

To receive a report on the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme and consider and actions and expenditure.

Report to: Personnel

Date of Report: 09.06.2026

Officer Writing the Report: Administration Officer

Purpose of the report:

To consider whether to apply for the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Bronze Award.

Officers Recommendation:

Members are asked to consider:

1. Registering for and applying to the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) for a Bronze Award;
2. Note that progression to Silver Award status may be considered after a minimum period of 12 months, subject to further review and the development of appropriate HR policies.

Report Summary

At the Full Town Council meeting on 4 June 2026 Members agreed to pledge to the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC). **The copy of the pledge is attached as Appendix A for reference.**

Full Council resolved that progression to the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) is to be referred to the Personnel Committee for further consideration, due to the implications relating to staffing matters.

The ERS encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the Armed Forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant.

Participation in the ERS

To participate in the ERS, organisations must first sign the Armed Forces Covenant and submit their pledge via the online portal. Following this, the Town Council may apply directly for the Bronze Award. -https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/t/ERS_Bronze/ .

After holding Bronze status for a minimum of 12 months, organisations may be considered for the Silver Award through nomination. This requires evidence of active support and advocacy, including:

- Promoting supportive policies within the workforce
- Ensuring fair recruitment practices for Armed Forces personnel
- Supporting reservists (including a minimum of 5 additional paid training days)
- Providing flexibility for Cadet Force Adult Volunteers

Silver and Gold awards are assessed through regional and national nomination processes, with evaluation of the depth and sustainability of support provided.

Bronze Award Criteria

At this stage, the Town Council would be seeking to self-nominate for the Bronze Award. Requirements include:

- Signing the Armed Forces Covenant and registering via the ERS website
- Demonstrating understanding of the AFC and ERS commitments
- Promoting support for the Armed Forces community within the organisation
- Being a Forces-friendly employer
- Be open to employing members of the Armed Forces community including;
 - Reservists
 - Veterans (including wounded, injured and sick)
 - Cadet Force Adult Volunteers
 - Military spouses/partners.

The Town Council already meets the criteria required for the Bronze Award.

Considerations for future progression

The scheme is designed as a progression of increasing commitment.

While progression to Silver is not mandatory, employers are encouraged to develop practices that would support a future award, including:

- Supporting Reservists with training and mobilisation
- Developing HR policies to accommodate Armed Forces commitments
- Providing additional leave for Reservist training
- Supporting local cadet forces or volunteering opportunities
- Ensuring fair recruitment practices that do not disadvantage Armed Forces personnel.

Forward planning is necessary as Silver and Gold awards require formal proof of established HR policies (like extra paid leave for reservists). These must be developed practices well in advance of applying.

Signature of Officer:

Administration Officer