

To: BELLSHILL & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE		Subject: GOOD NEWS
From: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Date: 20 APRIL 2005	Ref: PJ/LMcM/JP	

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to advise committee of current 'good news' stories within the department.

2. **GOOD NEWS ITEMS**

A list of the current 'good news' stories is attached as appendix 1.

3. **RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 That members note the report.

Paul Ginties

1. DEPARTMENTAL

1.1 Gold Star Award Winners 2005

The winners of this year's Gold Star Awards, which recognised staff commitment across North Lanarkshire Council's Department of Community Services, were announced at an awards ceremony held on Friday 11 March 2005 at Motherwell Concert Hall.

From the Department's 5,500 strong workforce a shortlist of 88 nominees was drawn up from the hundreds of nominations received.

The 2005 winners were:-

Team of the Year: The School Meals Service

The Service won a Chartermark for excellence in public service delivery in 2004, the first school meals service in Scotland to do so. The service covers 165 school based catering facilities. The service is committed to providing high quality, nutritious meals while promoting the principles of healthy eating.

Newcomer of the Year: Jean Gilmour, Catering Services

Previously Catering Manager at Dalzell High School, Jean has held her current post as Lunch Club Co-ordinator for just over a year. Her new role entails working with Social Work to provide a lunchtime service to the elderly residents of North Lanarkshire.

Facility of the Year: Summerlee Heritage Park, Coatbridge

Awarded a Chartermark for excellent in public service in 2003, Summerlee has continued to grow its visitor numbers to 91,000 in 2004. Staff at Summerlee, graded a 4 star attraction by tourist agency VisitScotland, puts on a year round programme of workshops, exhibitions, horticultural activities and special events.

Service Provider of the Year: Bibliographic and Support Staff

This team, in association with software provider Dynix, created the first Council service to be fully web enabled. The new website allows users to search the library catalogue for books, CDs, DVDs and talking books. The site is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Library users can also renew items on loan, check for any outstanding charges and notify their local library of a change of name or address. The new website is secure and user friendly and, to date has been used by over 14,000 registered library users.

Service Improvement Award: The North Lanarkshire Challenge Programme

This programme is a partnership with the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services together with local businesses. The programme involves 10 to 14 year olds working towards a series of challenges which are focused on skill, service in the community and physical activity. To date, over 450 young people are, or have been, involved in the challenge programme and over 500 enrolment forms have been received.

Working Together in the Department Award: Building Cleaning Public/Private Partnership Bid Team

The bid team for the building cleaning PPP was made up of staff from Building Cleaning, Policy & Development and Finance. They worked together for over 18 months to ensure that the building cleaning contract for the Education 2010 project was secured by the Council. In so doing, they safeguarded over 185 jobs.

Working Together in the Community Award: The Top Play/Top Sport Programme

The Top Play/Top Sport Programme was established to encourage schools to increase their activity levels by being involved in sport and play and fun and safe and nurturing environment. Led by the Sport & Recreation Section, the partners include other Sections within Community Services, the Council's Education Department, Sportscotland, the Youth Sports Trust, Sports Club, local Colleges, parents, volunteers and support workers.

Convener's Cup: George Smith, Building Cleaning Services

George has been a Janitor at Cathedral Primary School for 10 years during which time he has made an invaluable and unique contribution to enriching school life for pupils, parents and staff. He is continually engaged in school events ranging from pupil activities and games during intervals and lunch times. He is also a key contributor to the extra curricular activities in the school having written and co-produced musicals and shows which are acquiring a well deserved reputation for excellence.

Director's Cup: Brian Walsh and Tommy Slavin, Cleansing Services

Part of the Souterhouse based Graffiti Squad, Brian and Tommy have been an asset to the community since the launch of the "Streetsmart" campaign in 2003. Brian and Tommy have received numerous commendations for the work they have carried out, including one from the Chief Constable of Strathclyde Police's Monklands Sub Division which covers Airdrie, Coatbridge and surrounding areas. They have also received praise from local community action groups.

1.2 Perfect Attendance

A review of attendance during 2004 identified over 1500 employees who had no sickness absence during this 12 month period. Although it is recognised that sickness absence is in most cases unavoidable, it is also important to appreciate the sustained commitment and dedication necessary to achieve a sickness free record for a 12 month period. The fact that a large number of employees receiving the award do not work in offices and work in, what are at times challenging conditions, makes the achievement even more impressive.

All staff concerned received a certificate, pin badge and gold card. The Gold Card affords the employee complementary or discounted use of certain departmental services between 1 April and 23 October 2005 as well as 2 months free membership of Access NL Scheme. A random selection of these employees were invited to attend the Gold Star Awards ceremony which took place on 11 May 2005.

Impressively, 183 of the 1500 staff who received the award did so for the fifth successive year. The achievement of maintaining this impressive level of attendance for such a sustained period is truly outstanding and one which will be recognised at a special event, currently being organised and to which all 183 employees plus guests will be invited.

2. LIBRARIES & INFORMATION

2.1 Health Information Project

The Information Section of the Libraries and Information Section secured its 4th consecutive COSLA award when it was long-leeted in the Innovative Technology category of COSLA Excellence Awards 2005. The Health Information Project uses new technology

to deliver health information to those areas in North Lanarkshire with the poorest health records including Coatbridge, Motherwell North, Bellshill and Viewpark.

North Lanarkshire Council's Libraries & Information services and NHS Lanarkshire have formed a partnership to deliver health information and promotion to communities in North Lanarkshire through the development of a health information project based in 4 libraries. The major objectives of the project are to:-

- ◆ build aware of the health services available locally in North Lanarkshire and how to access them;
- ◆ through local information provision to enable people to change their lifestyles and take greater responsibility for their health;
- ◆ support chronic disease management by providing information on chronic illnesses;
- ◆ enhance early detection of illness through self assessment;
- ◆ improve medication compliance by increasing awareness by the need to complete courses of medication;
- ◆ promote healthy living; and
- ◆ ensure that there is provision of health information in ethnic minority languages

Health information points are available in Motherwell Library, Coatbridge Library, Bellshill Cultural Centre and Viewpark Library providing much needed information to those communities in North Lanarkshire most in need. The information is delivered through kiosks operated by touch screens which removes the need for keyboard input. The kiosks are internet enabled and provide information on health services available locally, support groups, travel health, medical conditions, healthy living, an A-Z of the NHS plus links to a wide range of health related websites covering issues such as alcoholism, drug addiction, teenage health, family planning and stress.

The information is available in nine languages including English, Bengali, Gujurati, Arabic, Somali, Cantonese, Urdu and Punjabi.

Interactive Digital Television Service

2.2 Interactive Digital Television Service

North Lanarkshire Council's Open Learning Service recently launched in March 2005 the first dedicated e-learning presence of any UK local authority on interactive digital television via Telewest platform.

The new IDTV presence makes use of technology that is already available in people's homes. There is no need to invest in additional hardware to access lifelong learning. The IDTV service means that people will no longer have to travel to access learning. Recent research by MORI has shown that significantly more people from low income families have access to digital television than the internet. The Council's new IDTV site will help ensure our services are as social inclusive as possible.

The IDTV presence has been developed as part of a £337,000 investment in the open learning and information services funded in partnership by North Lanarkshire Council; Objective 3; and the Scottish Libraries & Information Council.

2.3 4U Readers Website

The Scottish Libraries & Information Council have awarded a partnership place to the Libraries & Information Section in the consortium developing the 4U Readers website. The website aims to develop the reading range and literacy skills of young people across Scotland. It provides interactive activities, reading suggestions, chat rooms, homework help and assistance help to develop creative writing skills.

2.4 Big Plus

The Libraries & Information Section have been awarded £4,200 of literacy collection materials as part of a national literacy reading and development project. The grant has been awarded by Learning Connections and the Scottish Libraries & Information Council under the Big Plus banner.

All authorities were awarded the equivalent of one literacy collection. Supplementary bids were made on basis of need for additional collections. North Lanarkshire were awarded six collections in total. Part of the grant is being used to provide specialist software to allow learners to use ICT equipment in libraries to develop literacy skills.

Literacy development training will be provided as a further part of the award.

3. CREATIVE SERVICES

3.1 Groove Live - North Lanarkshire Youth Arts Festival

February saw the return of the North Lanarkshire Youth Arts Festival under it's new name "Groove Live". This multi-art form festival aimed at young people aged 12-25, was hosted in various venues and schools across North Lanarkshire including; Motherwell Concert Hall and Theatre, Cumbernauld Theatre, Pather Art Works, @ Home Centre in Airdrie, Summerlee Heritage Park and many more.

With support from the Scottish Arts Council National Lottery Fund, the festival was bigger and better than ever before. The Festival saw 2,363 young people attending workshops and a further 3,362 young people attending performances. The wide ranging programme included; drama, dance, music, creative writing, ceramics, DJ skills and visual art.

4. BUILDING CLEANING SERVICES

4.1 Public Convenience Loo of the Year Awards 2004

The Department's Building Cleaning Services have again been extremely successful at this year's Loo of the Year Awards 2004, which are organised by the British Toilet Association in conjunction with Cannon Hygiene.

The following awards were achieved:-

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| • Bellshill North Road | 4 Star |
| • Brandon East, Brandon Parade, Motherwell | 3 Star |
| • Brandon South, Brandon Parade, Motherwell | 3 Star |
| • Mossend Shopping Centre | 3 Star |
| • Kenilworth Avenue, Wishaw | 2 Star |
| • Station Road, Shotts | 3 Star |