

New sentence for 'Marine A' a victory for justice

Yorkshire & North Lincolnshire MEP, Mike Hookem, has welcomed the prospective release of Royal Marine Sergeant, Alexander Blackman as a "victory for justice and great news for Alex and his family."



Mr Hookem's comments came after a panel of Court Martial Appeal Court judges reduced the sentence of the long-serving Royal Marine Sergeant – also known as 'Marine A' – to seven years following the downgrading of his conviction for murdering a wounded Taliban fighter to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility.

Speaking of the Royal Marine's prospective release in the next few weeks, Mr Hookem said, "I am very pleased that Alex will soon be at home with his wife and family, where he belongs. In my opinion, Sgt Blackman should never have been in prison in the first place, so today's news is most welcome."

Legislation not the answer on parental leave says UKIP's Women's and Equalities spokesperson

Margot Parker MEP has said legislation is not the key which would unlock the gender pay gap when it came to paid parental leave for fathers.



Reacting to news that MPs are calling for a statutory entitlement to three months of non-transferable paid parental leave for fathers or second parents, at the same rate as maternity pay, UKIP's Women's and Equalities spokesperson

said: "This is not the way forward.

"Figures show that only 3,000 couples took shared parental leave in the first three months of 2016, which equates to two per cent of families in which the mother took maternity leave during that same period.

"Statutory entitlement to three months of non-transferable paid parental leave for fathers or second parents, at the same rate as maternity pay is a sticking-plaster solution, an easy diversion from the structural and institutional causes of the gender-pay gap by blaming the gap solely on motherhood.

[Reaction to SEDE recommendations for Brexit](#)

UKIP Defence spokesman Bill Etheridge has issued a strong rebuff to suggestions that the UK could still be involved in a European Army, even after Brexit.



As with all other committees, the Security and Defence Committee (SEDE), has submitted an initial assessment of implications of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union. These reports will form the opening stance for European negotiators such as Guy Verhofstadt and Michel Barnier once Article 50 is invoked.

The UKIP MEP has picked up on a number of points in the report which he calls "scary".

[To block Scotland's right to self-determination would be democratically indefensible](#)

There are days which are seen by history as truly defining. They shape the

eras which fall on either side of them and come to be judged as the pivot points on which history then turns, for good or ill. Today, 29 March, threatens to become one of those days. I say threatens because I cannot pretend that I believe the triggering of article 50 by the Prime Minister is anything other than a sad day in the history of Britain, and the European continent as a whole.

Article 50 triggered: what happens next

The Prime Minister today triggered the beginning of the Article 50 process: informing the EU that the UK intends to leave in March 2019.