



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ARMED FORCES WORKING GROUP

30th SEPTEMBER 2021

**IMPROVING THE COUNCIL'S RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR THE
ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY.**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES RICHARD EVANS
& SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS
CHRISTIAN HANAGAN IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET'S ARMED
FORCES CHAMPION (COUNCILLOR MAUREEN WEBBER)**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the report being presented to Cabinet on the 4th October in respect of options that could improve the Council's recruitment process, so as to make it easier for the Armed Forces Community and veterans to overcome barriers to civilian employment. The main proposal outlined in the report is for the introduction of a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Armed Forces service leavers, reservists and veterans if they meet the vacancy essential criteria. and to feedback any comments of the Working Group in relation to the intended scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Working Group:

- 2.1 Consider the report provided in appendix A and provide comment as appropriate on the intended scheme.
- 2.2 That Members feedback is presented to the Cabinet prior to their consideration of the item.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The scheme would benefit veterans and armed forces leavers by helping them overcome the barriers to employment post service and helping to reduce the potential health and wellbeing impacts of long-term unemployment.

- 3.2 The Council would benefit from a wider selection of candidates who meet the essential criteria and who may have a large number of transferrable skills.
- 3.3 It would further demonstrate the Council's support for the Armed Forces Community and honour the spirit of the Armed Forces Covenant to which RCTCBC is a signatory.
- 3.4 The Council would also be able to demonstrate its continuing commitment to the Armed Forces Community when reapplying for the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award in 2022. Though not an essential requirement, the implementation of the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for the Armed Forces Community is seen as an important supportive measure.
- 3..5 The other recruitment options proposed would ensure that Council jobs are promoted in the right places to encourage applications from the armed forces community and veterans.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Armed Forces Covenant was enshrined in law in the Armed Forces Act 2011 and ensures that members of the Armed Forces community are not disadvantaged as a result of their service in accessing Government and commercial services. Special consideration is also appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and bereaved. The Covenant applies to serving and past Armed Forces community members and their families.
- 4.2 The majority of Service leavers may settle back into civilian life effectively, using the wide variety of skills developed during their time in the Armed Forces to gain meaningful employment and contribute to their communities. However, there are those that will need extra support.
- 4.3 Veterans are typically resilient and possess many valuable transferable skills including effective communication and problem solving. A forces career promotes teamwork at all levels, and management and leadership potential is developed throughout. The Council could benefit from these skills in the future development of a suitably skilled workforce.
- 4.4 The introduction of a guaranteed interview scheme along with the other options identified below, may go some way to enabling veterans to overcome any barriers to finding civilian employment and help reduce any negative impacts of potential long-term unemployment.

- 4.5 A guaranteed interview scheme if implemented would provide the guarantee of an interview to those who meet the essential criteria set out in any job pack. It would not however, guarantee employment, as selection procedures would ensure the best candidate for the job is appointed.
- 4.6 Other employers are adopting the Guaranteed Interview Scheme across Wales, including Council local Authorities such as Torfaen County Borough Council and Newport City Council, who have adopted the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, with the Vale of Glamorgan in the process of implementation. Many local authorities in England have successfully adopted the scheme including Buckinghamshire, Cumbria and Lancashire County Councils.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council as an equal opportunities employer positively encourages a diverse workforce from all sections of the community. A screening EIA has been developed and established some potential negative impacts of the proposal, however these can be mitigated against in the wider recruitment strategy.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Consultation details are listed within Appendix A

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 Any financial implications are listed within Appendix A

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

- 9.1 The success of the ERS will help improve well-being and will therefore help to make a positive contribution to armed forces employees'. Implementing the Guaranteed Interview Scheme will contribute to the following well-being goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016:
- A prosperous Wales
 - A more equal Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities

- A Healthier Wales

The scheme is consistent with the five ways of working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The introduction of a Guaranteed Interview Scheme and other recruitment options suggested will strengthen the Council's standing amongst the general public, particularly the Armed Forces Community. It should increase recognition amongst the public about the actions the Council is taking as a signatory of our Armed Forces Covenant.
- 10.2 The recommendations if agreed will benefit the Council as an employer through a potential wider selection of candidates who meet the essential criteria and have a large number of transferrable skills. They will also benefit veterans and armed forces leavers by helping them overcome the barriers to employment post service and helping to reduce the potential health and wellbeing impacts of long-term unemployment.