

Hard at work for our Armed Forces community

As we prepare to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War, which cost the lives of more than 700,000 British soldiers, including thousands from Wales, events are being held across the country to mark this significant milestone.

Ahead of Armistice Sunday, when the Cabinet Secretary will attend the Welsh Government's National Service of Thanksgiving at Llandaff Cathedral, he today outlined some of the work currently ongoing to support our Service personnel and Veterans in Wales.

He also launched an Employment Pathway for Veterans and Service leavers, aimed at supporting them into employment, and funding for councils to implement long term support through dedicated liaison officers.

Alun Davies said:

"This time of the year serves as a poignant reminder of those who fought bravely in previous conflicts to preserve our way of life. We must never forget those who have paid the ultimate price, and those that survived with serious injuries, to protect the freedom we have today.

"We have made tremendous progress in Wales to deliver appropriate services and support for our Armed Forces community and today I am delighted to announce two new measures which I believe can help many more.

"Employment is clearly pivotal to a successful transition, and the health and wellbeing of Veterans and Service leavers. That's why we have been working hard with our partners including the Armed Forces Expert Group to develop an Employment Pathway. To complement the Pathway, we are also working with 'Business in The Community' to develop an Employers' Toolkit, which will help them recognise the qualities ex-Service personnel can offer prospective employers.

"Last year, the WLGA was successful in obtaining Covenant Funding to appoint Armed Forces Liaison Officers, to deliver consistent support for veterans and their families in local authorities across Wales. I have been carefully following the valuable work they are doing, including the Construction Insight Day, which provided Service leavers and Veterans with an opportunity to meet employers in the construction and civil engineering sector to give them an overview of opportunities within these areas of employment.

"This funding will come to an end in 2019. To continue this momentum, and build on the good work already being undertaken, I am

allocating half a million pounds from next year to enable Covenant Guidelines and services be fully embedded by councils over the next two years.

“We will continue to work collaboratively with our key partners to make a difference for our Armed Forces community.”