

COBSEO ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2021

Mission

1. 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.

Objectives

2. Strengthening the Confederation:

- a. **Strategic Objective.** Cobseo will promote the highest standards of governance across the Confederation in order to develop the strength and resilience of the Sector and so retain the trust of the Nation.
- b. **Annual Deliverables.** Cobseo will:
 - i. Continue to promote maximum take up of the governance programme for Full and Associate Members; and prepare for the next reporting cycle in 2022. [D Gov Sp]
 - ii. Extend the Affiliate Membership programme where appropriate beyond the initial 601 Association Branch charities identified in the DSC Sector Insight Report. [D Gov Sp; Hd Mem & Fin]
 - iii. Finalise the development of a Pathway to Membership to engage potential Members, whilst encouraging best practice from the outset. [Hd Mem & Fin]
 - iv. Develop a communications strategy for an externally-facing campaign to promote the progress of the governance programme. [Hd Comms]
 - v. Develop further plans to support Members' engagement with those in need from minority communities across the Armed Forces Community and monitor impact. [D Ops]
 - vi. Conduct internal EDI awareness training. [D Ops]
 - vii. Monitor governance developments, particularly from Regulators, and provide guidance, both new, and updating existing, aide memoires and Information Notes as appropriate. [D Gov Sp]
 - viii. Develop a joint Data Sharing Agreement with the Charity Commission. [D Gov Sp]

3. Working Effectively:

- a. **Strategic objective.** Cobseo will work to enhance Members' efficiency and effectiveness by encouraging greater cooperation. We will do so through the cluster structure ensuring all Members have the opportunity to link with each other, share information and address common issues, in order to improve best practice and long term sustainability, and deliver greater support to beneficiaries from available resources.
- b. **Annual deliverables.** Cobseo will:

- i. Continue to improve the effectiveness of the Cluster structure through the appointment of a new post to work with Cluster Chairs to improve coordination between Clusters and with the Executive Committee. [D Ops]
- ii. Continue to support Clusters as they pursue the achievement of their stated objectives. [D Ops]
- iii. Encourage all Members to take steps to improve efficiency and consider rationalisation where appropriate, including hosting targeted webinars, and facilitating wider discussion through Clusters. [D Ops; D Gov Sp]
- iv. Help establish through the SSR a forum (or cluster) for grant makers and funders to come together to discuss and coordinate major funding issues. [D Ops]
- v. Continue to facilitate initiatives aimed at supporting Members' fundraising and their access to funds including inter alia: Accessing Grants (including through partnership); Working Together; and Grant Writing. [Hd Mem & Fin]
- vi. Promote the Sector's engagement with and use of the Veterans' Gateway. [D Ops]

4. Collaboration:

- a. **Strategic objective.** Cobseo will encourage and promote collaboration between like-minded Members, whilst discouraging and reducing duplication in order to simplify the delivery of support to beneficiaries. Examples of good practice will be identified and promulgated, and Cobseo will make itself available to act as a broker if required.
- b. **Annual deliverables.** Cobseo will:
 - i. Work with key stakeholders to develop plans for a digital and data strategy for the Sector to deliver a seamless journey for beneficiaries through improved collaboration. [Chmn; D Ops]
 - ii. Support the Sector Strategic Review, managing with key Members the Action Plan arising. [D Gov Sp]
 - iii. Support the work to develop a long-term strategy to sustain the Sector's approach to case working. [D Ops]
 - iv. Explore closer Sector collaboration and cooperation at a local and regional level with those Members that have a national footprint, enabling wider Sector engagement with NHSE's new Integrated Care System (ICS). [D Ops]
 - v. Continue to support the procurement and roll out of the new CMS. [D Ops]
 - vi. Support the development of consistent case management across the UK, particularly for those who face the challenge of poor mental health, by enabling the Contact Mental Health Group Scoping Study into a Veterans Mental Health Information System and co-chairing the Working Group. [D Ops; D Gov Sp]
 - vii. Work with the NHSE CRG and Contact Group to simplify the beneficiary journey and access to all physical and mental health services. [D Ops; D Gov Sp]
 - viii. Support the development and delivery of AFCFT Positive Pathways Programme. [D Ops; PPP Coord]
 - ix. Support the development of new mechanisms to ensure the engagement of all small Member organisations in Cobseo business. [D Ops]
 - x. Encourage and support capacity building initiatives in Clusters and Action Groups. [D Ops]
 - xi. Work with DRM through the Cobseo/ERS Communications Hub in order to positively influence engagement with employers. [Hd Comms]

- xii. Continue to develop the communications forum and networks across the Cluster structure. [Hd Comms]
- xiii. Further develop, in conjunction with RFCA NI and the Northern Ireland Veterans Support Office improvements in Covenant capacity building and the delivery of services in Northern Ireland. [D Ops; Hd NIVSO]
- xiv. Support Members and the veterans' community in their engagement with Op Legacy. [D Ops]

5. Engagement:

- a. **Strategic objective.** 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.
- b. **Annual deliverables.** Cobseo will:
 - i. Conduct continuation surveys with Members in April and October to better understand and evidence the impact of the pandemic on members and the support they need. [D Ops]
 - ii. Commission through Clusters additional survey work specifically to understand the Sector's expectations in the immediate term, and over the next 2-3 years, in light of the impact of COVID-19. [Dir Gov Sp]
 - iii. Develop a mechanism to provide a continuously updated view of the Armed Forces Community. [Dir Ops]
 - iv. Continue to develop communications with Members to ensure a greater understanding of, and input to, the work of the Confederation, including Members' obligations to each other. [Hd Comms]
 - v. Work with Government, key stakeholders, and the private sector to deliver greater engagement with and greater understanding of the Confederation; [D Ops; Hd Comms]
 - vi. Within the framework of the Veterans Strategy continue to engage with Government to influence its work to develop a campaign to redress public perception of what it is to serve, whilst acknowledging the case for support where necessary. [D Ops; Hd Comms]
 - vii. Conduct a review of Cobseo branding and make recommendations for its improvement. [Hd Comms]
 - viii. Further develop the programme of members' communications training events. [Hd Comms]
 - ix. Continue to develop Cobseo's social media platforms (Twitter channels, LinkedIn) to increase reach of Members' and Cobseo's messages. [Hd Comms]
 - x. Continue to develop a Member communications strategy to address cross-organisational issues. [Hd Comms]

6. Influencing:

- a. **Strategic objective.** 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 OVA, 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 delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant and the Veterans' Strategy.

b. **Annual deliverables.** Cobseo will:

- i. Continue to lobby Government and key stakeholders for additional support for the sector in light of the significant impact caused by the pandemic. [Chmn]
- ii. Engage with Government and key stakeholders to improve Members' access to pandemic support measures, whether specifically for the Service charity sector or for the wider third sector. [Chmn]
- iii. Engage with Government and all Members in the development and delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant and of the Veterans Strategy, including its Implementation Plan, holding the OVA and MoD to account for their delivery where appropriate. [D Ops]
- iv. Monitor the impact of amendments to the Armed Forces Bill, as aspects of the Covenant become law. [D Gov Sp]
- v. Support FiMT's collaboration with the OVA to develop a better understanding of the linkages and boundaries between the Public and Armed Forces Charity sector. [Dir Gov Sp].

7. **Structure and resilience of the Confederation:**

a. **Strategic Objective.** Cobseo will encourage 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.

b. **Annual Deliverables.** Cobseo will:

- i. Amend and implement plans for the long-term sustainability of Cobseo in light of the new MoD support grant and impending final drawdown of the Cobseo Office Libor support grant. [D Ops; Hd Mem&Fin]
- ii. Enhance the internal working practices and external engagement with Members through the introduction of a new Cobseo CRM and associated systems to improve productivity and automate membership processes. [Hd Mem & Fin]

8. **Resources.** Refer to 2021 Budget.