

HEALTH OF THE EX-SERVICE COMMUNITY

Report of the Chief Executive

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For the Committee to receive a briefing about progress on the regional health scrutiny review of ex-service personnel.

2. Background

- 2.1 In December 2009 a bid was made to the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) on behalf of the 12 local authorities' overview and scrutiny committees in the North East. In summary the bid made was for a project that would *“examine the physical, mental and broader health needs of ex-servicemen and women, their families and communities, how they are being assessed and met across the range of agencies at regional and local level, and how far ex-service personnel and their families are aware of the support available to them”*.
- 2.2 The Health & Well-Being Scrutiny Committee is the lead Scrutiny Committee for this project which will be managed by a newly formed Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Group. The Scrutiny Committee is being kept informed of the project and will continue to receive regular reports and updates until the Project is concluded at the end of 2010.
- 2.3 An event to launch the review took place on 28 June 2010. A summary of the overview day is attached.

3. Project Work Streams

- 3.1 Three work streams focus on a specific issue relating to health inequalities. Progress from the work streams is as follows:

a) Physical Health

Physical Health Work Stream has made significant progress in the evidence gathering and has met with the SHA and PCT – one of the main topics of discussion was around the Military and NHS interface. A number of concerns were raised which will be investigated as the work progresses e.g. GP's understanding of the particular issues with ex-services personnel.

A visit to Catterick Garrison has been planned.

b) Mental Health

The Mental Health Work Stream has also made significant progress with the production and distribution of a questionnaire to identify policies and strategies for housing at local levels. This Work Stream will be talking to ex-service personnel in future meetings

c) Socio-economic wellbeing (including housing, employment, support for families, transport and benefits)

The Socio-Economic Wellbeing Work Stream has held an evidence gathering session with veterans. This workstream has also carried out a consultation with housing providers about policies in place to support service leavers. Future workstreams will explore housing and employment issues in detail.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the progress report.

5. Background Papers

Bid to the Centre for Public Scrutiny
Draft Programme for the Baseline Evidence Day
MOD (2008) The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans
<http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/415BB952-6850-45D0-B82D-C221CD0F6252/0/Cm7424.pdf>
MOD (2009) The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans, external reference Group annual report http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/BBAC5D78-7183-403F-B45E-8259C27B5932/0/TheNationsCommitmentAnnualReport_2009.pdf

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