
NON-EXEMPT

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

HR Committee

20 July 2022

RESERVE FORCES TRAINING AND MOBILISATION POLICY

FOR DECISION

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Gwen Robinson (HBC)

Key Decision: Yes

Report Number: *HBC/066/2022*

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper is submitted to the HR Committee:
For policy decision / to meet a statutory requirement

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Members are requested to approve the adoption of a Reserves Forces Training and Mobilisation HR policy

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1. Approval and implementation of a new Armed Forces HR policy - 'Reserves Forces training and mobilisation policy'. We do not currently employ any Reservists at the council, but this policy may attract Reservists to apply for job opportunities at Havant Borough Council in the future. This new policy will also support the newly acquired Silver ERS (Employers Recognition Scheme) award which Havant was granted in July 2021 in addition to the bronze award. The policy request to the Executive Board formed part of the evidence of our commitment to the Armed Forces and links to the Covenant which was signed by the Havant Mayor in February 2021 including a supporting action plan.
- 3.2. Several organisations have been consulted and support the implementation of this new HR policy including the HR team, Councillor Julie Thain-Smith (Havant Borough Council Armed Forces Champion) and the South East Regional Director (MOD).

- 3.3. Resource implications: Whilst we do not currently have any staff who are Reservists the cost is zero. If we do employ a Reservist, the cost would be the equivalent of 2 weeks salary plus on-costs for any future employees who meet the criteria.
- 3.4. Approval and implementation of a new Armed Forces HR policy – Reserves Forces training and mobilisation policy will support new employees who are Reservists joining the organisation. A copy of the new policy is attached, see **Appendix 1**. The policy will further highlight our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, see **Appendix 2** and supporting Action Plan, see **Appendix 3**. The new policy will enable the Council to apply for a Gold ERS (Employer's Recognition Scheme) award, details of this award can be found via this link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-employer-recognition-scheme/defence-employer-recognition-scheme>

4. Additional Budgetary Implications

- 4.1. The budgetary implication would be salary, an example of Grade F - 2 weeks salary = £1171+ on-costs per Reservist.

5. Background and relationship to Corporate Strategy and/or Business Plans

- 5.1. There is currently no independent Reservist policy. To support the Silver Award and to apply for Gold the council requires this separate Policy.
- 5.2. We do not employ any Reservists at this current time
- 5.3. This policy will support our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and shows that we are an Armed Forces friendly organisation. This policy supports theme 5 of the Corporate Strategy – to be a sustainable Council. Our staff are an asset to our borough, and we will continue to invest in training to ensure we have a workforce ready to deliver transformative changes and able to deliver service in the future.
- 5.4. The original Havant Borough Council Armed Forces Covenant was signed in 2017, and a new HR policy - Veterans Guaranteed Interview Scheme was adopted in 2016 which is applied to all job opportunities to date, this policy guarantees Veterans a job interview as long as they meet the personal specification, see **Appendix 4** for a copy of this policy. The newly signed Armed Forces Covenant was signed in February 2021 by the Mayor alongside representatives from the Army, Navy and RAF.
- 5.5. The Council recognises the valuable contribution that members of the Reserve Forces make to the UK Armed Forces, their communities and the civilian workplace and have nominated an Armed Forces Champion to oversee this work which currently sits within the Community Team. The Council further

acknowledges that the training undertaken by Reservists enables them to develop skills and abilities that are of benefit to both the individual and their employer.

- 5.6. This document will provide a policy framework for the support of council employees who are members of the Reserve Forces and sets out the obligations that the council has towards Reservists and vice versa in relation to training and mobilisation commitments.

6. Options considered

- 6.1. Do nothing - If we do not implement this policy, it would not be considered good practice and goes against the ethos of the Covenant. In addition, we will not be able to apply for the Gold Employer Recognition awards.

Adopt the new policy - Adopting the policy will give us the evidence for future Employer awards and satisfy our commitment in line with the Covenant. The policy is fully supported by the Havant Borough Council Armed Forces Champion and satisfies the points in our equality policy.

Other local authorities such as Gosport and Hampshire County Council have adopted a Reservist policy which has enabled them to achieve a gold status Employers Recognition award.

The implementation of this policy will be overseen by HR and implemented by the relevant Manager of staff member and reported on via the Covenant Action Plan.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1. Financial Implications

The financial implication would be salary, an example of Grade F - 2 weeks salary = £1171+ on-costs per Reservist.

S151 Officer comments:

Date: 02/12/21

“As included in the report, overall cost to the Council would depend on the numbers taking up and the grade of those staff. However, it is expected to be low cost and will be looked to be managed within current budgets”

7.2. Human Resources Implications

This new policy will need to be part of the training for Managers regarding recruitment. HR are fully aware of this new policy which will be for new employees only.

7.3. Information Governance Implications

Reservist information will be kept by HR and via MyView as with all employee personal information.

7.4. Other resource implications

None

8. Legal Implications

Daniel Toohey, Head of Legal Services 25.11.21 - "Legal implications are contained in the policy document attached."

Monitoring Officer comments

Date: 25/11/21

"Legal or governance implications are contained in the policy document attached."

Daniel Toohey

9. Risks

9.1. The Council could be criticised for not having this policy in place therefore failing to support any future Reservists that join the organisation. We would also be failing to implement this as one of the actions on the Covenant Action Plan.

10. Consultation

10.1. Consultation has been undertaken with a number of internal and external stakeholders including – HR, The Mayor, Community Cabinet Lead - Cllr Gwen Robinson, Cllr Thain-Smith (Armed Forces Champion), Councillor Bowerman and MOD Regional Employer Engagement Director, all of whom are supportive of the implementation of this policy.

11. Communication

- 11.1. Once this policy has been agreed and implemented by HR, internal and external communications will be released as soon as possible with the support of the Communication team, particularly targeting managers. This policy is a positive step forward to showing our support to the Armed Forces community.

12. Appendices

- 12.1. Appendix 1 - Reserve Forces Training and Mobilisation policy March 2021
Appendix 2 – Havant Borough Council Armed Forces Covenant 2021
Appendix 3 – Havant Borough Council Armed Forces Action Plan 2021 - 2024
Appendix 4 – Veterans Guaranteed Interview Scheme

13. Background papers

- 13.1. Reserve Forces Training and Mobilisation policy, Havant Borough Council Covenant and supporting action plan and the Veterans Guaranteed Interview Scheme policy.

Agreed and signed off by:

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Gwen Robinson 11/01/22

Director: Simon Jenkins 25/11/21

Monitoring Officer: Daniel Toohey 25/11/21

Section 151 Officer: Matthew Tiller 02/12/21

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