

EXECUTIVE NEWS

Information bulletin from the Chief Executive's Department

No. 44 February 2006

Be my guest, says Dave

TV presenter shares the secret of good communication



Wigan Tonight: popular BBC presenter Dave Guest hosting the convention

250 people came together on Friday 3rd February, for the sixth annual Partnership Convention at the Pier Centre, Pottery Road in Wigan.

This year, the event was hosted by the BBC presenter Dave Guest.

As in previous years people from different agencies and services enjoyed the chance to get together with elected members, community and voluntary groups and others.

The focus for this year's event was "getting the message across". Speakers including Peter Smith, Joyce Redfearn and Rev. Ray Hutchinson talked about the

major success stories from the past year – and then all participants were asked to put forward their own success stories.

With help from Mark Ashley, editor of the Courier newspaper and Peter Coulson from Children's Services, the convention then got to work to convert this good news into a communications campaign for everyone in the partnership to share.

At the time of writing the convention report is just being put together – and will be published in newspaper format by the Courier in early March.



A delegate to the partnership convention

If you want more details about the event – please contact Lynn Kay, Partnership Support Officer on Wigan 776156

Saying thank you

We are now half way through a series of ten Big Thank You events – one in each of the townships.

In each area we've contacted all the local groups and organisations we know – and asked them to nominate a volunteer or volunteers who they feel need to be recognised for the work that they have done.

In total over 300 people will be recognised for their work in all kinds of fields including:

- Charity Shops
- Young people's groups
- Community Transport
- Caring services
- Sports groups
- Neighbourhood groups

On the night of each event, certificates have been awarded by elected members or by representatives from Wigan and Leigh CVS. In total over 1500 people will have attended the events.

Feedback from all of the events has been almost universally positive. For the council the Big Thank You campaign is providing important recognition for the work it does in supporting volunteering. For the groups themselves it is providing a welcome public and civic acknowledgement of their contribution to the Borough.

In strategic terms we all recognise the growing importance of support for volunteering. It is a key part of the Local Area Agreement – and over the next few years is likely to be the focus for development.

Further details from Anne Roberts, 6165

The future of LSPs

Just before Christmas the government published a consultation document: "LSPs: Shaping their future".

In it they describe their aspirations for the future of partnership working and the government's support for the development of partnerships that can help to deliver local services with local people.

The consultation document has been considered in some detail and a response sent to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

In general terms Wigan Borough Partnership (as our Local Strategic Partnership) supported the tone of the proposals but made a number of comments:

- Partnerships need to suit local circumstances and should not have to fit a "one size fits all" model from Government;
- Good relationships between partnerships and the local authority are vital;
- Local Strategic Partnerships need to be given the opportunity to help develop plans which cover the strategic priorities for all local services, and that devolve more decision making to a local level (from central government);
- Continued support for community participation and involvement is vital – and the LSP has an important role in promoting and coordinating this work.

More details from Simon Dale, 6171

Putting on the style

Research shows that the most successful and well-regarded councils also have a clear brand, including visual identity.

Our new logo was introduced in 2001, but research has revealed widespread inconsistency in its application, low visibility and a lack of recognition amongst a significant minority of local residents. Especially at smaller sizes, the word 'council' was almost unreadable.

The logo has now been modified to make it easier to use and easier to identify, and a 'Corporate Style Guide' produced describing how, where and when the logo should be used. The aim is to ensure "consistent, high quality presentation of the council's physical brand", in line with the objectives of the corporate communications strategy.



The old logo (left) with the new one on the right

All council departments and service sectors **must** use the council logo, colour and typeface on **all** printed and electronic material (e.g. letters, stationery, reports, forms, notices, name badges, livery, uniforms, posters, leaflets, booklets, newsletters, adverts, exhibitions, presentations, website etc) and observe the instructions on dealing with partner organisations.

There will no cost or wastage involved in the introduction of the revised logo and style guide. Departments have been asked to delete any existing electronic copies of the old logo, but must use up any existing stocks of literature/publications etc before producing any style guide-compliant material.

The various representations and formats of the logo are available on the intranet at <http://wm10/logos>

(Andy Donnelly, 3145)

Singing stars hit the high notes for team of the year



David Grant presents an award to students at St John Fisher high school

Fame Academy judges and Pop Idol vocal coaches, Carrie and David Grant, currently featured in BBC 1's "The Sound of Musicals", presented the council's 'team of the year' prizes at an awards ceremony on February 10th.

Overall winners were the licensing team for the way they have implemented the new licensing laws.

The awards showcase the achievements and hard work of Metro staff, and recognise how they have led to continuing improvements in services for the borough's residents.

The day started with Carrie and David delivering a 'Reach for the Stars' speech for council staff. David then visited Pembec and St John Fisher High Schools. He opened a new theatre at Pembec and heard about a 'Battle of the Bands'

competition that will take place there later this year.

At St John Fisher he watched performances by pupils and presented a plaque in recognition of it becoming a specialist college for the performing arts.

Council chief executive Joyce Redfearn said: "We were delighted that Carrie and David came to Wigan to see examples of the teamwork that has helped us become an excellent council.

"The awards recognise and celebrate the way our staff have worked together to provide quality services for the residents of the borough."

The winners were (in reverse order):

Achievement

3rd: Development Control, Planning and Regeneration

2nd: Leigh Building Services, Engineering Services

1st: Licensing, Community Protection



Cheers: the licensing team celebrate their award

Customer Satisfaction

3rd: Grounds Maintenance, Leisure Trust

2nd: Pest Control, Community Protection

1st: Building Control, Planning and Regeneration

Cross Departmental Working

2nd: Communications Officers Group

1st: Investors in People Internal Reviewers

Innovation

3rd: Benefits, Finance and I T

3rd: Equality, Diversity and HR, Wigan and Leigh Housing

2nd: Learning Disabilities Team, Adult Services

1st: Policy and Performance Improvement, Chief Execs

Motivation

3rd: Robin Park Catering Team, Wigan Culture and Leisure Trust

2nd: Streetcare Helpline, Engineering Services

1st: Family Placement, Children and Young People's Service

Are you engaged?



We're talking....but is anybody listening?

It's an age-old question...do people really care about their council and its decisions?

And it's a question that was put to the borough's citizen's panel recently.

Members were asked how interested they were in getting involved in Wigan Council decisions. Here's their verdict:

50% said: "I'd like to be kept informed about what Wigan Council is doing, but I'm happy to let them get on with their job."

36% said: "I would like to be more involved in what Wigan Council does and the decisions it makes."

11% said: "I'm not interested in how Wigan Council do their job as long as they do it."

Clearly most people *do* care even if they don't always want to get more involved. More spare time and better information were by far and away the biggest incentives to getting more involved, with lack of childcare and transport not seen as a problem for most people.

When asked who they would approach if they wanted to try and influence something that was happening in their area, 54% of panel members said the council, 47% said their councillor and 38% their MP (voters could choose more than one option).