

Cobseo Strategic Framework

Introduction

1. The Service Charity Sector is a very diverse group of organisations designed to serve the Armed Forces Community in all its forms including:
 - serving servicemen and women and their families including those engaged in transition to civilian life;
 - veterans and their families, especially those that have fallen on hard times; and
 - wounded, injured and sick, including those suffering from mental illness, who need support to enable them to live as normal a life as possible.
2. The Government has committed to support the Armed Forces Community, through the Veterans' Strategy and the Armed Forces Covenant, which provides that no member of the Armed Forces Community should be disadvantaged in the provision of public and commercial services as a consequence of their Service and acknowledges that increased levels of support will be justified in some circumstances. The Covenant has been embraced by every Local Authority in Great Britain through the Community Covenant and by many commercial companies, which have committed to support the Armed Forces Community through a Corporate Covenant.
3. While the Government has the lead in delivering support to the Armed Forces Community, there remains a key role for Service charities in supporting the diverse needs of the Armed Forces Community across the United Kingdom, through the Devolved Administrations where appropriate. Cobseo exists to play a leading role in ensuring the effective and efficient delivery of this support.

Mission

4. Cobseo will maximise the effectiveness, efficiency and influence of the Service Charity Sector in order to positively enhance the lives of Armed Forces Community beneficiaries.

Strategic Objectives

5. **Strengthening the Confederation.** Cobseo will promote the highest standards of governance across the Sector in order to retain the trust of the nation.
6. **Working Efficiently and Effectively.** Cobseo will work to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Sector by encouraging greater cooperation and collaboration, utilising the cluster structure and ensuring all member organisations have the opportunity to link with each other. This will enable members to share information and address common issues, in order to deliver greater support to beneficiaries from available resources.

7. **Collaboration.** Cobseo will discourage and reduce duplication of effort through actively encouraging and promoting collaborative effort between like-minded members. Examples of good practice will be identified and promulgated and Cobseo will make itself available to act as a broker if required.
8. **Engagement.** Cobseo will, working with its members, develop further a proactive internal and external communications and engagement strategy ensuring that the voice of the Service Charity Sector is heard and understood by all members and stakeholders including Government and the private sector.
9. **Influencing.** In order to influence key stakeholders and fulfil its role as an advocate for the Service Charity Sector, Cobseo will represent and promote the interests of the Armed Forces Community at all relevant high-level coordination groups involving interaction with the MOD, other government departments and appropriate regulatory bodies. Cobseo will work to ensure that its members are able to play a full part in all relevant decision making regarding the Service Charity Sector.
10. **Structure and resilience of the Confederation.** Cobseo will encourage full and associate membership of the Confederation by suitably qualified Service Charities and other organisations that work to positively enhance the lives of Armed Forces Community beneficiaries. In order to deliver its mission, Cobseo will have a strong and resilient central team operating to high standards of governance and service delivery to its members. Central costs will be transparent, and enduring funding solutions will be established to ensure the Confederation is sustainable in the long term.

Operating Principles

11. In delivering these objectives Cobseo will:
 - recognise the absolute independence of the membership organisations and their need to respond to their individual charitable objects and the wishes of their trustees;
 - welcome the interaction and advocacy activities of the individual membership organisations with Government and the private sector;
 - recognise the need for membership organisations to conduct their own separate and independent fundraising activities;
 - encourage all membership organisations to observe the highest standards of corporate governance.

Operational Methods

12. Cobseo will achieve the objectives by:
 - working together effectively;
 - using the power of collaboration;
 - engaging with the Armed Forces Community;
 - influencing stakeholders;
 - strengthening and delivering value to our membership;
 - developing the structure and resilience of the Confederation;
 - setting an annual business plan.