

MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE

NORTH OF ENGLAND RESERVE FORCES’ AND CADETS’ ASSOCIATION BOARD

53 OLD ELVET, DURHAM DH1 3JJ

AT 1800 HRS ON MONDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2019

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Col G Straughan OBE TD – Chairman

Col V B Jassal TD DL – Vice Chairman (Cadets and Youth)

Gp Capt T C Willbond DL RAF – Vice Chairman (Air Force)

Wg Cdr E H Lowe OBE RAFVR(T) – Vice Chairman (Transition)

Mrs K Simpson – Vice Chairman (Engagement)

Colonel N Rhodes – Deputy Commander 4 Inf Bde and HQ NE

Col C Tearney – Col Cdts 4 Inf Bde & HQ NE

IN ATTENDANCE

Brigadier P J A Baker OBE

APOLOGIES

Cdr J Lee RD RNR – Vice Chairman (Navy)

Cdr G Deighton RD RNR – CO HMS CALLIOPE

Col S Hopper TD – Vice Chairman (Army)

Col J G Hughes TD VR – Vice Chairman (Army)

Gp Capt M Leeming OBE RAF – Regnl Comdt RAF Air Cadets (North)

Mr G Wynne-Jones VR Phd FRCS (Sn) – Vice Chairman (Medical)

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| **A G E N D A**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Serial |  | **Action** | | 1. | ITEM 1: CHAIRMAN’S OPENING REMARKS. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Col Nigel Rhodes, Deputy Commander 4 Inf Bde and HQ NE to his first meeting and noted that Col Rhodes would brief the Board later. Col Lisa Brooks has replaced Col David Middleton as Deputy Commander Reserves 4 Inf Bde and HQ NE and would attend the Yorks and the Humber RFCA Main Board. He noted that we had apologies from six Board Members, but that we still had sufficient Members to be quorate. He reminded the Board that he would like to continue the practice of moving purposefully yet thoroughly through the agenda, allowing Members as much time for discussion as was required on each issue. |  | | 2. | ITEM 2: ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENTS. Changes to Association Membership and Appointments were briefed and approved for formal ratification at the Association AGM. There was only one change other than in the Chairman’s opening remarks, which was that:   1. Ex Officio Army. Lt Col Peter Winton had succeeded Lt Col Ben Crookes as Commanding Officer 101(Northumbrian) Regiment RA the week prior to the Board. | CE | | 3. | ITEM 3: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING. The minutes of the last meeting were proposed by Wg Cdr Lowe and seconded by Col Tearney. | CE | | 4. | ITEM 4: CHAIRMAN’S UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL AND STRATEGY GROUP BUSINESS.  The Chairman gave a brief update on the Tailored Review and his latest External Scrutiny Team visit impressions. He also thanked the Board for their constructive feedback via the Board Appraisal. The Chairman’s summary of the Board Appraisal was that the Board and the Executive were working well together in delivering our outputs and that Board Members were willing to do more if asked. | Board/  CE | | 5.  6.  7.  8.  9.  10.  11. | ITEM 5: PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD ON THE QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW.  The Chief Executive briefed the Board on the Quinquennial Review, which the Board accepted in principle but wished to consider more fully out of committee.  **Afternote: The Paper was circulated, minor observations were incorporated and it was approved out of committee. The updated Scheme of Association (SoA) was forwarded to CRFCA for ratification by MoD RF&C. It currently sits with RF&C but ratification is anticipated. The Board will be kept informed.**  ITEM 6: REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISORY BOARD.  The Chief Executive presented Col Hopper’s Report to the Board. As the major financial decisions within the Board’s remit were normally made in the Spring, this was more of a situation awareness update on how spend was progressing:  The Board **noted:**  a. Annual Business Case (ABC) Grant in Aid (GiA) Submission. That the Finance Team had done an excellent job in compiling the ABC, which was approved, it was 0.8% lower than the previous Financial Year and that NE RFCA had second lowest submission of the 13 RFCAs.  b.Estates Maintenance. That the Statutory and Mandatory Inspections and Tests budget was underfunded by £25-30k and that additional funds had been requested. This is important to maintain a compliant estate. **Afternote: Additional funds were received.**  c. Annual Business Case (ABC) 20/21 Grant in Aid (GiA) Submission. That GiA is the money required to run the business (pay, pensions, office equipment, etc). The screening was due in Nov/Dec 19 and would be the first since accounts were reorganised within a corporate structure down to Level 5 (ie Level 4 Payroll costs, Level 5 would be split down into Regular pay, overtime, bonus, etc).  **Afternote: This screening has still yet to take place due to weather and Covid-19 issues and will be conducted by the CE and Hd Bus Sp with CE CRFCA via skype. It is not anticipated that we will have any issues as our bid remains one of the lowest.**  d. Capital Works. That there were 10 capital projects ongoing totalling £703k. Seven were for Project AINTREE, an important armoury upgrade programme for the Army.  e. Cadet Estate Maintenance Programme (CEMP). That of the £100k CEMP funding approved at the last Board £74k had been committed to 20 projects and a further 29 projects were being scoped.  ITEM 7: PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD. The Board **noted:**  a. Stainton Cadet Training Centre. That the Stainton submission had now started the Single Gate Business Case process via DIO. **Afternote: After much prompting and further staffwork we are now assured by DIO that the decision will be made by the end of the current Financial Year. The ‘good news’ is that those involved in the scrutiny so far will be involved in the decision-making process and their input has been incorporated. The Board will be kept informed.**  b. Current Projects. That the Estates Team was managing a significant number of projects concurrently. Project AINTEE and the RAFAC ‘Hub and Spoke’ armoury programmes both aim to deliver fully compliant armouries with the right ‘footprint’ and capacity to the Army Reserves, Cadets and the RAFAC respectively. The Army also plan to reduce the holdings of Cadet GP Rifles.  c. HMS CALLIOPE. That HMS CALLIOPE continues to benefit from investment. Project GEMINI is designed to place Rigid Hulled inflatable Boats (RHiBs) at Maritime Reserve locations to be paired with Offshore Patrol Vessels. HMS CALLIOPE is planned to host 2 RHiBs and is to be paired with, and help crew, HMS TYNE.  d. Normanby ACF Detachment. That securing the funding to re-open Normanby ACF Detachment will make a difference to this deprived area of Cleveland. A prestigious opening is planned on completion if funded. **Afternote: Funded and almost complete. Opening to be attended by the Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire and CACF are planning to do this as early as possible after the Corvid-19 restrictions are lifted.**  e. Sleeping in Army Reserve Centres (ARCs). That post-Grenfell legislation has meant that many ARCs are no longer able to sleep Reservists during weekends. The Executive were working closely with units to see if there were any ‘quick wins’ to make this viable. Army-wide what is required is a prioritised and funded list of ARCs which are required to be able to sleep Reservists. **Afternote: Bids are now being incorporated into the annual Army Balance of Investment (BoI) process by NE RFCA, to be prioritised and funded as part of an Army programme. The Board will be informed when we start to see the outcome of this Regionally.**  ITEM 8: TRI-SERVICE CADET AND YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD. The Board **approved:**  a. Amendments to the SoA as detailed in the subsequent Paper.  b. The Tri-Service Cadet Offer for 2020.  c. Continued collaboration between NE RFCA, Cadet Forces and the Key Charity.  d. Exploring ways to support 5 Sea Cadet Units recommended by the Regional  Commander.  e. **The Board deferred** the recommendation to amend the qualifying period of a Lord Lieutenant’s Certificate of Meritorious Service from 7 years down to 6 years pending further examination by the Vice Chairman Cadets and Youth.  The Board **noted:**  f. Schools Cadet Expansion Plan. That, as of the end of Nov 19, the Region will have a total of 21 CCF Contingents parading. South Shields High School was due to close at the end of August 2020. Most of the Cadets have moved to Boldon School and joined their CCF Contingent.    ITEM 9: REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT GROUP. The Board **approved:**  a. Engagement Advisory Board. The establishment of the Engagement Advisory Board to report to the Spring Main Board on the full gamut of Engagement matters, with the Regional Employer Engagement Group reporting to the Autumn Board primarily on Employer Engagement and Employer Support.  The Board **noted:**  a. Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) and Armed Forces’ Covenant (AFC). That there was an excellent uplift in the number of AFC signings and ERS. In particular that NE RFCA achieved the highest number of Gold Awards of any RFCA outside the South East of England.  b. Armed Forces’ Business Forums (AFBF). That 3 AFBFs had been established to promote best practise amongst our supportive Employers and to encourage them to recruit more businesses in support of the REEDs and the Defence People Agenda.  c. NE Volunteer Magazine and the NE RFCA Website/Social Media. That work was ongoing on the next edition of the NE Volunteer Magazine. Our President was a great supporter of the magazine and undertook to act as an ‘active distributor’! Notwithstanding the Government policy of ‘digital first’, Director Defence Relationship Management (DRM) had agreed that this was an important publication and that digital media were not, yet, exclusive. Work would continue on the development of the Website regionally in parallel with work nationally by DRM to develop a national structure within which each region would fit and be accessible.  ITEM 10. REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEDICAL CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE. The Board **noted**:  a. That 201 Field Hospital were in good order, but that the inability to sleep in the ARC on training weekends was having some impact. A planned training event with Newcastle University was cancelled as the University considered it to be ‘bland military training’. VC Medical suggested the Unit contact the newly formed Sunderland University Medical School.  b. That VC Medical had also suggested that the Unit might consider adding mental health awareness training to their programme.  ITEM 11: BRIEFING ON THE NE RFCA RISK REGISTER BY THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE. The Board **noted** the briefing and acknowledged the good work done by the DCE in preparing a tool that was more appropriate for NE RFCA and **directed** that more work was to be done to develop it in line with Board discussion, to be presented at each Main Board Meeting having been first assessed at the FAB.  **Afternote: The Chairman has subsequently approved the Risk Register as ‘fit for purpose’ noting that it will be an evolving document as risks change and new risks appear.** | CE  CE  CE  CE  CE  CE/DCE | | 12. | ITEM 12: ANY OTHER BUSINESS.  a. Briefing on 4 Brigade and Headquarters North East. Col Rhodes gave a comprehensive briefing on the structure, work and priorities of the Brigade. The Board discussed with him further opportunities for NE RFCA to support the Brigade within the Region. He thanked the Board for their work in support of the Brigade and he felt that our working relationship was very good. The Chairman thanked Col Rhodes for his excellent briefing and welcomed him to the Board. The Chairman assured him of our continued support and that we would always look for and respond to opportunities to improve this within resources. | CE  All | | 12. | ITEM 13: DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING  The date and time of the next meeting is 1800 hrs, Monday 16 March 2020 at Eden Armoury, St Andrew’s Road, Bishop Auckland, DL14 6RX and will be followed by the Chairman’s Dinner.  **Afternote: This meeting and the Chairman’s Dinner scheduled for Monday 16 March 2020 were cancelled because of the increasing problems caused by the Corvid-19 crisis.** | All |   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: 12 November 2019  Col G Straughan OBE TD  Chairman |