

Meeting	Full Council
Date	25 th August 2026
Report Title	Armed Forces Accreditation – Next Steps
Agenda Reference	18
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Officer's Recommendation

To approve signing the Armed Forces Covenant as a next step to progressing the Bronze Employer Recognition Scheme accreditation, demonstrating the Council's commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community and reservist employees.

Background

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated fairly and should not face disadvantages when seeking to access public or private goods and services in the UK. The Covenant also provides for special provision to be made for those who have given the most, where this is justified.

Signing the Covenant is voluntary. Organisations may choose to sign up in order to demonstrate their support for the Armed Forces Community and for the principles of the Covenant. All organisations – public, private or voluntary and small, medium or large – are welcome to sign the Covenant.

The Covenant is a flexible tool. While all signatories pledge to uphold and act in accordance with the basic principles of the Covenant, organisations are free to tailor their specific pledges to suit their circumstances. In other words, organisations are free to specify – with as much or as little detail as they think necessary – how exactly they plan to support and uphold the Covenant.

Listed below are the suggested for pledges for the Parish Council to consider.

Suggested Pledges

Haydon Wick Parish Council will:

- Promote the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces community within the Parish.
- Seek to ensure that veterans are treated fairly and are not disadvantaged during recruitment and selection processes.
- Encourage applications from veterans, reservists, service leavers, military spouses and partners where they meet the requirements of the role.
- Support employees who are members of the Reserve Forces and consider requests for training and mobilisation commitments in accordance with operational needs.
- Recognise the valuable skills, experience and attributes that members of the Armed Forces community bring to civilian employment.
- Publicise its status as an Armed Forces-friendly employer through its website, recruitment materials and communications.
- Support local initiatives that benefit veterans and the wider Armed Forces community where reasonably practicable.



For Progressing the Bronze Accreditation

The key things the Ministry of Defence looks for are, that the Parish Council:

1. Has signed the Armed Forces Covenant.
2. Has informed staff of its commitment.
3. Is willing to employ veterans and reservists.
4. Takes a positive stance towards the Armed Forces community.

Next Steps:

Haydon Wick Parish Council will:

- Communicate the commitment to staff and public explaining why as a Council this is being taken forward.
- Prepare a Press Release, confirming pledges and commitments agreed to at Full Council on 25th August 2026.
- Councillor L Stevenson & Meetings Administrator to progress examples of Armed Forces recruitment policies and wording from other Councils along with approaching local veterans, reservists and Armed Forces families about barriers they have faced around employment. Councillor Stevenson will draw on her first-hand experience and identify sensible changes.
- Marketing Co-ordinator to develop a dedicated Armed Forces web page explaining the covenant and the Bronze accreditation, along with promoting existing activities such as Remembrance Sunday, Armed Forces Day, VE Day and VJ Day.
- Agree a Councillor(s) to assist in researching the website content which should include any parish military history.
- Review the Bronze Award at Personnel Sub Committee and/or Finance and Policy Committee's every six months.

Period	Milestone
25 th August 2026	Council approves Covenant and Pledges
1 st September 2026	Bronze Award application submitted
1 st September 2026	Internal and External Comms to promote the Covenant & Bronze Application
September/October 2026	Councillor(s) to assist with military history research for web page
End October (or sooner)	Web page completed
Upon Accreditation	Press release issued and logo added to website
Every 6 Months	Progress reviewed by Finance & Policy Committee.