

**FALKIRK COUNCIL CORPORATE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND ANNUAL REPORTING STATEMENT
2013/14**

Organisation Name	Falkirk Armed Services Advice Project – Denny CAB
Project	Falkirk Armed Services Advice Project
Agreement Dates	1 March 2013 – 31 March 2014
Name of Lead Officer	Caird Forsyth

A OVERALL ORGANISATION AIMS

Summary of Key Aims & Objectives

- Appoint Armed Services Advice Project, Project Officer
- Market availability of the service to services/organisations and community
- Raise awareness amongst generic CAB advisers about particular needs of armed services/veterans community
- Build relationship with local veteran support services

List of Agreed Outcomes

- Appointment of Armed Services Advice Project, Project Officer
- Preparation of marketing material
- Contact services in Falkirk Council area and advise of project and confirm referral process
- Promotion of project – giving presentations / providing information stands as required in the Falkirk Council area
- Meet with clients referred / self referred providing advice / assistance as required

Why Service/Project is Funded Externally Rather than by the Council

Provides bespoke advice service for veterans resident in the Falkirk Council area assisting them to access services provided by the council or charitable services provided by veterans charities who operate throughout Scotland. The project is staffed by ex forces personnel and is part of a network that operates throughout Scotland. Those presenting to the service often have complex needs relating to their service within the forces which the adviser can relate to. The service is viewed by clients as understanding their particular needs.

B ACTUAL PERFORMANCE vs. OBJECTIVES / AGREED OUTCOMES

Summary of Key Achievements

- Ongoing marketing activities of the service across the Falkirk Council area
- Accepting referral and self referral of / from veterans seeking help who are resident in the Falkirk Council area.

- Providing a range of advice to 180 veterans between 01/04/2013 and 31/03/2014. The top issues cited are benefits, debt and employment, however clients also present with a wider range of issues, including, housing, legal, education, relationship, war disability pension and AFPS 75 Pension/AFPS 05 Compensation Scheme.

An example of the type of support provided is outlined below:

Case Outline

Client is an army veteran. After a severe injury and numerous operations to both his knees the client retired with a 60% War Disability Pension. Client was also awarded DLA High Rate Mobility and Low Rate Care. Client applied for ESA in Sep 2012 but was only awarded 6 points for his mental health issues and had been found not to have a limited capability for work. Client had a long running dispute with the DWP over their decision not to award him ESA which had left him exhausted and worn out. The Client had managed to bring his case to an Appeal Tribunal and was now anxious that he would not be able to get a positive outcome at the tribunal hearing. The client and his family were currently living with a family member, the client was in debt to extended family members.

Assistance Given

When the client contacted ASAP he was in poor physical and mental health and felt (in his words) that no one was listening to him. The ASAP Support Officer was able to reassure the client and offer support through the mental health organisation "Breathing Spaces". The ASAP Support Officer arranged to represent the client at the ESA Appeal Tribunal and worked with him to prepare and build his case for the appeal hearing.

Positive outcomes

ASAP Support Officer represented the Client at the ESA Tribunal and won the appeal. The Client was placed in the Support Group and awarded £2000 ESA Back payments. The client is now being assisted to re-apply for ESA.

The ASAP Support Officer organised a visit to the Client from the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency to review and try and increase his current War Pension Status. If successful this will increase the client's income and remove his dependency on Employment Support Allowance completely.

Although still in a great deal of physical pain the client's mental health is in a better state and he now feels that he is supported and being listened to. With the ESA back payments he was able to clear his debt to his family members.

Once the client Benefit situation is stabilised he will be in a position to look for a rental property for him and his family. The ASAP Support Officer continues to work with the client and coordinate the help from the various organisations assisting the Client.

Summary of Key Issues/ Challenges Facing Organisation

Service not previously available within the communities of Falkirk and provision has allowed access to a client group who may previously have travelled for advice or attempted to deal with problems on their own and possibly not reaching conclusion. Service needs to continually market availability and extend availability of the service by raising awareness of issues for veterans with generic CAB workers.

How has Organisation Contributed to Council/ Service Priorities

SOA – Health Inequalities and Physical Activity – Reduced health inequalities and equitable access to health care and support

Falkirk Councils commitment to Armed Services Community Covenant – provision of help for veterans within our community experiencing difficulty with a range of issues including Health, Debt and Housing.

List any Areas where there has been Shortfall in Performance

None found / recorded

How often are Review Meetings held with Lead Officer

ASAP Project Officer and Manager of Denny CAB attend quarterly meetings of Falkirk Armed Services Community Covenant Group and with the Lead Officer and Falkirk Council Veterans Champion (Depute Provost Cllr John Patrick) on a quarterly basis.

C FINANCIAL / RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Total Support Provided (Financial & In- Kind Contributions)

£20,000 from Falkirk Council

£7,730 From CABx

Project also has access to national support (Training, Conferences/Seminars and Peer Group Meetings) that is provided for ASAP by Poppy Scotland.

Last Period of Submitted Audited Accounts

The audited accounts for the period 2013/2014 have not been developed.

Future Risks (Financial, Operational or Structural) Faced by Organisation

Continuation of the service dependant on funding with the challenge of ensuring that generic advisers are trained/briefed

Overall Risk Rating (Low/Medium/High)

Medium

D CONCLUSIONSSummary/ Opinion of Organisations Overall Progress During Year

Since January 2013 the advisor employed by CAB for ASAP has engaged with the client group using his particular services background to advantage and success for clients. As knowledge of the service spreads through the community, the demand on the service has increased.

E COMPLETED BYName

Caird Forsyth

Designation

Policy Officer Substance Misuse

Date

07 April 2014