

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: WISHAW CITIZENS LOYALTY CARD
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT		
Date: 3 October 1996	Ref: CMcA/LU/REP.079	

**INTRODUCTION**

North Lanarkshire Council have received a sponsorship proposal from the Wishaw Business Group for a project entitled "Wishaw Citizens Loyalty Card". The proposal was received by Town Centre Initiatives, the Town Centre Management Project funded jointly by North Lanarkshire Council and British Steel (Industry) Ltd. A copy of the proposal is attached.

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

The project is a shop local incentive scheme. It encourages local people to support local businesses by offering discounts, special offers and various incentives to holders of the "Wishaw Citizens Loyalty Card". The project is open to any business based in Wishaw town centre to join. There is likely to be a charge for businesses to join the scheme. This charge is currently under discussion. Loyalty cards will be distributed to local people through the local press and local businesses.

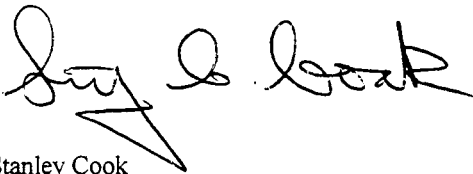
The Wishaw Business Group intend to launch the scheme on the 14 October 1996.

**PROJECT SPONSORSHIP**

Following some discussion within the Economic Development Unit, it was agreed that Town Centre Initiatives Ltd was a more appropriate sponsor of this project than North Lanarkshire Council. Town Centre Initiatives is the town centre management project funded by North Lanarkshire Council and British Steel (Industry) Ltd. The sponsorship by Town Centre Initiatives Ltd enables the direct involvement of the Town Centre Manager in the administration and the development of this project

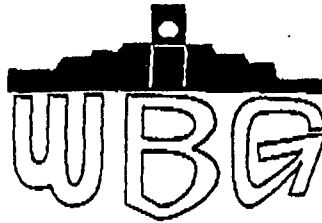
**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee notes the contents of the report and agree with the referral of the sponsorship proposal to Town Centre Initiatives Ltd for consideration.



Stanley Cook  
Director of Planning & Development

For further information contact Gordon Smith, Head of Economic Development and Planning.



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Dear Fred,

Citizen Loyalty Card --- Launch Date 14th October.

Following the televising of the successful Local Loyalty Card programme initiated in Leominster. Wishaw Business Group have decided to launch a similar initiative with the start date set for 14th October.

How it works.

Shoppers to the town are given a loyalty card, free of charge and encouraged through the card to support their local community. Shopkeepers can offer a number of rewards to shoppers for their loyalty. Such as discounts, free gifts, vouchers, entry to prize draws etc.,. These Rewards are at the discretion of each shop owner and may be changed from week to week. Unlike current supermarket cards however rewards could be on the spot giving a clear edge to the high street.

Tradespeople in the town of Leominster who brought in this system in march have reported an increase in trade of over 40%.

Furthermore, the town of Leominster stated that 40 shops were lying empty in 1995, similar to Wishaw. Today because of the increase in trade there are no empty shops. The butcher who devised the scheme told me that the last empty shop was filled last week. Five months to transform a town.

Objective. from the MEDCO survey, we learned that only 30% of people who live locally shop locally. [except food shopping] Were we able to increase this to 40% loyalty then the effect on trade would be an increase of 30%. An increase to 50% local

loyalty and every business would be in a position to improve their premises and expand their businesses substantially. We want people to think local first before they go out of town to shop. This programme seems to offer the best hope for reversing decline with the least of resources. It is the simplest of ideas which is working so successfully for Leominster that Staffordshire University are monitoring the success. Enquiries are coming in from all over the world on what has been done. Graham Hurley who devised the scheme told me 'everyone has a smile on their face, people want their town to succeed, they feel wanted because of the extra service flashing the card produces. Where everything before was doom and gloom and we were continually at loggerheads with everyone, now there is a great partnership between the people, businesses and the politicians. Everybody seems to want to do their bit.'

### **A Working Partnership.**

Much of the publicity to date has been negative, highlighting the demise of Wishaw. Investors have steered clear of speculating in Wishaw because there was no clear indication that imminent changes were planned or that the political will is for improvement. Furthermore the machinery of Local Government takes time to research, plan and implement. To the public the perception is, nothing is being done so they get used to habitually going out of town to shop and talking down their own town centre.

Progress can only come about through partnership, working together with all those who have an interest in town. There is a wonderful opportunity to kick start the local economy in the most cost effective way. The knock on from such a simple idea has been proved to be remarkable.

1. Shoppers changing their habits back to the high street.
2. Investors quickly recognising the opportunity of returning to the high street and away from speculating out of town.

3. Compliance with NPPG 8 Retailing guidelines as set out by the Scottish Office Development Department.
4. The immediate perception to public, investors and shopkeepers that something is happening. That political and economic will is in favour of in town development.
5. The street becomes visibly busier attracting others into town to see what is happening.

The system can be duplicated for other towns in similar problems, without detriment to the Wishaw project.

The Card. would be simple credit card size numbered plastic with the front side saying Wishaw Business Group citizens loyalty card, the reverse would have the name of our sponsor. The idea of a North Lanarkshire in Partnership sounds good. Emergency local telephone numbers could be another winner affording the need to hold onto the card.

### Publicity.

Every participating shop that registers with the Business group would be given a promotion pack. This would contain a door sticker, posters, ideas on rewards, how to promote the card through staff and staff training, a complete support package in order to make the card count and give mileage to the project.

The local press are to fully support the campaign with a full countdown to launch initiative. To create a buzz.

Even more exciting is that 'Reporting Scotland' will be in town for the launch. They intend to interview shoppers, shopkeepers the business group leaders and of course our sponsors. The posture would be very positive highlighting Wishaw's initiative at fighting back against competition, how partnership is needed for regeneration for market towns, how North Lanarkshire in partnership are leading the way in Scotland. The close association of North Lanarkshire and Business Group together with National Publicity can do wonders for the town.

**Further, it is the BBC,s intention to return to the town at a later date and monitor progress. The mlieage and the opportunity for good press and media coverage is there for the taking.**

### **Extending The Program.**

Smaller communities such as Overtown, Newmains, Cleland will be included in the program, either from day one or as soon as registration and their business pack is received. We want to support community businesses. It is East Kilbride, Hamilton, Glasgow and Edinburgh that have robbed our town of business and development. Now is our chance to fight back since these developments outwith North Lanarkshire have robbed our region of valuable income, sources of revenue and therefor investment capital.

Following the Wishaw launch and the lessons which no doubt will be learned, there is no reason why the idea cannot be extended to Bellshill, Airdrie, Kilsyth and the like.

### **Cost of Launch.**

All the initial press and television coverage is free.

The first batch of cards would cost £2400 + VAT.

We would anticipate needing twice this amount around 20,000 cards in the first full year.

A Citizens loyalty Calendar with the Sponsor occupying centre spot. posters, door stickers, a training pack, business registration forms and a registration card for all citizens participating would be needed to support the campaign.

Wishaw business Group would be the administrators of the scheme the leaders and members providing voluntary support to the project.

The total maximum cost of the first twelve months would not exceed £10,000.

This project offers a tremendous opportunity for the best publicity with future repeat publicity and the most positive press coverage.

We would require our sponsors to support the project by contributing 50% of the total project cost to a maximum of £5,000.

**Full Review.** As this project is in support of small business and business communities we would anticipate that after the Wishaw Launch, the business group could help in training for expansion of the scheme to other towns in North Lanarkshire.

Should you require additional information or clarification on any point, then please give me a call.

We would need confirmation and artwork no later than the meeting with Cllr McGuigan on Wednesday 25th September.

Yours sincerely,



Alan Patterson.

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\*\*\*END\*\*\*