

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services)

Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee : 7 February 2007

Subject: Nutrition and Health Certificates

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To advise the Committee of the recent award of Nutrition and Health Certificates to Catering staff.

2. Background

- 2.1** It is recognised that staff controlling school meals production require to have a knowledge of nutrition and an understanding of the benefits associated with a nutritionally balanced diet in schoolchildren. Such benefits can include improved learning ability, increased concentration levels in children and an overall improvement in health.
- 2.2** The Scottish Executive identified the benefit of health and nutrition training and a nutrition training programme was developed by the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) in Spring 2006. Prior to this in 2005, the Council had identified a requirement to provide health and nutrition information to catering staff as quickly as possible and were exploring alternative training options.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Catering staff at schools within West Dunbartonshire recognised the benefits to be gained from undertaking health and nutrition training and sourced a Distance Learning course which was provided by James Watt College.
- 3.2** The distance learning nature of the course resulted in a requirement for participants to undertake the course programme in their own time however this did not deter 28 Catering Managers and Cooks from completing the course.
- 3.3** The course covered all aspects of healthy eating including consideration of the constitutional parts of a healthy diet, the nutritional values of food, knowledge of how diet can impact directly upon health and food additives and labelling. The course also covered diet and nutrition issues specific to young children and the elderly.

- 3.4 The catering service delivered in schools by Council staff, and subsequently the health of our schoolchildren, will benefit from the commitment of these staff in completing this training.
- 3.5 The department of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services recognised the commitment of these staff in completing the distance learning programme in their own time and recently held a short ceremony where each participant was congratulated by the Director and presented with a bunch of flowers and a book token.
4. **Personnel Issues**
- 4.1 As a result of their personal commitment, 28 Catering Managers and Cooks have gained Nutrition and Health Certificates from James Watt College.
5. **Financial Implications**
- 5.1 Places on the course were offered free by James Watt College therefore no training costs incurred were incurred.
- 5.2 The cost of providing each employee with a book token and flowers was funded from the Council's Hungry for Success budget.
6. **Risk Analysis**
- 6.1 There are no risks associated with the content of this report.
7. **Conclusions**
- 7.1 The achievement of nutrition and health certificates by Council catering staff in their own time evidences how committed these staff are to providing an excellent level of service to their young customers. Such provision meets with the Council priorities of promoting health and well being and developing children and young people.
8. **Recommendations**
- 8.1 **The Committee is requested to note the achievement and contribution made by Council catering staff to developing improved standards of diet and nutrition in our schools.**

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(Land and Environmental Services)
Date: 8 January 2007

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All