



Oldham Council

We commit to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the contribution that Service personnel, both regular and reservist, veterans and military families make to our organisation, our community and to the country.

20th February 2025



The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
His Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most, such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We, **Oldham Council**, will endeavour to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant:

- *Members of the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantages arising from their service in the provision of public and commercial services.*
- *In some circumstances special provision may be justified, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2 We recognise the contribution that Service personnel, reservists, veterans, the cadet movement and military families make to our organisation, our community and to the country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant by:

- 2.1 We will promote the fact Oldham Council is an armed forces friendly organisation by publicising our Armed Forces Covenant commitment on our website and through other appropriate means and by promoting the fact to our employees through our intranet pages and at specific staff events to promote the Armed Forces.
- 2.2 We will seek to support the employment of veterans and cadets by offering guaranteed interviews to veterans and cadets who meet the minimum selection criteria laid out in a job advert and criteria.
- 2.3 We will endeavour to offer flexibility when granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment by looking kindly on requests for holidays before, during or after a partner's overseas deployment, when the Service person has leave to spend time with their family. We will also consider whether special paid leave is appropriate for employees who are bereaved or whose loved ones are injured.
- 2.4 We will support our employees who choose to be members of the reserve forces, this includes providing paid leave for duties and training, releasing them for deployment where possible and providing appropriate support before deployment.
- 2.5 We will promote the Reserve Forces to our employees through various means, including the Reservist intranet guidance, attendance at events, and promotional material specific to Reservists.
- 2.6 We will support those reservists who wish to wear their military uniform to work on Reserves Day in the run up to Armed Forces Day.
- 2.7 We will work with our local cadet units, in our local communities or in local schools, and where possible include them in our calendar of events e.g. Remembrance Day and Armed Forces days.
- 2.8 We will help to organise and actively participate in promoting Armed Forces Day events in the borough.
- 2.9 We will encourage local partners to offer a discount to members of the Armed Forces Community.
- 2.10 We will create and maintain policies that support better access to housing to assist current and ex-members of the Armed Forces to relocate and settle in Oldham.

- 2.11 We will improve signposting and access to support for current and ex-members of the Armed Forces by maintaining an up-to-date specialist directory of support services on our website.
- 2.12 We will provide or organise work experience or job shadowing where possible for members of the Armed Forces Community.
- 2.13 We will appoint a dedicated Armed Forces Champion who is an Elected Member of Oldham Council, along with an officer Champion.
- 2.14 We will actively take part in Greater Manchester Armed Forces Lead Officers group, sharing best practice and working together to support our Armed Forces Community.
- 2.15 We will offer peer support and advice to other local authorities across Greater Manchester when appropriate.
- 2.16 We will operate the Oldham Armed Forces Partnership, developing working relationships with organisations that support the Armed Forces Community; providing support and advice to organisations, and encouraging them to sign-up to the Armed Forces Covenant.
- 2.17 We will publicise these commitments through on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Armed Forces Community and our customers on how we are doing.