

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL10 September 2025Report by Director of Business Operations & PartnershipsMINISTRY OF DEFENCE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To advise the Council on the success of gaining Gold accreditation from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) and of the ongoing work being carried out in support of serving personnel and veterans

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Council:
 - a. recognises the achievement of gaining the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold award; and
 - b. note the continuing work of the Council, HSCP and East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure in support of serving personnel and veterans.

BACKGROUND

3. At the Council meeting on 23 October 2024, it was reported that the Council and HSCP had started working towards the ERS Gold award, in addition to the work we already do to support serving personnel, regulars and reserve, veterans, their partners and dependent children in East Renfrewshire.

4. The Council continues to support the Armed Forces Covenant Duty which contains the following legal obligation:

When a specified body exercises a relevant function, it must have due regard to:

- a. the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces;
- b. the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for service people from membership, or former membership, of the armed forces; and,
- c. the principle that special provision for service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, in the armed forces.

5. East Renfrewshire Council also continues to support the Community Covenant with the Armed Forces and Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire to build on the good relations between the Armed Forces Community and its partner organisations. This is a voluntary statement of mutual support that recognises and remembers the sacrifices made by members of the community, including those currently serving as well as their families.

REPORT

6. The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support the armed forces and acknowledges employers that provide exceptional support to the Armed Forces community and Defence by going above and beyond their Covenant pledges. The scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate, and advocate support for defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant.

7. The Armed Forces Oversight Group, comprising of representatives from Housing, Education, Money Advice and Rights Team (MART), Employability Team (WorkEastRen), HSCP, HR, and East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCLT), have monitored progress at quarterly meetings towards achieving the Gold award.

8. On Monday 21 July 2025 it was announced that East Renfrewshire Council had been successful in achieving the MoD Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award. This prestigious accolade is the highest badge of honour available to organisations that employ and support Reservists, service leavers, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and their families.

9. This achievement has been recognised by the Lord-Lieutenant, Colonel Peter T McCarthy, who has written to the Chief Executive offering his congratulations on this thoroughly well-deserved achievement to everyone at East Renfrewshire Council involved in this success.

10. The Armed Forces Oversight Group, will continue to meet quarterly to maintain this standard. The Armed Forces' Champion, Councillor Campbell, will attend twice a year and keep elected members and the local MSPs and MP apprised of any issues affecting the armed forces community.

11. The Council continues to work alongside ERCLT to provide the Health for Heroes programme, which allows free fitness membership and support to veterans whose mental health is improved by physical activity. Also the Veterans' Breakfast Club, financially supported by the British Royal Legion, held each quarter in Barrhead Foundry, continues to be supported. Feedback from veterans continues to be positive.

12. The Council, via East Renfrewshire's Health and Social Care Partnership, continues to work with Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board to improve health outcomes and healthcare experiences for members of the Armed Forces Community in East Renfrewshire and across the region.

13. Work also continues with individual service personnel and their families, signposting to other services, advocating on their behalf, and offering bespoke assistance to return to civilian life.

CONCLUSION

14. The Council, HSCP and ERCLT continue to support serving personnel, regulars and reserve, veterans, their partners and dependent children in the area and have developed this support further by gaining the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold award.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

East Renfrewshire Council, Council Paper, 24 October 2024, Report by Direct of Business Operations and Partnerships, Nomination of a Veterans' Champion

East Renfrewshire Council Cabinet Paper 1 October 2015, Report by Chief Officer HSCP and Deputy Chief Executive, Veterans Support Advisors Role.

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