North Lanarkshire Council
Report

Policy and Strategy Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref CC/SP **Date** 05/06/25

Annual Communications Review and Evaluation

From Stephen Penman, Chief Officer (Strategy and Engagement)

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Executive Summary

Following approval of the Communications and Engagement Strategy by the Policy and Strategy Committee in May 2024, a full programme of communications activities, campaigns and projects has been undertaken over the last year to support the ambitions outlined in The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the deliverables aligned with the new five-year Programme of Work.

As outlined in the 'measuring success' element of the agreed strategy, all major communications and engagement activity is reviewed and evaluated to ensure alignment with The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work and to demonstrate effectiveness, positive outcomes and impacts.

The associated review and evaluation is appended to this report.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee:

(1) Acknowledges the significant communications work undertaken during 2024/25.

(2) Otherwise notes the contents of the report.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	All ambition statements
Programme of Work	All Programmes of Work

1. Background

1.1 The Policy and Strategy Committee approved a five-year Communication and Engagement Strategy in May 2024. As part of the implementation of the strategy, the Chief Officer (Strategy and Engagement) is required to present an annual communications evaluation to the committee for approval.

1.2 Annual review and evaluation reports for communications activity have demonstrated the value, benefits and effectiveness of good, multi-disciplinary communications since the inception of The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

1.3 As outlined in the Communication and Engagement Strategy, an annual review and evaluation of communications activity is crucial to demonstrate effectiveness and performance of the service. The evaluation report links the outputs and outcomes generated by Corporate Communications to improved service delivery and positive impacts for residents, communities and businesses. All activity is aligned to key themes in The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work, as well as regular council business.

2. Report

2.1 It should be noted that the annual plan evaluation does not contain all communications activity over 2024-25. It summarises significant communications activity relevant to The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work, as well as other campaigns and communications activity with a clear focus on outputs and positive outcomes for people, communities and businesses.

2.2 The evaluation incorporates an overview of the communications activity in 2024-25, key annual highlights and narrative around how communications has supported services, council policies and the current programme of work and how they align with The Plan for North Lanarkshire. This review also incorporates an overview of the operating model for communications going forward.

2.3 In line with the overarching communications strategy, all major activity must support either a Programme of Work, or an ambition statement, which aligns with the core narrative supporting the Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit brand strategy.

2.4 Much of the focus for communications activity over the last year has been on supporting specific projects within the seven Programmes of Work, as well as ongoing campaigns aligned to The Plan for North Lanarkshire. It should be noted that communications support for committee business, civic activities and functional services are standard operations and may not be included in the evaluation.

2.5 Several key issues that required significant communications support are highlighted in the report, specifically Storm Eowyn, the first red weather warning in Central Scotland in over a decade, the impact of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete on a range of services and management of communications around the UK General Election.

2.6 All campaigns that have been evaluated will be shared and discussed with services across the council to ensure they inform service changes or improvements. Evaluations will inform future campaigns and phases of campaigns to ensure a robust demonstration of the outcomes which can be achieved by excellent communication activity. Key achievements include:

- The promotion of the refurbished library at Motherwell contributed to an increase in visitor numbers by almost 11% in 2024/25.
- Open Market Purchase Scheme campaign saw a 569 increase in click-throughs to the dedicated webpage which generated a 57% increase in applications, resulting in 83 properties purchased.
- A specially designed exhibition to promote the future of Cumbernauld Town Centre realised 439 individual engagements with officers, 263 survey responses and 1,667 hits to the webpage.
- The multi-channel Sum it Up numeracy campaign generated impressive results with more than 450 individuals supported to date, 360 learners registered for Scottish Qualifications and 283 achieving SQA qualifications.
- After creating a compelling brand and look to The Hive women's business incubator, the dynamic campaign drove 444 online registrations, 1,424 hours of workspace bookings over the year and importantly, helped create 31 new female-led businesses.
- The modern apprentice campaign saw a rise of 672% in applications compared to the previous year.
- Work to promote the NL Employer Charter generated 7.7 million impressions, resulting in 49,000 click-throughs to the webpage, video adverts fully viewed 53,000 times and we now have 62 employers registered to become accredited charter members.
- As a result of activity to promote the Working For Families programme, 680 parents have now registered, with 206 securing employment, 152 gaining work placements and 228 attaining qualifications.
- The range of campaign work to support people struggling with the cost of living, included supporting Challenge Poverty Week, which saw the tackling poverty team assisting 1,992 individuals, addressing over £6.4 million of debt (an annual increase of 14%), as well as requests for benefit checks rising by over 41% and welfare rights referrals increased by 25%, generating nearly £48 million in additional benefit income for North Lanarkshire residents.
- The campaign to promote North Lanarkshire as an attractive base for business saw the videos attract 4.4 million impressions, 28,000 clicks-throughs to the Invest in North Lanarkshire website, generating 54 enquiries from interested businesses.
- The period products campaign webpage has been visited 20,000 times and the animation has been viewed 105,000 times. When polled (2025), 91% of women said they were aware of the service and 82% said they had seen the service advertised, which is testament to the power of the campaign's reach.
- A campaign to address under-reporting of domestic abuse from women over 50 reached 53,000 women, gaining 441k impressions on Facebook/Instagram and 667 link clicks to the adult protection webpage outlining support services available to them. Aura reported an uptick in women contacting them, with 50 looking for support.
- The innovative North Lanarkshire Stories Trail created and produced by the team across 10 locations has seen 20,000 visits to the webpage in the six months since launch and almost 1,000 interactions with the QR codes at locations.
- The campaign to promote the annual pantomime at a new venue saw ticket sales rise by 34%, the promotion of Easter sports camps saw sales rise by 14% and compelling campaigns promoting leisure saw gym memberships grow overall by 16.5%, from 30,048 in 2024 to 35,021 in 2025.
- The promotion and creation of two themed fanzone events at Broadwood Stadium on the back of Scotland's national football team reaching the UEFA European Championships, saw both 5,000-capacity events sold out.

2.7 There is a continued focus on linking internal communication activity with the council's overall strategy, ensuring staff can be ambassadors for the council's work and feel informed about major priorities. This was central to the organisation of a series of

roadshow events to promote the ambition and delivery of The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work. A total of 75 events took place across 42 different venues with 2,630 attendees, and feedback demonstrating that the roadshow was relevant, informative and dynamic.

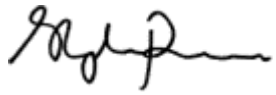
2.8 The challenges facing communications from the emergence and increased use of AI, automation, changing communication technology and algorithms and an increasingly fragmented social media landscape are acknowledged in the report, with a commitment to shaping and embracing them into the operating model for Corporate Communications over the next few years.

3. Measures of success

3.1 Measures of success are evidenced through communications outputs and outcomes aligned to projects and activity within The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work as outlined in the appended report.

4. Supporting documentation

4.1 Appendix One: Communications Plan Evaluation



Stephen Penman
Chief Officer, (Strategy and Engagement)

5. Impacts

5.1	**Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty** Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes ☐ No ☐
5.2	**Financial impact** Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.3	**HR policy impact** Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4	**Legal impact** Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5	**Data protection impact** Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes ☐ No ☐
5.6	**Technology / Digital impact** Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.8 Communications impact

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? Provides an overview of the positive impact on communities, people and businesses in North Lanarkshire through communications activity.

5.9 Risk impact

Is there a risk impact?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

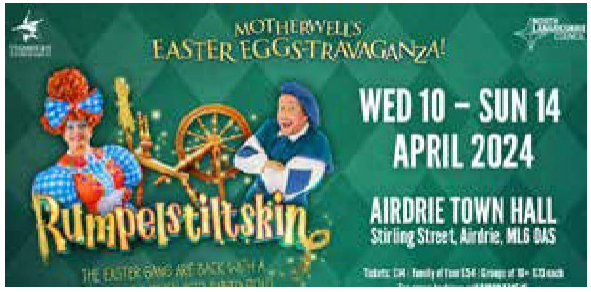
If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Appendix 1








LIVE HERE
It's Your Place

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

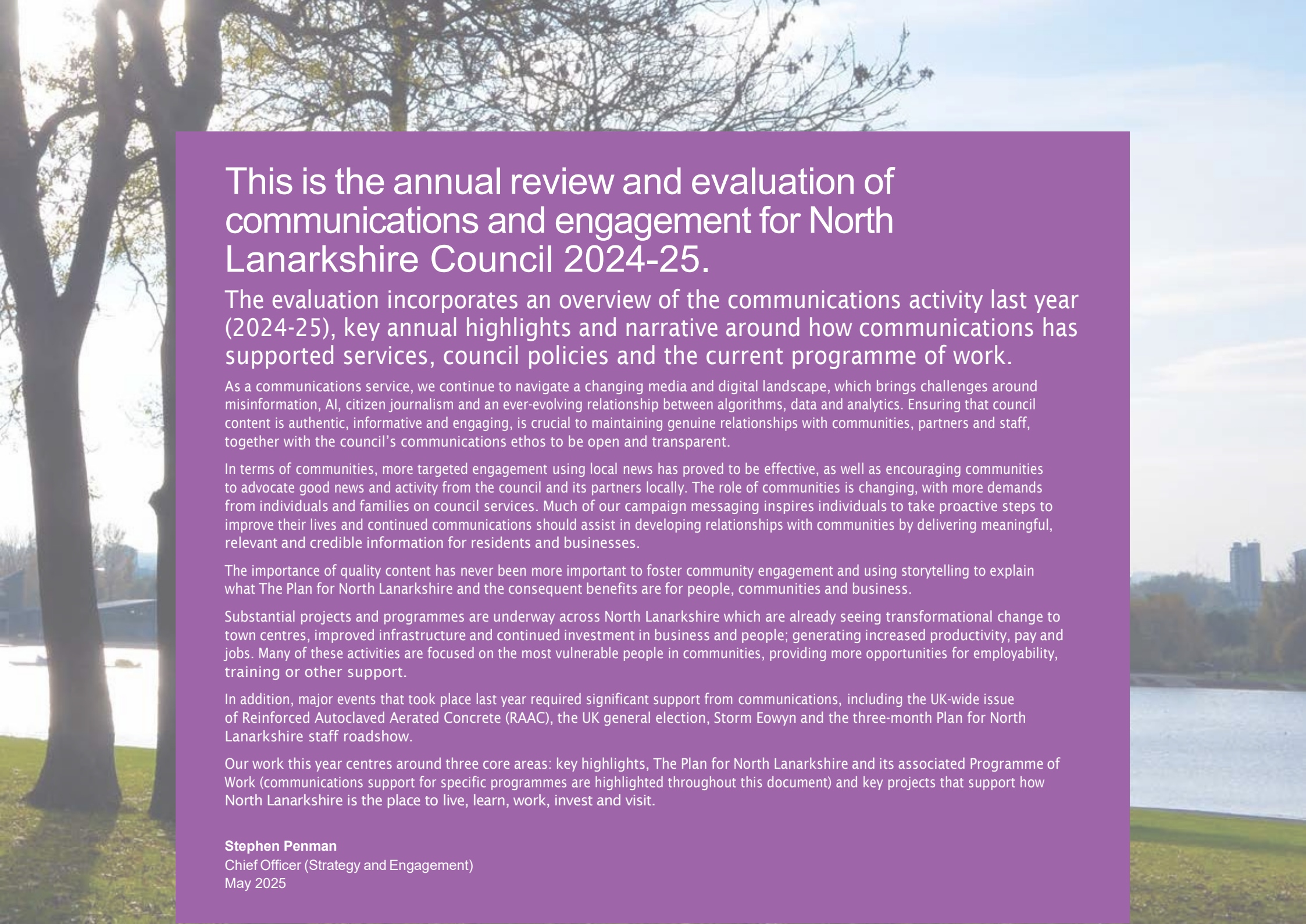
communications plan evaluation 2024 - 2025







LIVE
LEARN
WORK
INVEST
VISIT



This is the annual review and evaluation of communications and engagement for North Lanarkshire Council 2024-25.

The evaluation incorporates an overview of the communications activity last year (2024-25), key annual highlights and narrative around how communications has supported services, council policies and the current programme of work.

As a communications service, we continue to navigate a changing media and digital landscape, which brings challenges around misinformation, AI, citizen journalism and an ever-evolving relationship between algorithms, data and analytics. Ensuring that council content is authentic, informative and engaging, is crucial to maintaining genuine relationships with communities, partners and staff, together with the council's communications ethos to be open and transparent.

In terms of communities, more targeted engagement using local news has proved to be effective, as well as encouraging communities to advocate good news and activity from the council and its partners locally. The role of communities is changing, with more demands from individuals and families on council services. Much of our campaign messaging inspires individuals to take proactive steps to improve their lives and continued communications should assist in developing relationships with communities by delivering meaningful, relevant and credible information for residents and businesses.

The importance of quality content has never been more important to foster community engagement and using storytelling to explain what The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the consequent benefits are for people, communities and business.

Substantial projects and programmes are underway across North Lanarkshire which are already seeing transformational change to town centres, improved infrastructure and continued investment in business and people; generating increased productivity, pay and jobs. Many of these activities are focused on the most vulnerable people in communities, providing more opportunities for employability, training or other support.

In addition, major events that took place last year required significant support from communications, including the UK-wide issue of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), the UK general election, Storm Eowyn and the three-month Plan for North Lanarkshire staff roadshow.

Our work this year centres around three core areas: key highlights, The Plan for North Lanarkshire and its associated Programme of Work (communications support for specific programmes are highlighted throughout this document) and key projects that support how North Lanarkshire is the place to live, learn, work, invest and visit.

Stephen Penman
Chief Officer (Strategy and Engagement)
May 2025

The story

LIVE

LEARN
WORK
INVEST
VISIT

This is North Lanarkshire.

The place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest, and Visit.

It's a place where residents, communities and businesses have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic but one that can and will recover.

It's our vision, our shared ambition. It's what We Aspire to achieve.

Our ambitious plans are already underway for social and economic regeneration and growth that benefits everyone in North Lanarkshire. We are already responding to major social, economic and technological change.

We are improving the lives of everyone who lives, learn, works, invests or visits here by driving inclusive economic growth, increasing skills and generating jobs and training opportunities. In doing this, we will reduce poverty and inequality.

We work in partnership to achieve this and we involve people in communities in what we do. We share our ambitions with them.

We have big ideas and the vision to achieve them.

LIVE HERE

North Lanarkshire has welcoming, vibrant towns. Places where people want to live.

We have a history, but a much bigger future.

We have a great mix of housing, facilities and services. We're transforming our town centres. We're helping people live for longer in their own homes. We're improving transport links.

These are happy, connected, safe and resilient communities.

LEARN HERE

All young people in North Lanarkshire can achieve their full potential. They have the tools to make their way in life through quality, exciting, and challenging learning. That means improving attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Learners of all ages have the skills to take advantage of the employment opportunities our growing economy brings. We have a flexible, resilient and skilled workforce for the future.

Everyone has access to quality learning and teaching. We make sure our schools are inclusive, energetic places which take into account the needs of all our young people. Young people have experiences which last a lifetime and a voice in their own learning.

WORK HERE

We have a dynamic, diverse and growing economy with a great mix of small, medium-sized and large businesses.

People in North Lanarkshire are connected to employment and have the support they need to access jobs. They have skills appropriate to the needs of employers. They are supported, no matter their background, personal needs or economic circumstances.

We provide great places to work, with engaged, ambitious people who are ambassadors for the services they provide.

INVEST HERE

North Lanarkshire is the best location for business. There are excellent transport links across Scotland and the UK, a strong employment market, a skilled workforce and flexible land and premises. There is an effective digital infrastructure.

Businesses have the support to grow and succeed, to develop new products and markets and to create and secure new jobs.

Existing businesses have the help they need and North Lanarkshire is attractive to new employers. Residents have job opportunities and our economy will continue to grow in a way that benefits all local people.

VISIT HERE

North Lanarkshire is the place to visit and play. Our tourism sector is growing with improved opportunities and better attractions and events.

We offer distinctive, authentic experiences which provide value for money and are accessible to all. Investment is generated by achieving the right mix of events hosted here, bringing additional money into the local economy and supporting jobs and business. We are building on our reputation for hosting world class events.

This is a place for active, healthy lives. A place where the right facilities are in the places they're needed. A place to enjoy.

Corporate Communications Production Overview 2024/25

Strategic Communication

Corporate Communications sits within the wider Strategy and Engagement service, providing enhanced opportunities to engage with the public through interdependent services: the community partnership team, customer service hub and leadership and operating model. With strategy and customer experience joining in 2025/26, strengthened engagement with residents and businesses can be explored.

The range of communications activities is far-reaching and diverse and requires insight, coordination and direction in order to deliver a quality service. Much of this work is planned, some is reactive.

But our approach is always professional, structured and embedded in strategic thinking. Some highlights of the year are outlined below.

Storm Eowyn

A rare red weather warning in January 2025 saw schools, workplaces, transport and shops close as Storm Éowyn wreaked havoc on North Lanarkshire due to winds up to 100mph. The Met Office warning claimed there could be a risk to life due to flying debris, fallen trees and damage to buildings.

Following the initial Corporate Resilience Management Team/gold command meeting, decisions were made about services, including meeting closures of schools, leisure facilities and other impacts such as domestic bin collections. The council has well-developed plans for severe weather and the team worked closely with its communications partners through local, regional and national resilience arrangements.

Corporate Communications immediately stepped up, pulling together a crisis response team, creating a dedicated webpage on the council website with

and businesses, such as road closures. The webpage was the central source of the most up to date information and provided clarity, reassurance and authenticity, with over 3,000 hits and almost 2,000 unique users visiting the page.

We also created a partner checklist, where we identified helpful information from partners including Police Scotland, Transport Scotland, Scottish Government and Scottish Fire and Rescue, that could be beneficial to residents and staff on the day of the storm. The team checked for key issues such as power, fallen trees, road closures and flood alerts, and shared anything appropriate on our social media channels and web page.

The team worked over the four days of the storm, liaising with contacts at key services to get the latest information to promote service updates. There were over 500 incidents reported on fallen trees and messaging was devised to reduce multiple reports

and to manage resident expectations on clear-ups, with roads a priority. A local primary school was impacted into the next operational week and communications were issued to parents/carers to keep them updated of learning arrangements.

On social media, there were 1,216,886 impressions across all channels, 26,612 engagements, with Facebook proving to have most cut-through with 994,451 impressions and 11,108 engagements. Email was also particularly effective, with four bulletins issued to 144,982 recipients in total, which were opened 118,228 times, generating an average open rate of 53.5%.

Our social media channels received a number of comments from residents expressing their gratitude for the flow of updated information over the days of the storm and its aftermath.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

The UK-wide issue of RAAC unfolded at the tail end of 2023 with the material being identified in the majority of the roof at the Motherwell Concert Hall and Theatre following a review of the corporate estate. The immediacy of the issue was highlighted due to some of the RAAC panels being damaged by water ingress, resulting in the immediate closure of the venue for safety reasons. This required a series of communications to alert current and future ticket holders of the change of venue for many of the performances to Airdrie Town Hall, with the showcase performance of the annual Christmas pantomime moved to Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility for the second time.

To be as open and transparent as possible, a dedicated webpage was set up with information on what facilities have been affected and what the council is doing to address any issues. This page is constantly updated with the latest information and received almost 2,000 page views over the year.

Ongoing assessments are being carried out on council housing, with communications underway to the very small number of residents affected. This remains an ongoing communications activity for the team to ensure that the council is doing everything it can to make buildings, facilities and homes as safe as possible.

UK General Election

Corporate Communications has an important role to play in the running of elections, both national and local.

We provided communications support for the UK General Election in July 2024, which included specific pre-election guidance for officers and other staff to ensure they were aware of restrictions throughout this period. Ahead of the General Election in July, the key message was the need for residents to have appropriate voter ID; the first time this was needed for an election in Scotland.

Information was posted regularly on social media, using information from the Electoral Commission, highlighting different types of ID and how to apply for alternative free ID. The message was also included in news releases, GovDelivery emails, staff newsletter and on the web site as part of the overall communications plan for the election.

We carried out promotional activity to encourage residents to register to vote and for a postal vote, as well as encouraging residents to go to the polls to cast their vote.

Given the timing of the elections, during the summer school holidays in Scotland, issues began to arise around the postal vote. A small number of the 45,000 postal voters in the area had not received their postal voting pack and we were able to quickly identify and communicate arrangements to provide a replacement for affected voters.

We worked with national broadcast media to ensure coverage of the election count was delivered effectively, and immediate updates following the announcements of new MPs were communicated on a wide range of media channels.

The General Election resulted in by-elections in two council wards in October. We supported the election team again to provide residents with the information they need to use their vote.

Budget Engagement 2024/25

Although meaningful and effective consultation on local authority budgets is difficult to achieve for a range of reasons, including the complexity and extent of services, unconscious bias on the part of participants and the consequent difficulties stemming from asking people to value one service over another. Following on from an exceptional response rate to our quantitative survey in 23/24, our team procured a research agency to build on this insight. For a qualitative perspective, the agency created a series of focus groups and in-depth interviews to provide resident insight on their understanding of council services and finances.

There were three elements to this work: a desk review of previous budget research and budget decisions carried out by the council, five community days (where independent, external researchers engaged directly with residents within communities) and group discussion sessions. The fieldwork was carried out in November and December 2024. The total sample was 101 respondents, which is considered an excellent qualitative sample for this work and included residents from all nine community board areas.

The research demonstrated that people find it difficult to discuss council finances, particularly the detail for each service. However, overwhelmingly, respondents were keen to see services preserved without further cuts, and investment in the future of services and in the regeneration of North Lanarkshire, along with strong leadership which will fight to protect services. There was a desire that the council should make efficiencies, change the way it delivers services, and innovate before cutting services.

People thought it important that the council had demonstrable values around ensuring that the most vulnerable people were not disproportionately impacted by any cuts.

Consultation and engagement on budgets is notoriously difficult for local government, and this qualitative research only strengthens that perception. A report was provided to elected members to assist with making budget decisions that included the findings of the qualitative research, as well as the quantitative research carried out the previous year, which still has relevance.

Campaigns and Media

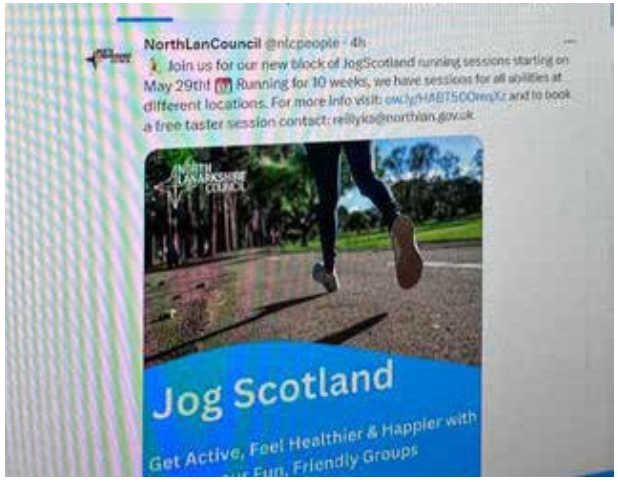
Our media team dealt with **320 enquiries,** provided **43 statements** and issued **300 news releases** over **2024-25,** produced and posted **131 videos** to support proactive stories, tweeted **795 times,** compiled **798 Facebook posts, 278 on Linkedin, 69 photographs on Instagram** and **71 videos on TikTok,** generating a wealth of coverage in traditional and digital media.

Preparing media responses and advice for residents in relation to news items or incidents, including Storm Eowyn, council tax and budget or incidents and issues stemming from external and internal political, economic and social events, are core activities. Media interest can exacerbate issues, and social media can fuel misinformation and incongruous sentiment among communities. It is important that communications are timely, open and valid, in order to clarify facts for people or to provide reassurance of action being taken.

Important advice was issued to residents and businesses following a chemical spillage in Coatbridge and reassurance messaging was provided to the community following unfounded concerns at The Time Capsule. A global IT outage linked to an external provider that affected organisations around the world impacted on some card payments for council services including leisure centres. The team quickly issued information on social media, as well as to staff operating the payment systems.

The team also liaised closely with NHS Lanarkshire public health over a very small public health outbreak in a town, providing communications support, letters for parents and promotion of vaccination clinics.

Continued pressure from parent/carer groups regarding the changes to school transportation limits, led to significant media enquiries. A later change in policy was agreed by the council to remove the previously agreed changes limits in the coming year for primary-aged pupils only and this was welcomed by parents and carers across the region.



Read all about it

In January 2024 we worked with the libraries team to promote the opening of the newly-refurbished Motherwell Library. Key to this was launching an appeal to find the family of a Scottish woman who left more than £350,000 to two Lanarkshire libraries - decades after she emigrated to the US.

This story gained national attention with both STV and BBC news covering the story as well as national and local newspapers and radio.

The refurbished library is proving popular with local people with visitor numbers up almost 11% in 2024/25, compared with the previous year and the number of items borrowed up 14.5% over the same period.

North Lanarkshire's own Billy Elliot, Scottish ballet star Reece Clarke, returned to perform in his hometown in August.

He took to the stage at Airdrie Town Hall along with fellow Royal Ballet dancers.

The media team worked closely with colleagues from Active and Creative Communities as well as sponsors Albert Bartlett to secure national coverage of his presentation to pupils at Airdrie Academy including BBC Reporting Scotland and STV.

The sell-out shows celebrated Reece's journey from local talent to international ballet sensation, with proceeds supporting The Guide Dogs charity.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire
PROGRAMME OF WORK

TRANSFORMING PLACES

Housing

Our new council house building programme forms part of the council's overall vision to transform communities and town centres as places where people want to live. This year, the target to deliver new homes by 2035 increased to 6,000, with a total of 2,393 delivered to date and 278 this year alone.

We promoted key milestones including new sites, builds in progress and completed developments, together with showcasing the quality of our homes, their eco-friendly features, and tenants' stories.

We issued newsletters via email to 10,361 residents facilitated interviews for local and national media to highlight significant milestones including tenants' testimonials and explained how the council is transforming derelict properties in town centres into quality homes, inciting local pride. Video undoubtedly generated an increase in likes and shares online while raising awareness of our investment, ambition and life changing new homes.

We used local channels to promote completion of various energy efficiency and renewable technology projects across the area, focussing on happy tenants and outlining the improvements, investment and benefits.

These include the installation of EV charging pillars to support the move to electric vehicles, the availability of cycle parking and more recently supporting a Ministerial Visit, to a development at Brandon Street, Motherwell, to showcase a ground source heat pump system.

A dedicated campaign to promote the Open Market Purchase Scheme, which aims to tackle homelessness, increase the supply of affordable housing and bring back long-term empty properties back into use was successful. Consistent messaging and targeted promotion highlighted the benefits of the scheme for local communities, private sellers and landlords. Our campaign saw an 837% increase in page views, 10426 impressions from Google search ads with an impressive CTR of 13.25% and importantly, a massive 569% jump in click-throughs to the dedicated webpage to 897 last year. This generated a 57% increase in applications which saw 83 properties purchased (of which 34 were long-term empty homes), contributing to 836 homes secured since the scheme's launch in 2013.

CityDeal

2024 saw the 10th anniversary of Glasgow City Region City Deal which we marked with communications highlighting the progress to date and the benefits to the economy and local communities.

From November to January a community engagement exercise was run on the updated design for the East Airdrie Link Road. Corporate communications supported this through a news release, GovDelivery email, web information and social media messaging throughout the exercise.

The council received 77 responses to the engagement exercise, and feedback is being used to help refine the detailed route of the road ahead of the planning application being submitted.

Cumbernauld Town Centre

We developed and produced an exhibition in Cumbernauld Library to highlight ideas for the town centre as part of its investment and regeneration programme. As well as a brief history of Cumbernauld, the exhibition showed concept designs to give residents and businesses an opportunity to highlight their needs and demands for the future use of the town centre. We promoted the exhibition which was held over six weeks on social media, traditional media and included information on a dedicated webpage. Council officers were on hand to discuss the concepts with visitors, resulting in 439 individual engagements with officers. Almost all visitors to the exhibition were supportive of the demolition of The Centre progressing, happy with the concept designs, with residents keen to see Cumbernauld town centre transformed and have the negative image of the town removed. A few areas of concern were highlighted through the engagement, such as parking, accessibility and the famous St Enoch's clock. There were also 263 survey responses and 1,667 hits to the webpage.

We also 'styled' the fronts of vacant units and the escalator to alert visitors and businesses to the fact that the town centre is changing. The visual panels featured a QR code which took users through the dedicated webpage with the latest updates on what was happening in the town centre.

Community Hubs

Across North Lanarkshire there are currently five community hub projects in or close to beginning construction. These projects represent an investment of over £160million.

They include Orbiston Community Hub in Bellshill, St Kevin's Community Hub in Bargeddie, Gartcosh Community Hub, the extension to Chryston High School and the St Stephen's Community Hub.

Our media team has worked with the estate development team to publicise these projects throughout the key stages of their development, including the new Chryston Community Hub declared officially open in June 2024. To celebrate the opening we created three videos which were seen by thousands of people.

The £22 million state-of-the-art facility houses Chryston Primary School and the new Community Health Clinic for NHS Lanarkshire, replacing the Muirhead Clinic.

DIGITAL NL

We continue to encourage residents and businesses to access council services online through our ongoing 'It's Quicker to Click' campaign. To migrate online, customers have to sign up to a MyAccount and by the end of March 2025, we have 159, 862 people registered, which means that all households in North Lanarkshire should have an account, with 5,125 average weekly users.This is a 17% rise on the figure for March 2024 and represents 57% of the adult population aged 16 and above in North Lanarkshire.

As more council services are available online, we are highlighting how residents can access the services. A further 16 services came online in the last year, which we promoted to communities.

Analysis of web visit data shows highlights from just some of the online services (using forms) completed from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, demonstrating increased use.

Promotion of the Driving Digital Locally intergenerational programme is showing how the council is supporting older residents to learn about digital technology. Details of successful projects were shared on our local channels and in relevant media, recognising the achievements of the 115 pupils and 90 residents who took part over eight sessions. Another project offering digital skills to people in Holytown saw 11 residents completing a course solely on the back of promoting locally.

Webpage or form	Page views (of which are unique)
Recycling book in	20181
Request a housing repair	16112
Request a special uplift	9217
Free school meals and clothing grants	7802
Report a household waste issue	6967
Request a new recycling bin	3561
Report anti-social behaviour	2835
Report a roads and pavements problem	2827
Complaint	2413
Fly-tipping report a problem	2324
Report an abandoned vehicle	2264
Request a new bin	1367
Request street cleaning	1340
Report a problem with a tree	1235
Report a problem with streetlighting	1340
Request pest control	1074
Request to join bin pullout service	956

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

Through the Centre of Excellence for Decarbonising Roads (CEDR), the council carried out the first trials of new materials designed to reduce carbon in the roads industry.

A range of innovative materials were applied during the trials, including a surface rejuvenator which aims to extend the life of the road, products to repair potholes and road marking materials.

Regular inspections of the trial sites are ongoing to monitor the condition and performance of each product over time.

In partnership with the CEDR partners, corporate communications delivered a communications plan to share learning and outcomes from the project with other local authorities, academic institutions, and private companies within the road industry.

Recycling

New shared waste facilities for flats are delivering a significant improvement in recycling levels.

As a result of contamination, the previous bins regularly saw 70% of materials rejected – with the new bins, more than 98% is recycled. To support installation of the new facilities at 80 locations, a comprehensive pack of information was created and provided to tenants to help them use the bins effectively.

A new grant scheme offering small to medium sized businesses help to reduce their environmental impact and improve the sustainability was launched in April 2024. We promoted the Net Zero Business Challenge Fund through local media and our channels aimed at the business sector, and as a result, our enterprise team received 30 applications.

10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY 2024

Get Walking Lanarkshire

2024 marked the 10th anniversary of Get Walking Lanarkshire, a partnership between North and South Lanarkshire Councils, NHS Lanarkshire and Paths for All which organises 33 free weekly walks.

We promoted a series of four special walks held in May to celebrate the anniversary and followed up with social media posts thanking everyone who took part and using photos from the walks.

In October, we followed up with a news release and four-week social media campaign highlighting different benefits of the health walks, with photos and quotes from participants.

The social media posts were well received, with high engagement rates and the campaign resulted in a number of new walkers joining the health walks programme.

BRIGHTER FUTURES

Sum it Up

We used a multi-channel campaign to promote our adult numeracy programme designed to enhance confidence with numbers and increase employability prospects. This included the creation of 12 videos featuring real participants describing their experiences and achievements which were promoted on Google, Snapchat, YouTube, Spotify and 60 online radio stations. Print materials and outdoor adverts were strategically placed in high-footfall areas such as supermarkets, schools, GP surgeries and individual classes were promoted on the Adult Learning Facebook page.

- Adverts and videos generated over 13.2 million impressions and 95.7k clicks in total
- As a result of campaign activities, the webpage was visited 85K times by 66K users
- The Adult Learning Facebook page grew from 720 to 1,030 followers within two months
- Registrations for some classes increased from zero to full capacity following social media posts

This campaign generated impressive results with over 450 individuals supported to date.

- 360 learners registered for Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) courses

- 283 SQA qualifications achieved, with 52 learners earning multiple qualifications
- 95% of participants reported improved numeracy skill
- 98% expressed high satisfaction with their learning experience
- 77% reported improvements in their personal life and mental/physical health.

In addition, the multi-media team created a website for the west partnership, comprising eight local authorities, to promote numeracy courses across the region. This included designing and creating the website and content, including videos and sound. Called Multiply123, the website saw over 53,000 visits over the year, 38,400 unique users, 247 enquiry forms submitted and 240 people providing feedback that they found out about the campaign through advertising.

The Hive

Only 2.2% of working-age women in North Lanarkshire are self-employed. As a way of addressing inequalities in entrepreneurship, the team was heavily involved in the design and development of The Hive, which launched in February 2024. A visible space to house and support female-founded business start-ups to increase business participation and economic performance.

Offering desks, offices, meeting rooms, treatment rooms, onsite business support and networking opportunities, we are the first local authority in Scotland to offer a dedicated female-led business workspace.

Creating a compelling brand and look for the facility, as well as campaign collateral, we devised a campaign targeting women over 18, to drive them to register with The Hive, included the creation of bespoke, branded signage and fixtures and fittings within the facility itself, printed collateral (flyers, pull-up banners, posters), a webpage, new Facebook page, audio adverts across 60 online radio stations, and videos promoted on Google and YouTube.

The Hive Facebook page following grew from zero to over 1k followers, online adverts and FB posts gained a total of 3.2 million impressions, with 33.3k click-throughs to the Hive webpage. A series of testimonial videos featuring Hive users were viewed 91k times. This activity helped drive 444 online registrations with The Hive, 1,424 hours of workspace bookings over the year and 298 women attending events. Importantly, 31 new female-led businesses have been created thanks to support from The Hive.

Volunteers

Throughout 2023/24 and 24/25 we posted on facebook, X and Linkedin to highlight volunteering opportunities available to both individual people and to employers. These posts helped grow the number of people involved in volunteering projects in our area with 164 volunteering opportunities created and 62 organisations receiving grants to assist with volunteering, making a difference to communities in North Lanarkshire.

Pathways to Work

To support the recruitment of Modern Apprentices into council roles, 10 positions were promoted through Facebook and LinkedIn in May 2024 using videos and images of past and present apprentices describing their experiences and achievements. The series of posts received a combination of 2.3k reactions, comments or shares and 19k post clicks, which resulted in 170 applications. Prior to our activity, only 22 applications had been received.

Scottish Apprenticeship week was also promoted in March to raise awareness of apprenticeships to young people and their families through a series of posts celebrating our Apprentices, on Facebook and LinkedIn, which resulted in 2.1k reactions, comments or shares and 9k clicks.

The 2024 Student Summer Placement Programme was a resounding success, supporting 128 young people aged 16–18 from local high schools, priority groups, and New College Lanarkshire in paid six-week placements across key sectors including construction, health & social care, early years, sport, and administration. A strong communications strategy, working in partnership with our Early Careers Team, played a central role in achieving this success. A wide range of channels was used, including news releases, engaging student and mentor videos, regular social media posts, internal communications, and direct promotion through schools and colleges. These efforts helped raise awareness, encourage applications, and celebrate achievements, including a high-profile celebration event attended by over 300 people. Key achievements include a 97% completion rate, 43 students offered casual contracts,

and several securing apprenticeships or permanent employment. The programme also provided skills workshops, Green CSCS Cards for construction students, and real-world experience that has equipped participants with transferable skills and boosted their future prospects.

We are already preparing for our 2025 intake with key figures including:

- 1492 applications (250 last year) – a huge boost in applications
- 485 students invited to interview
- Approximately 192 placements
- Increase in Built Environment external placements from 21 in 2024 to 40 this year

NL Employer Charter

We work with the employability services team to promote the NL Employer Charter to businesses across North Lanarkshire to maintain and support a network of good employers who do business responsibly, to a set of prescribed standards.

With the aim of increasing membership, a campaign to promote the charter to all businesses in started in September 2024 through news articles, email marketing and social media posts. A series of adverts and videos were produced, using current charter member testimonials and promoted online on appropriate business-to-business channels: LinkedIn, Google and YouTube, through direct marketing with emails/hard-copy leaflets sent to 11,429 senior decision makers and supporting a presence at local business events.

The adverts generated 7.7 million impressions, resulting in 49k click-throughs to the webpage. The video adverts were fully viewed 53,000 times.

We now have 62 employers who have registered to become accredited charter members.

Working for Families

We worked with the service to devise a look and feel to the Working for Families programme, which with partners, provides tailored support to individual family needs, spurring parents into work as a way of lifting families out of poverty.

The programme's range of interventions helped parents overcome barriers to employment, resulting in increased income and unlocking employment and training opportunities. We produced a new brand, website, video and audio adverts and printed collateral (posters, flyers, pull-up banners and billboard/bus shelter ads) with the aim of encouraging parents to register with the programme.

The campaign activity generated 5M impressions and 69k click-throughs to the new website and the video advert was viewed 33k times. The audio adverts, featuring positive experiences from real service users, were shared across 60 online radio stations. Our Google search optimisation resulted in 11% of those searching for relevant terms clicking through to the WFF website.

As a result of this outstanding activity, 680 parents have now registered with Working for Families with 206 securing employment, 152 gaining work placements and 228 attaining qualifications, demonstrating that this campaign resonated with the right people.

Breastfeeding Friendly

We're the first council in Scotland to achieve the Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland Local Authority Award at the gold standard. This was followed by a win at the COSLA awards for the initiative in the Tackling Inequalities and Improving Health and Wellbeing category. We delivered internal communications to promote our breastfeeding policy by producing a video of an employee who felt she was enormously supported in her return to work and external communications to highlight our work with partners across our local communities to raise awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding support.

Our promotion of a range of initiatives including Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland week local events and highlighting work in schools and nurseries to deliver breastfeeding education has helped to change the culture of breastfeeding and support healthier futures for all. One recent post on Facebook received 498 engagements, 253 comments and 104 shares. Historically, North Lanarkshire has had one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in Scotland but this activity has helped change behaviour with at present 50% of babies are breastfed at the 10-14 day old review, with the breastfeeding rate at 6-8 weeks thereafter increasing from 23.1% to 30.4% over the period of The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

Tackling Poverty

Poverty and in particular, child poverty, continues to have a detrimental effect on famlies. We provided ongoing communications support throughout the year across a range of PR, digital, social media, website and campaign activities, including articles in the Tenants' News to the integrated multi-service teams that can assist.

We supported Challenge Poverty Week (7 to 13 October 2024) to help raise awareness of support and solutions to poverty available. Throughout the week, we shared information aligned with the daily themes to promote the wide range of advice and support available for families facing income or money challenges. This included promotion of local community events, and the launch of a Pension Credit campaign aimed at encouraging applications and entitlement to the Winter Fuel Payment.

- Challenge Poverty Week results: received 116,747 (6688 local channels) impressions, 361 reactions (10 local), 185 shares (13 local), 240 link clicks (19 local) and 993 engagements (53 local). A series of 13 animations created (also produced in BSL) and launched to support the campaign.
- During 24/25, debt advice services provided by our Tackling Poverty team assisted 1,992 individuals, addressing over £6.4 million of debt, an annual increase of 14%
- Requests for benefit checks rose by over 41% and welfare rights referrals increased by 25%, generating nearly £48 million in additional benefit income for North Lanarkshire residents.
- Housing Income Maximisers (trained to support tenants at every stage of their tenancy) generated a total income of £20,068,915.83 for tenants during 2024/25.

The Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan (RRTP) helps to address homelessness and we signpost people to support and help such as the Household Support Fund, which has assisted 140 young, single individuals facing financial hardships with essentials like rent, energy, and food costs, preventing further cases of homelessness.

The team works closely with the community partnership team to engage with communities by highlighting the successful delivery of local development plan projects using video to showcase community use of new facilities. As a way of influencing participation, particularly around the community asset transfers programme, we promoted local achievements to demonstrate successful community ownership of assets. A video made with grassroots sports club, Fir Park Corner was well received online, after it was granted ownership of Overtown Sports Pitch and Pavilion and was viewed 14,626 times and received 252 comments and reactions. The agreement has enabled the football club to establish the pitch and pavilion as a central hub for their teams, which currently include an amateur team, an over-35s team, and four children's teams.

INVEST IN NORTH LANARKSHIRE

To promote North Lanarkshire as an attractive base for business to set-up, relocate or expand, a series of eight videos featuring local companies who have either located to or expanded in the region were produced and shared using online channels LinkedIn and YouTube - targeting senior decision makers across the UK. News copy was promoted when new businesses located to the area, to highlight their experiences and the benefits to other potential organisations. There was also a feature in Commercial Property Magazine to further raise the profile of North Lanarkshire as THE place for business.

The videos have achieved 4.4 million impressions and 28k clicks-throughs to the Invest website. This represents an average click-through rate of 0.63%, which is higher than the industry average of 0.43%. This generated 54 enquiries from interested businesses through the website during the campaign period.

ONE SERVICE

As part of the One Service programme of work, The Plan for North Lanarkshire roadshow was planned, developed and delivered to coincide with the new five-year Programme of Work.

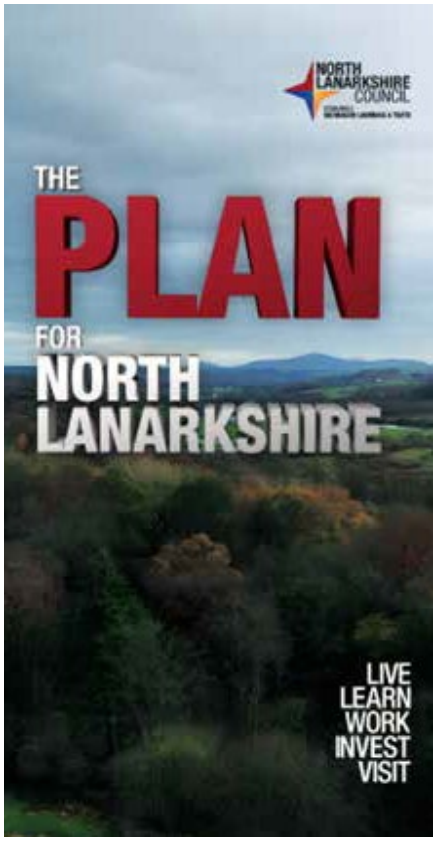
We organised a series of engagement events from April to September 2024 for staff, stakeholders and elected members as a platform to outline The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the associated Programme of Work. Entirely organised by a core team, a total of 75 events took place across 42 different venues to provide a wide geographical spread and opportunity for staff to attend. In addition, dedicated sessions were arranged for community boards and community groups, elected members and local industry through a business breakfast, which generated a number of leads for the enterprise team.

Designed in two parts: a dynamic multi-media presentation on The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work by a chief officer, and an engagement session, where staff could feedback and input their thoughts.

The team's promotional work generated 3314 bookings made on an online booking system, resulting in 2630 attendees, representing an attendance rate of 79.3%, higher than average for conference attendance figures.

This represents almost one in five members of staff attended a session. Overall, more than two thirds of staff thought that North Lanarkshire as a region was getting better and 79.9% of respondents said that they thought the Programme of Work was getting it right in terms of achieving the right outcomes.

Almost all attendees thought the sessions were valuable with many saying the presentation was informative, dynamic and visually stimulating. Having the opportunity to ask questions and find out more information about the programme of work was productive and helped them have a better understanding of the 'bigger picture' on what the council was aiming to deliver with its partners.



There is an appetite for more engagement sessions with an update on progress, possibly at a more local level within services and the service will explore this further.

We will continue to find new ways to engage with staff and strengthen the 'one service' ethos. We continue to work on an ongoing brand development programme to implement visual consistency across the physical estate and digital materials. A number of leisure centres, community hubs, facilities and workspaces have had design elements installed from signage, installations, wayfinding and visual branding over the last year.

LIVE HERE

It's Your Place

Launched in December 2023, this ongoing campaign aims to highlight issues such as littering, fly tipping, graffiti and dog fouling which negatively impact on our communities.

We developed a campaign image to link the different issues under one brand that aims to promote community engagement – not dropping litter or allowing dogs to foul the streets - as well as proactively improving communities by carrying out litter picks or reporting fly tipping. We have also issued messaging advising the public to be careful using 'man with a van services' advertised on social media. Investigations by SEPA show that corrupt operators may dispose of the waste they collect through fly-tipping.

A community recognition badge is used to thank groups who have contributed to improving their local area, and we plan to include a new category within the annual Provost's Awards.

As part of the campaign, we support Keep Scotland Beautiful's annual Spring Clean campaign. In 2024, 235 litter picks were carried out in North Lanarkshire, with 3,598 people taking part. Hilltop Primary School in Airdrie also won the top prize in the Litter League competition among schools in Scotland.

In May, the campaign also highlighted the community groups which received grants from our Recover NL initiative to carry out environmental improvements in their local area.

We created dog fouling signs which the service erected in hot spot areas to deter poor dog owner behaviour, with a complementary social media campaign.

Enforcement figures for financial year 2024/25

Financial year 2024/25	Number of FPNs Issued
Litter	581
Fly Tipping	83

Dog Work	2024/25
Dog Fouling FPNs	0
Dog Fouling Patrols	296
Dog Fouling signs erected	1,051
Stray Dogs Uplifted	71
Dog Bag Deliveries	546 (over a million bags distributed free to residents)

- The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 makes it illegal to park on the pavement in Scotland, as well as double parking and at dropped kerbs designed to allow pedestrians to cross the road safely. The council started to enforce this legislation in March 2025 but the team promoted the new law from the start of the year to raise awareness and pre-empt a change in driver behaviour by creating warning notices for parking attendants to place on vehicles parked illegally.
- We assisted Food Standards Scotland to widely distribute information about potentially contaminated vodka containing the chemical isopropyl, which can be harmful if consumed, that was circulating in a North Lanarkshire town. This issue then escalated as it was identified in other UK cities and became a criminal investigation relating to potentially serious organised crime. The local retailer's licence was revoked as a result.

Suicide Prevention

It is widely reported that poor mental health across the UK is becoming a bigger issue meaning that preventative work and education around the issues have never been more critical.

In North Lanarkshire, our strategy focuses on reducing stigma, reaching people in their everyday environments, and ensuring consistent, compassionate messaging that encourages people to talk, seek help, and support others. Over the last year we have continued to target 16 to 24 year olds and 35-55 year olds with two specially designed creatives. This has included delivering nearly 3 million impressions and achieving over 26,000 click throughs to the webpage from digital adverts on Google, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook and Tiktok. Our engagement rate has been at least four times higher than the industry average and the suicide prevention films have been watched over 66,000 times this year alone. The youth film focuses on the message that hiding your feelings can make things worse.

The second film appealing to a wider and older audience, urges people never to assume that someone is okay and to persist in checking on and talking to them. These figures show that our films have successfully engaged with audiences and we are exploring concepts for developing an additional creative for the youth audience as well as a new film for the 65+ audience.

Meanwhile we have continued to develop FeelWellNL, an innovative, holistic interactive chat service that provides information and ideas for promoting mental wellbeing while quickly identifying and signposting vulnerable people to the support they need. Initially, access to the service was via discreet signage installed in 'locations of concern'. However, recognising the increasing number of suicides taking place within the home, we are now more focused on digital delivery.

We have trialled geo targeting and targeting by age and the results have been promising. Throughout the year there have been 1,385 engaged users. Users who indicated that they were 'feeling bad' and 'didn't see their mood improving', were asked if they had experienced thoughts of suicide within the preceding few days. 61 users shared that they had felt suicidal. The response these people received was developed in consultation with Samaritans and Breathing Space and urged them to seek help immediately as well as providing them with a range of appropriate contacts.

This message may well have saved up to 61 lives.

Domestic abuse support

The council has a commitment to ending violence against women in all its forms. Data was informing us that domestic abuse is under-reported amongst women over 50. A campaign specifically targeting this demographic to promote support services to them ran on Meta (Facebook & Instagram) in October 2024. This channel was selected because 72% of the target audience use this channel. Our adverts reached 53,000 women aged 50 to 90 in North Lanarkshire, gaining 441k impressions and 667 link clicks to the adult protection webpage where we share all the details of support services available to them.

Aura, one of the support services we promoted, reported an uptick of women contacting them during the campaign period, with 50 individuals getting in touch - an increase from previous months.

Scottish Housing Day

We supported Scottish Housing Day and its theme, Homes for Life by promoting how adaptations, technology and resources can help tenants remain in their home as they get older.

As part of the campaign, a video was created and showcased on Facebook, featuring the tenants living in one of our retirement housing complexes, talking about the benefits of living independently but with enhanced housing support. The video gained 325 likes, 80 comments and 37k views with a CTR of 96 and 41 shares. A second video highlighted the benefits of assistive technology in living independently at home which also performed well. Email communications to 11,482 housing subscribers secured a 16% open rate and 2% CTR. Our final post promoted the Making Life Easier project, had 1894 impressions which led to increased interest and demand for the project.

Period products

In support of the Scottish Government's initiative enshrined in law, to provide free, easily accessible period products to anyone who needs them, we continue to promote free period products and where to get them, across our communities. A campaign, which ran from October 24 until March 25, involved the promotion of a suite of adverts (including an animation) across a range channels including printed collateral such as posters, flyers and pull-up banners, plasma screens in leisure centres, cultural venues, schools and community centres and online on Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Google - which amassed a total of 4.6 million impressions and 20k clicks. The webpage has been visited 20k times during the campaign and the animation has been viewed 105k times. News releases, members briefings and social media posts are all also ongoing. We also promoted 'Period dignity week' in February 25, including a roadshow, visiting multiple community venues to raise awareness of the service.

When polled (2025) 91% of women said they were aware of the service and 78% said they knew where to collect products with 82% saying they'd seen the service advertised, which is testament to the power of the campaign's reach.

LEARN HERE

Our Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) campaign creative once again supported the campaign for early learning placement applications between December 24 and February 25. This year we generated 2,937 applications which is in keeping with the birthrate for children who will turn three years of age for the 25-26 session. Using advertising via Google ads and social media channels for five weeks, supported by organic promotion through our nlcpeople channels, our early learning applications page on the website was accessed on around 35,000 occasions.

A consultation took place in early 2025 to determine views on school holiday arrangements.

We used several communication methods including GroupCall messages to all parents, carers and staff, posts on social media platforms, emails to the 28,420 subscribers of school topics, website and reminders in the education and families' weekly bulletin.

A total of 22,840 responses were received during the consultation, representing a 250% increase from the previous consultation. Around 32.6% of eligible parents/carers and 78.3% of eligible school-based staff took part. Most responses came from parents and carers (71%), followed by teachers (13%). Overall, 66% of respondents preferred Option A, which is broadly in line with the current arrangements.

We also supported a range of projects and awareness days with schools and early years facilities including remembering Holocaust Memorial Day on the 80th anniversary of Auschwitz-Birkenau's liberation and 30 years since the Bosnian genocide at St Andrew's High School, celebrating the reopening of Stepps Library with pupils from Stepps Primary Schools and promoting diversity and inclusion for Pride Month with Kilsyth Academy pupils.

WORK HERE

Due to the significant 86% decline in customer demand and changing customer preferences when it comes to financial transactions for council services, we worked with colleagues in housing to devise a survey to ascertain views on proposals to change the current first stop shop arrangements and whether to integrate face-to-face customer enquiry services with local housing offices. The decision to approve the new operating model was made that will integrate the First Stop Shop services into existing housing offices and adopt a cashless transaction approach across all remaining offices. Although this will not take place until June 2025, posters and leaflets for existing first stop shops have been produced and announcements on local MyTown channels published to ensure awareness of the changes from March 2025.

As well as the promoting employability initiatives through Brighter Futures, the team also contributed to a range of measures to help secure bronze accreditation in the Equally Safe at Work award for our work to advance gender equality, prevent violence against women and for the steps taken to create a more inclusive workplace culture.

As part of this, the team arranged a week-long promotion of sexual harassment in July which coincided with the introduction of the new sexual harassment policy, and included a statement of commitment from the chief executive, highlighted training available and information on how to report incidents. In addition, engagement sessions took place with staff and elected members and an eye-catching promotional campaign including posters, leaflets and other internal communications platforms extended through a programme of internal communications.

A major new partnership between the council and global infrastructure solutions company HOCHTIEF, was announced in September, with the aim of delivering improvements, maintenance work and investment across the roads, footpath and lighting networks and related infrastructure.

As one of the major enterprise contracts for the council, Corporate Communications engaged early with the new contractor and with the previous contractor to ensure an effective handover and to promote awareness internally to staff.

INVEST HERE

Together with the work to drive interest in investing in North Lanarkshire through the Invest in North Lanarkshire campaign and website, we promote major investment to the region, with HSBC Bank and Doble Engineering recent additions to the area. Welsh engineering company, Envico, was another company that we promoted to business media, as it expanded its UK operations and creating 20 new jobs.

At the start of the year, there was significant media coverage on the back of a release we issued that showed North Lanarkshire entered 2025 on a strong footing following a year of positive business performance in the local economy. There was a £2.21 billion increase in turnover by North Lanarkshire businesses in the year to 31 March 2024 with the number of registered businesses increasing by 60 in 2023/24 to 8,385. The number of people employed by businesses in the area also rose to 97,960. We maximised figures published by the Scottish Government's annual Businesses In Scotland report, to demonstrate that total turnover of local businesses reached £17.283 billion in 2024, up 14.7% on the year before.

We work closely with Business Gateway Lanarkshire, which is now in-house, to promote support services to local businesses across the region. This includes promoting networking events to success stories.

business gateway Lanarkshire

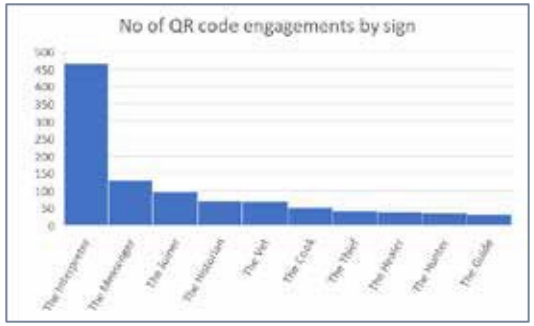
VISIT HERE

The North Lanarkshire Stories Trail funded by UKSPF, is a series of 12 original short stories, written by Scottish storyteller Shona Cowie and illustrated by artist Johnathan Chamberlain. Ten of these stories feature on installations designed and built for the project to showcase the tales in in the 10 locations that inspired the stories. Made from corten steel, each installation feature a cut out of a local type of flora and a rubbing tile of an animal, both referenced in the story. A QR code takes the user to the full story for that location on the website and to an AI service offering the opportunity to ask questions of the main character. This allows us to evaluate interactions.

Additional physical outputs include: 12 audio recordings of Shona Cowie reading each story; a webpage for each story on the Visit Lanarkshire website; 500 printed copies of a book featuring all 12 stories; a display located at North Lanarkshire Heritage Centre and an additional story panel located outside the heritage centre displaying the story related to Ravenscraig Steelworks.

The trail was launched in October and has been actively promoted since January with online digital, radio and outdoor adverts as well as 100,000 flyers distributed throughout Central Scotland. In the six months since launch there were around 170,000 views of launch teaser videos; nearly 20,000 visits to **www.visitlanarkshire.com/stories;** around 1.5m views of our online digital adverts with a consistently higher than industry average click through rate. Meanwhile there were 854 engagements via the QR codes at the signage locations. As the weather improves, we can already see that this number is increasing rapidly and is likely to continue doing so over the coming months.

Following a slow start, google figures show that the number of visitors to the Visit Lanarkshire website is steadily increasing. The number of active users for the year has increased by nearly 100,000, with a rising average dwell time and nearly 230,000 page views. Shoulder season campaign advertising in Autumn and Spring has delivered consistently high engagement rates, ranging from two to six times the industry average. 100,000 promotional flyers were distributed throughout Central Scotland and Greater Glasgow to raise awareness of activities and days-out in Lanarkshire. Organic web visits are up by 37% which suggest that the on and/or offline profile of Lanarkshire has been further raised.



Arts, Culture, Sport and Leisure

A large amount of work is dedicated to driving memberships and usage of leisure facilities or ticket sales for performances, classes and workshops across the entire Active and Creative Communities service.

A dedicated campaign to raise awareness of the annual pantomime and its return to a new venue at Ravenscraig Regional Sports Centre was hugely successful, which positioned the new location for the panto as a new and exciting experience for audiences.

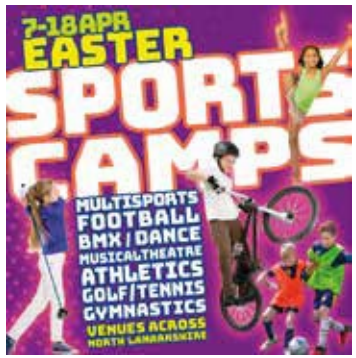
The campaigns team worked closely with the venue team, Spillers Pantomimes and cast to create video and photography content for use throughout the promotional campaign. Photography of the cast was used in promotional campaign graphics, while short video content was created for social media channels using a bright, exciting and humorous creative to reflect the panto production and introduce audiences to the characters.

The three main campaign videos, across all platforms, were viewed 64,806 times, with over 600 comments, shares and reactions and the biggest result was ticket sales, which increased by 34% compared to 2024 with 20,632 sold.

In April 2024, Airdrie Town Hall became the sole council entertainment and events venue, hosting our popular what's on entertainment programme, which previously ran chiefly at Motherwell Concert Hall & Theatre). We launched the first production, the annual Easter pantomime, Rumpelstiltskin, working with local panto actor Iain 'Sheepie' Smith in a video. Promotional artwork focused on ease of access and transport to the venue, to encourage previous audiences of Motherwell to return to the events programme.

From April 2024 to March 2025, there were 49 what's on entertainment shows, with a total of 23,248 tickets sold.

The campaigns team worked closely with venue staff as well as third party promotors to create bespoke promotional campaigns for each show, targeting previous audiences as well as the wider North Lanarkshire Community and beyond. Promotional activities include digital communications such as paid and organic social media, email and listings website; press, PR, print and outdoor.



The sports camps offered by the Active NL team continue to go from strength to strength, with the most recent camps, delivered over Easter school holidays, seeing an increase of **741** attendees compared to 2024 Easter camps (14% increase year on year), reaching and engaging more young people.

The promotional campaign to support this activity ran throughout March 2025 and targeted previous participants of sports camps, as well as the wider school aged community. Campaign graphics were developed to be used across all communication platforms to create a consistent look and feel for the promotional activity, supplemented by video and photography featuring real children and activities undertaken at camps to give an insight into what to expect.

Revenue for Easter camps was also up 37% from 2024.

The annual destination promotional campaigns for Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life saw creative return to a focus on previously used photography to create familiarity with the audience, as well as linking with Lanarkshire's industrial past.

Active NL memberships are also thriving with several campaigns set up throughout the year to boost different types of membership.These included outdoor, print, PR and digital activity, with a strong creative focused on the positive impact of physical exercise. Gym memberships overall have grown by 16.5%, from **30,048** in 2024 to **35,021** in 2025.

Supporting campaigns also contributed to specific gym membership types including Active 60 in August 2024, with weekly targets set and exceeded. Through customer testimonials, the team created video and photography content to push a digital campaign on social media and to previous members, which was supported by print and PR. Memberships in this area grew from 8278 to 9506.

In addition, a campaign focused on children's memberships also ran in August to coincide with schools returning and families getting back into a routine after Summer holidays. This campaign used bold new campaign graphics featuring real children with a focus on the Ultimate Sports membership with membership rising from 399 in 2024 to 574 in 2025, while single sports memberships for this audience also increased (1405 to 1477).

The team also ran campaigns for golf season passes in April and September, creating video and photography to promote both the main season pass and the winter pass. Memberships reached a record 1001 (up from 894 the previous year).

Category	Subtype	Mar-24	Mar-25
Gym Membership	Active 60	8278	9506
	Active Health	183	192
	Active Teen	2239	3122
	Adult	4458	5336
	Corporate	2290	2554
	Junior Individual	857	987
	Junior Link	2448	2991
	NHS Staff	1129	1263
	NLC Staff	4604	5441
	Passport to Leisure	1275	1252
	Single Venue	1171	1284
	Student	1108	1085
	Talented Sports Person	8	8
Gym Membership Total		**30048**	**35021**
Learn to Swim	Adult Swim Lessons	57	60
	Early Years Swim Lesson	476	541
	Junior Swim Lessons	4280	4237
	Swim Club	287	279
Learn to Swim Total		**5100**	**5117**
Sports Development	Single Sport	1405	1477
	Ultimate Sports	399	574
Sports Development Total		**1804**	**2051**
Golf	Golf Season Ticket	**894**	**1001**
Golf Total		**894**	**1001**
Grand Total		**37846**	**43190**

Internal Communications

With around 14,500 members of staff, it is important that a more robust way of communicating information at either low or urgent level is devised. An ongoing issue is that only half of staff have a work email address and the team is currently working on an improved process to address this. The roadshow was undoubtedly the biggest commitment to staff communications as a way of conveying more details about the council's vision and the current programme of work. Feedback from these sessions will help the team explore further opportunities for staff engagement.

- We created 12 newsletters on behalf of the chief executive, with an average of 2,862 views per issue.
- We issued 159 announcements to staff to alert them to news, events, surveys or policy changes
- We promoted a range of initiatives including Cyber Awareness Week, Mental Health Awareness Week, Sexual Harassment Week, Learning and Work Week and serious and organised crime/counter terrorism information.

Digital First

We continue to maximise digital opportunities to share information with residents, businesses and partners. Our digital channels and platforms are key to effective public engagement and thinking 'digital first' is crucial for communications.

Website

Our website, northlanarkshire.gov.uk, is firmly established as the key platform for delivering services to our residents – more than 30 online forms linked to back-office systems are now in operation. Total form submissions for 2024 exceeded 50k, up from 41k in 2023, representing a 21% increase.

There continues to be year-on-year growth in general website traffic, with more than 13 million page views (2024-25) compared to 10.5 million over the previous period (2023-24), a 26% increase.

Dates	Page views
April 24 – March 25	13,222,404
April 23 – March 24	10,513,371

The recent addition of a chatbot on every page has made it easier for users to find information and is our first use of AI within online customer services.

In the first six months of operation, there have been over 17,000 chat bot engagements, resolving around 66% of enquiries. Over 7,000 calls are abandoned but in the main, that is due to people dropping off the discussion before formally terminating it. The digital team is constantly looking to improve the service.

The website also continues to provide the basis for many communications campaigns, most notably landing pages for Sum It Up and Period Dignity where social media also played a key role in driving traffic.

Social Media

The digital team worked with colleagues to post compelling content on our corporate social media channels, which helped to increase our online presence as the year progressed. With the exception of X, which had a relatively small increase, all our corporate channels saw a healthy increase in follower numbers, most notably on TikTok, with a 419% increase. 2024 was the breakthrough year for the platform with a focus on tailored content, in particular fun videos made for mass participation events like the Broadwood Fan Zone and fireworks at Strathclyde Country Park. Each event resulted in significant step changes in follower numbers.

We also experimented successfully with live video broadcasts on multiple platforms at the fireworks event.

Our diversified social media content strategy, reflected in past years on new platforms like Instagram and NextDoor, and now on TikTok, was further complemented by the launch of a WhatsApp Channel to leverage the huge audience potential of that platform.

We continue to develop the My Town community social media channels, which are growing in strength as we use them to engage with local businesses and communities specific to the nine town areas in North

Corporate Social Media Channel Followers

	31-Mar-25	31-Mar-24	Total change (24-235)	% change (24-25)
	71715	67655	4060	+6.00%
	51933	51334	599	+1.17%
	5033	4378	655	+14.96%
	14612	12819	1793	+13.99%
	2764	533	2231	+418.57%
nextdoor	42502	37034	5468	+14.76%
YouTube	1475	1370	105	+7.66%

My Town Social Media Channels Followers

	Channel	31-Mar-25	31-Mar-24	Total change (24-25)	% change (24-25)
	My Airdrie	4893	4514	379	+8.40%
	My Bellshill	4679	4570	109	+2.39%
	My Coatbridge	5932	5063	869	+17.16%
	My Cumbernauld	2624	2131	493	+23.13%
	My Kilsyth	2598	2574	24	+0.93%
	My Motherwell	5626	4857	769	+15.83%
	My Northern Corridor	566	425	141	+33.18%
	My Shotts	3180	3016	164	+5.44%
	My Wishaw	4723	4392	331	+7.54%
	My Airdrie	803	731	72	+9.85%
	My Bellshill	614	576	38	+6.60%
	My Coatbridge	818	743	75	+10.09%
	My Cumbernauld	425	355	70	+19.72%
	My Kilsyth	398	374	24	+6.42%
	My Motherwell	883	816	67	+8.21%
	My Northern Corridor	118	96	22	+22.92%
	My Shotts	689	682	7	+1.03%
	My Wishaw	629	577	52	+9.01%

Direct Messaging

The digital team continues to respond to direct messages and enquiries on social media, providing a fast-response service, alleviating pressure from calls to the Customer Service Hub and other services, enabling a more joined-up and improved service when interacting with customers. Perhaps reflecting the increased use of online forms and the success of the chatbot, there has been an 18.5% decline in private messages via Facebook and Twitter throughout the business year, from 3,461 to 2,819.

Data Driven

The data collected and analysed during this period has been instrumental in identifying gaps in our social media usage, as well as providing evidence to support our online marketing campaigns and inform our future strategies.

Email Communications

GovDelivery remains the most engaging digital platform with a far higher bulletin open rate (37%) than nlcpeople Facebook's post engagement rate (Likes, Comments and Shares) of just 0.61%.

	April 24 – March 25	April 23 – March 24
	3839	2764
	647	697

Date	Number of bulletins	Delivered to	Open rate	Click rate
April 23 – March 24	424	3,322,307	37%	2%
April 24 – March 25	366	3,172,640	38%	2%

Brand and Creative

It's been a busy year for the Brand and Creative team, producing striking and compelling materials and content for campaigns, services and external clients. As a branding programme continues, the team has created a range of templates for staff to use ranging from powerpoints, headed paper, digital signatures and policy documents. A full brand guidance document is underway.

Any products on PDF format legally requires to be accessible which increases the workload on each project. A number of projects have required to be translated, in either other languages or in braille.

The team undertook on Premiere and Aftereffects to enhance digital and animation training skills to produce materials such as short animations, gifs and visual effects.

Over the year, the team worked on 674 individual projects which created 981 pieces of graphic work, as well as 25 external projects.

Highlights internally include all interior materials and promotional campaign assets for The Hive, signage for the new community hubs, the interior design refurbishment of Broadwood Stadium, a programme of refurbed signage for the civic centre campus and supporting design work for events and campaigns.

The creative for the North Lanarkshire Stories Heritage Trail was innovative and unique and the team drew on their historical knowledge of the region to show their creative flair. The resulting installations and books are quite striking, and coupled with the interactive element to the stories, gives rise to a fully engaging attraction for visitors and residents.

A growing sector over the last year has been in producing visual materials for external public sector organisations such as Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire, NHS Lanarkshire, Centre of Excellence for Decarbonisation and the Scottish Serious Organised Crime Unit. The team has created a suite of materials and plans for SEPA and a range of brand designs for other agencies.

The multi-media production team worked on a total of 54 large media projects, including animations, videos, audio recordings and website projects. The team also worked on 73 smaller multi-media projects.

The output of these media projects included a total of 67 animations, 305 videos, 6 presentations and 33 audio recording sessions. We worked with external clients including NHS Lanarkshire, National Parent Forum of Scotland, City of Glasgow Council, North Lanarkshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership, SEPA and the Scottish Government. Notably we made a series of 16 videos for The Hive women's business incubator which were central to the campaign's success, as well as 20 videos for Challenge Poverty Week, which undoubtedly resonated with residents and drove calls to the tackling poverty team. We also created videos for the Lanarkshire Business Awards and an interactive presentation for the awards night. The team produced a heart-warming animation for Earth Hour, using the words of a primary school pupil, which had around 15,000 views on the night.

The impressive video and animation for The Plan for North Lanarkshire roadshow was widely commented on by staff, who described it as inspirational and dynamic.

The team also developed and created a website for the eight local authorities in the Glasgow City Region for its Multiply123 campaign, producing video and photography content that complemented the wider advertising campaign. The website had 35,933 users and 53,597 page views across the year to March 2025. Almost 20,000 people in the region participated in a course with 2282 achieving a qualification.


Palacerigg Country Park


The Artful Codgers


THE HIVE


Multiply
Are numbers getting in your way?


North Lanarkshire Stories Trail
"An immersive story telling experience for all ages."
It's a great day out and it's free!
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NLC INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SERVICE PRESENTS
BATTLE OF THE BANDS
ROCK FEST
WED 26 FEB 2025
AIRDRIE
TOWN HALL
7.00PM
FEATURING BANDS FROM
LEARN


SUM IT UP
NUMBERS ARE EVERYWHERE
At work
Helping kids with homework
Budgeting
Don't let them get in your way!
Find a fun, FREE course near you:
North Lanarkshire Sum it up
For adults over 16
Funded by UK Government
MULTIPLY
LEARN


SPRING HAS SPRUNG!
Press Pause.
Escape for a day
VisitLanarkshire.com


Volunteer NL
MAKE A DIFFERENCE


LET'S TALK


North Lanarkshire in
BLOOM
GARDEN AWARDS 2024
OPEN TO ALL TENANTS OF NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL


LIVE HERE
It's Your Place


Taking the pain out of paying
Free Period Products
For whoever needs them
NORTH LANARKSHIRE
LIVE HERE

Events

As well as the roadshow, which was one of the largest series of events undertaken, we arranged and managed a number of large-scale and smaller events over the year, often with the support of other services. Some key highlights are:

Capitalising on the success of the national football team getting to the event stage of the 2024 UEFA European Championships, the council hosted two themed fanzone events at Broadwood Stadium in June, believed to be the largest in Scotland. Operational support for both events was provided in terms of compliance with licensing and health and safety, technical assistance, outdoor furniture, performance artists, and signage was installed to ensure the events were safe, appealing and enjoyable.

Social media was used extensively to promote both events, in the lead up and on the day which attracted 1,058,311K people views. Reaching over 24,289K engagements including reactions, comments and shares (includes 838 saves).

Both events sold out in a matter of hours with around 5,000 attending. A family area was created, the big screen for the match, as well as entertainment, stilt walkers, fun activities for the younger age groups and crucially, a street food market and bar in association with THE BIG FEED Street Food Social. Tiered ticket sales were arranged for zone areas, picnic benches with capacity for 600 people and 320 in the barrel sections with 4080 general admission tickets sold. :2.

Feedback on our social channels was extremely positive and provided the local community with an affordable and fun event that supported a global celebration of football and delivered a high-quality event with community value.

The council hosted a special celebration to mark the historic occasion of The Royal Regiment of Scotland (SCOTS) being granted the Freedom of North Lanarkshire in July.

The organised parade recognised the Regiment's dedicated service to the country and local area and featured around 120 SCOTS soldiers, accompanied by their equine mascot, Corporal Cruachan IV who led the military pipe band parade from Dalziel High School to Strathclyde Country Park. A short ceremony took place on the lochside to celebrate this honour.

Social media was used extensively to promote this well-attended parade, which attracted 275,385k

people views. The event received over 3,090K engagements including reactions, comments and shares.

Our annual fireworks display at Strathclyde Country Park, which attracted the largest crowd ever, of approximately 50,000 visitors. As well as arranging event logistics, we promoted behind the scenes preparations, information on a web page, posters and banners were on site, a large screen was on site on the night of the display, information in all council locations and social media posts in the run up to the event and on the day. On 5 November we posted live streamed coverage of the fireworks display at Strathclyde Country Park.

The annual Provost's Awards took place in September 2024 and involved arranging the practical logistics

of the event to procuring a celebrity host who also provided entertainment. Elected members and members of community boards nominated individuals and groups from their communities who deserved recognition for their outstanding contributions to supporting people and communities with 37 award winners selected across the nine community board areas.

In the lead up to the event and just before the display burst into production, we received 727,836K people views with maximum 111,517 people views when the 'live stream' started. The event received over 10,135K engagements including reactions, comments and shares.

We arranged a free Christmas partnership event on behalf of Coatbridge Town Board in December which included a live stage hosted by Heart radio and a mix of entertainment from local groups, dance schools and choir, mascots and fun filled stage games with prizes. Following promotion on the local MyCoatbridge channel and posters and flyers around the town centre, around 200 people attended on the day.

The event manager continues to provide specialist advice to and chairs the multi-agency safety advisory group (SAG) for the North Lanarkshire area, providing guidance and assistance to allow public events to be successfully run safely and in compliance with relevant legislation. The council's Safety Advisory Group (SAG) received 27 direct enquiries from both council and external event organisers throughout the year with 19 required to go through the SAG process.

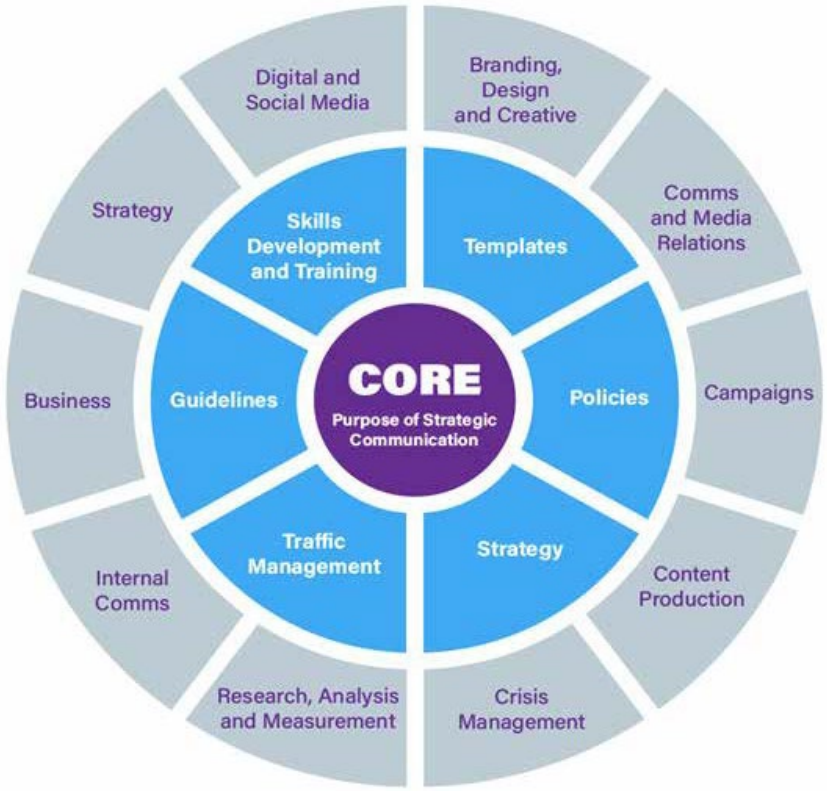
How we work

We utilise the full range of communication disciplines: campaigns and marketing; strategic consultancy; digital, brand and creative support; PR and media relations; internal communications; and major events.

How and why we communicate information is governed by our communications operating model. The speed of changes in digital technology means our operating model and team need to be agile, multi-skilled, engaged and crucially, digitally-skilled. Through our communications platforms and the complementary services within Strategy and Engagement, we offer residents, communities, partners, businesses and the media more choice in how and when they engage with council services.

These processes keep people informed, drive action, generates behavioural change and participation and can contribute to enhancing the lives of people in North Lanarkshire. Improving that process will always be central to our activity and looking forward, digital processes, technology and platforms will constantly be reviewed and updated.

We aim to provide a professional standard of practice to support the council and the operating model comprises three core areas: core competencies and training, standards and systems; governed by an assurance framework. By identifying and improving skills, creating guidance and templates to ensure consistency and standards and a range of support tools, our communications and service will be more organised with systems in place to support staff in their professional development as well as to accomplish their work.



We use the **OASIS** planning tool to ensure our work has a defined outcome that can be evaluated:

Objective: our campaigns will have a clear intended outcome.

Audience: we will define the audiences for each campaign to ensure we reach the relevant people.

Strategy: before we do any creative work we will define the strategy for each campaign which will guide us throughout the life of the campaign.

Implementation: our execution will be creative, bold and provocative. It will maximise the opportunity to change behaviour and achieve the outcome.

Scoring: we will set out how we will evaluate our work for each campaign in advance, the most significant measures will be those that demonstrate the outcome as opposed to reach or awareness-raising.

We have highly-skilled people. Communication techniques in a digital world evolve rapidly, so we will ensure our skills are kept up to date, utilising the latest technology and sharing knowledge.

Our communications are:

Community-focused: we will foster a sense of community spirit that is supportive. By championing certain types of behaviour or attitudes we can strengthen communities. We will promote community empowerment and participation.

Challenging: our communications can be confrontational and inspiring to generate behavioural change. If we need to be frank with the public on issues, we'll use forthright language to encourage people to address and change their behaviour and challenge those around them.

Informative: our work should direct people to information so they have improved access to services and advice but also demonstrate how services make a positive impact on people and communities. Encouraging take-up of enhanced services through digital offering will be championed as we help people to help themselves, assisting to make our communities more resilient and capable.

Inspiring: enlightening to residents and businesses about what already exists and what we are planning to do in North Lanarkshire. We will reinforce our vision for the future, vitalise our communities with our ideas and work collaboratively.

Creative: we will use the full range of creative skills to ensure our messages are compelling, whether through video, photography, design or in writing.

Responsive: we will be quick to respond in times of an incident or an issue occurring to assist the public, services and partners, as well as being fleet of foot in the digital realm.

Practical: whether responding to an emergency situation or to assist people in acquiring a service, communications needs to provide realistic and reassuring advice using language easily understood by people.

The role of communications is important to the operations of the council, with increased accountability on how it supports service delivery.

The emergence and increased use of AI, automation, and changing communication technology and algorithms and an increasingly fragmented social media landscape means that the team must keep on top of industry trends to ensure cut-through in our communications. A focus will remain on good quality content over frequency, ensuring that messaging is targeted and better evaluated through analytics.

Shaping and embracing AI into our operating model will be crucial, while adapting to the challenges it can bring. Communications should be at the forefront of this type of technology, moving at a faster pace with foundations based on factual insight.

We will be smarter in our audience segmentation and messaging, ensuring information that is relevant is distributed to the right people. AI and improved audience analytics will enhance this.

A focus on local will be key going forward. Working closely with colleagues in the other Strategy and Engagement sections will assist in relationship-building and dissemination of information locally.

The communication tools we use and what we say should be authentic, realistic, inspirational and meaningful. And that means understanding our audiences better and delivering high-quality, relevant content. It should also be more two-way, where we listen to residents and respond with helpful information.

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INVEST
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