katy Clark MSP, Stephen Kerr MSP, Ned Kelly, Carolyn MacLeod. In addition to formal apologies, a number of out of office notifications had been received stating that the subject individual was unavailable.

Item 1

Introductions and Opening Remarks

Maurice Golden MSP (Convenor) welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that Maurice Corry (Chair) was unable to attend this meeting due to work commitments. With 3 MSP members attending and a further 46 non-MSP members attending, the Convenor was pleased to confirm that the meeting was quorate.

Agenda item 2

The Minute from the previous meeting, which had taken place on 21 February 2024, had been distributed for consideration by the members. It was agreed that the minute provided an accurate record of the meeting.

Agenda item 3

Annual Report and AGM. A draft copy of the Annual Return had been circulated, the Secretary went through the return and updated it to include attendance and discussion topics taking place that evening. The return, as

amended, was agreed by the Group so the Secretary would submit it on 20 June.

During the AGM, it was agreed that Maurice Golden MSP would continue as Convenor, Jackie Baillie MSP had previously agreed to continue as Deputy Convenor. Willie Rennie MSP and Gordon MacDonald MSP had both indicated that they would be stepping down as Deputy Convenors. It was noted that a representative MSP from the SNP should be invited to join the Group. The Convenor agreed that he would engage with the SNP to find an appropriate candidate.

The role of Chair would continue to be held by Maurice Corry, and of Secretary and Treasurer by Jim Wilson.

Item 4

An update on Veterans in the Criminal Justice System was provided,

- SACRO confirmed the work that is being carried out with veterans who have received custodial sentences and are in the process of being released from prison. SACRO work closely with Scottish Prison Service staff, in particular the ViCSO's, and with a range of other agencies and charities.
- Care After Combat highlighted the work they do, predominantly in England and Wales at present, however they are extending their services into Scotland.

Item 5

Discussion on Employment and Op PROSPER

- Alistair Halliday, from the Forces Employment Charity provided an update on their work, promoting and supporting the employment of members of the armed forces and veterans community. He identified some of the changes that are being put in place as the career transition partnership contract is renewed. He highlighted the work of Op PROSPER, a UK wide initiative to ensure the long term, sustainable employment of service leavers and veterans.
- There followed some discussion about these initiatives.

Item 6

Scottish Armed Forces Evidence Research Hub (SAFE&R) Conference 2024

- Discussion of this important conference took place, a wide range of topics will be considered during the Conference which will take place at Edinburgh Napier University 22 – 28 August. Speakers will be coming from across the world to consider those issues of relevance to the Armed Forces and Veterans Community.

Agenda item 6

Open Forum

- Topics for Future Meetings were discussed (see below).

Date of next meetings:

- Future meetings are confirmed as:
 - 18 September
 - 27 November

Further topics that have been suggested for future meetings include: Data following Census 2022; Health; Housing and Employment. Any further suggestions that members feel should be considered would be welcomed.

Jackson	Carlaw MSP	In Person
Maurice	Golden MSP	On Line
Paul	Sweeney MSP	On Line

On Line

Alan	Hamilton	VAPC
Ali	Gemmell	ASAP
Alison	Howard	SVC Office
Allana		CVS
Caroline	Cooke	FiMT
Dougie	Morgan	FWP
Elaine	Edwards	CWGC
Emma	Perrin	AFF
Fiona	MacDonald	Bravehound
Fiona	Maxwell	Reading Force
Ian	Cumming	Erskine
Karen	Elliot	RNA/WRENS
Kari	Magee	NHS Highland
Liza	Jarvis	
Liza	Manson	
Marie	Crombie	F4F
Mark	Downie	
Meg	Thomas	
Murray	Leith	UWS
Pauline	Cherrington	LVC
Pedro	Cameron	HOS
Sandra	Cheyne	SDS

In Person

Adrian	Kirk	CAC
Alistair	Halliday	FEC
Beverly	Bergman	University of Glasgow
Bill	Bowman	
Carolyn	Caddick	VAPC
Eileen	Rietweld	GST
Elaine	Yuill	RCAT
Gerri	Matthews Smith	Edinburgh Napier University
Jamie	Higgins	RCAT
Jane	Jones	CAC
Jim	Wilson	Secretary
Joshua	MacLeod	
Joyce	Macmillan	Support Force
Julie	Mcllroy	SVC Office
Maria	Correige	St Johns Livingston
Maurice	Corry	Chair
Michael	Hutchison	Rep Jackie Dunbar MSP
Mo	Torau	CVO
Morevain	Martin	GST
Pauline	Winchester	Midlothian
	Shepherd-	
Scarlett	Grewar	Rep Edward Mountain MSP

Stephen	Elliot	VHS
Susie	Hamilton	SVC
William	Sinclair	Argyll & Bute

