



The Highland Council

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of:

The Highland Council

Signed:

Name: **Councillor Bill Lobban**

Position: **Convener**

Date: **20th November 2018**



The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between
The People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government
– and –

All those who serve or have served in the
Armed Forces of the Crown
And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm.

Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces.

In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families.

They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution.

This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We The Highland Council will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen;
- in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 The Highland Council recognises the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- promoting the fact that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation;
- seeking to support the employment of veterans young and old and working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP), in order to establish a tailored employment pathway for Service Leavers;
- striving to support the employment of Service spouses and partners;
- endeavouring to offer a degree of flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment;
- seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, including by accommodating their training and deployment where possible;
- offering support to our local cadet units, either in our local community or in local schools, where possible;
- aiming to actively participate in Armed Forces Day.

2.2 We will continue to work with Partners who, with The Highland Council, are also committed to the Highland Armed Forces Community Covenant and the delivery of better services for our Armed Forces community. We will support the work of the Community Covenant Partnership which has the following aims:

1. To embrace the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant in supporting the Armed Forces community residing in Highland.
2. To build on the partnership and good practice that exists in Highland between the Armed Forces community, statutory providers and third sector organisations.
3. To develop, monitor and review commitments made in the HAFVCCG Action Plan.

4. To realign service provision (where appropriate) to meet the changing needs of the Armed Forces community in Highland in response to recommendations from the Scottish and UK Governments and guidance on best practice.
5. To publicise the work of the HAFVCCG and ensure the Armed Forces community are aware of and can access support at a local level.
6. To meet the measures agreed in the Highland Armed Forces Community Covenant:

Economy

- To work with the Armed Forces community in Highland to identify potential employment opportunities for the Armed Forces and their families based upon a skills audit undertaken by the Armed Forces. To work with the Armed Forces community in Highland to promote the role of the cadets as a means of preparing for future employment.

Children and Young People

- To work with the Armed Forces community and their families and support access to universal service provision and improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Support and engage with specialist staff in the Armed Forces, to assist any children and families with additional needs.

Caring Communities

- To work with the Armed Forces community to ensure they have appropriate advice and information and encourage benefit uptake where appropriate.
- To support and engage with the Armed Forces community to promote and maintain the health and wellbeing of this community.

Housing

- To work with the Armed Forces community to provide information and advice on housing options.

Empowering Communities

- To support the Armed Forces community to ensure they have the opportunity to contribute and be part of their wider community.

- 2.3 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community and our customers on how we are doing.