
Report To:	The Inverclyde Council	Date:	10 April 2014
Report By:	Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources	Report No:	HC/LA/1152/14
Contact Officer:	Helena Couperwhite	Contact No:	01475 712111
Subject:	Legal Services for Forces Personnel (Armed Forces Legal Action) – Request for Support from Inverclyde Council		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise of a request received from Armed Forces Legal Action, seeking the Council's agreement to become a supporter of the organisation. A copy of the organisation's Corporate Covenant is attached. Appendix 1

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Armed Forces Legal Action (AFLA) is a nationwide scheme, founded in July 2013, by Scottish solicitor and current RAF officer Allan Steele. It brings together lawyers from across the UK who offer reduced fees to currently serving and, in certain circumstances, former serving members of the armed forces.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Council consider the request from Armed Forces Legal Action to become a supporter of the Organisation.

Helena Couperwhite
Legal & Property Services

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The background is as set out in the e-mail from Armed Forces For Legal Action. Appendix 2
- 4.2 AFLA member law firms offer a discount of between 15% and 33% of fees to:-
- Serving HM Armed Forces personnel (regular and reserve)
 - Those who left HM Armed Forces within the previous two years
 - Those members of HM Armed Forces who have sustained serious combat injuries (Lifetime cover)
 - Recipients of the Victoria Cross and the George Cross (Lifetime cover)
 - Bereaved next of kin recipients of the Elizabeth Cross (Lifetime cover)
- 4.3 AFLA is already supported by the Scottish Government, the Law Society of Scotland, St John Scotland and East Renfrewshire Council. If the Council agrees to support the organisation, it will be listed as a supporter on the organisation's website www.armedforceslegalaction.org.uk. There is no cost to the Council in expressing support; it is solely an outward expression that the Council supports the organisation's objective of helping the armed forces community.

5.0 PROPOSAL

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Council consider the request from Armed Forces Legal Action.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

- 6.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Human Resources

- 6.3 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

Equalities

- 6.4 This will afford members of the armed forces the opportunity to access legal advice..

Repopulation

- 6.5 There are no repopulation implications arising from this report.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 N/A

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None



Corporate Covenant

The Armed Forces Corporate Covenant

ARMED FORCES LEGAL ACTION

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 **ARMED FORCES LEGAL ACTION**

Signed:  

Name: **ANDREW MCKENDRICK**

Position Held: **HONORARY PRESIDENT (Wg Cdr (retired))**

Date: **17th February 2014**



Ministry
of Defence

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 Corporate Covenant

1.1 We, **Armed Forces Legal Action**, 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 **Armed Forces Legal Action** 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; (we exist solely to assist members of the Armed Forces of the Crown and their families)*
- *seeking to support the employment of veterans young and old; (we will encourage members to support this principle)*
- *striving to support the employment of Service spouses and partners; (we will encourage members to support this principle)*
- *endeavouring to offer a degree of flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment; (we will encourage members to support this principle)*
- *seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, including by accommodating their training and deployment where possible; (having no employees ourselves, we will encourage members to support this principle)*

- *offering support to our local cadet units, either in our local community or in local schools, where possible; (we will encourage members to support this principle)*
- *aiming to actively participate in Armed Forces Day; (our launch in 2014 will be in the week prior to Armed Forces Day 2014 and will promote the same)*
- *offering a discount to members of the Armed Forces Community; (this is what we exist for - we will encourage members to support this principle)*
- *any additional commitments Armed Forces Legal Action could make (based on local circumstances).*

2.2 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.

Sharon Lang

From: Helena Couperwhite
Sent: 31 March 2014 11:56
To: Helena Couperwhite
Subject: FW: Armed Forces Legal Action

From: Linzie Steele [<mailto:afla@live.co.uk>]
Sent: 29 March 2014 13:05
To: AFLA
Subject: Armed Forces Legal Action



Dear Provost,

Armed Forces Legal Action (AFLA) is a nationwide initiative founded by my husband, Scottish solicitor and serving officer Allan Steele, in July 2013.

AFLA brings together lawyers from all parts of the United Kingdom to offer discounted legal services to the men and women who safeguard our country when they themselves need assistance.

To date, supporters of AFLA include:

- The Scottish Government;
- The Law Society of Scotland;
- The Royal British Legion Scotland; and
- St John Scotland.

Last week, our local authority, East Renfrewshire Council, joined this growing list of supporters.

I now write to ask if your council would consider joining East Renfrewshire by showing its support for AFLA.

AFLA is completely apolitical - it seeks solely to look after a section of our society, some members of which have borne enormous personal loss over the last twelve years in particular. AFLA will continue to do that, long after medals have been awarded and when the memories of Iraq and Afghanistan begin to fade from the national conscience. Having your council's support will assist in reminding society of the debt owed to our Service personnel.

The AFLA website can be viewed at:

<http://armedforceslegalaction.org.uk/>

I thank you in advance for considering this approach and stand by to address any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Linzie

Linzie Steele

Armed Forces Legal Action

For Services Rendered