

Following an evidence session with her on Wednesday (26 Mar), the House of Commons Defence Committee has recommended the Defence Secretary to proceed with the appointment of his preferred candidate for Armed Forces Commissioner, retired RAF Air Commodore Polly Miller-Perkins.

Ms Miller-Perkins is expected to take up the role on an interim basis for one year from April 2026, as a direct appointment without competition. A previous full and open recruitment process was unsuccessful in appointing a candidate. The Ministry of Defence has announced its intention to re-run that process shortly.

The MOD announcement also says that

Former RAF Air Commodore Polly Perkins served for over 30 years in the Royal Air Force, specialising in logistics and holding senior leadership roles including Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, British Forces Cyprus. She deployed on operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan and worked with NATO partners to improve multinational logistics. She holds an MA in Defence Studies from King's College London and was awarded a CBE for her service.

Tan Dhesi MP the Defence Committee chair rightly said that '**The success of the Armed Forces Commissioner depends on being visibly independent**', but it seems in principle welcome that Ms Miller-Perkins has substantial experience of the armed forces.

The person-spec for the job did not require applicants to have served in the armed forces, but the 'desirable criteria' included 'Knowledge of the Armed Forces operating model, and the complaints procedures.'

The relevant legislation is the Armed Forces Commissioner Act 2025. The Interim Commissioner will take responsibility for the existing Service Complaints Ombudsman and, says the MOD, '**ensure there is no break in that service.**'

We wish Ms Miller-Perkins all the best in this new appointment. BAFF should take a close interest in how this develops.