**Jayne Surman**

**Lifetime Achievement UnAward18 nomination – supporting information**

It’s hard to know really where to begin with the reasons that I am nominating Jayne Surman for the UnAwards Lifetime Achievement Award.

I could tell you about her long history working in Communications in the public and not for profit sectors across the West Midlands leading large communications teams that have done brilliant things.

Jayne began her career as a senior manager working as marketing manager at a Birmingham University before making the move to Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council where she was instrumental in integrating Press and Marketing functions into a single full-service team, at a time when such teams were relatively rare in the public sector.

I could tell you about her expertise leading communications on highly complex internal and external change management programmes across the public sector and about her time as Chair of LGComms who she continues to do work for carrying out peer reviews at authorities across the country.

I could tell you that she speaks 5 languages fluently and even managed a level of conversational fluency in Japanese – which would take most people around 5 years to achieve – in preparation for a trip to the country that she made during her time working for Dudley MBC.

I could tell you about the many battle scars she bears from fighting the good fight for the legitimacy of communications as a professional discipline in the public sector. About all the times I’ve personally seen her completely disarm difficult customers with her huge smile and friendly approach to people.

I could tell you that she supports her teams professionally, from the most junior to the most senior, and that many of the staff who have worked for her have gone on to very senior public sector communications roles themselves.

I could tell you about how she has completely transformed the way the Warwickshire County Council Marketing and Communications team operate: giving us a firm framework for communication activity from the planning to measurement and evaluation that has led to the team going from strength to strength.

I could tell you about her deep sense of fun and incredible sense of humour and the amazing cakes she bakes for the team on a near daily basis, her deep love of a good cup of tea or her equally deep love for Gary Barlow.

I could tell you all these things, and any one of them (possibly with the exception of the last) should be enough to earn her a nomination for a Lifetime Achievement Award. These are all great things that make a fantastic leader in Public Sector Communication. Jayne has something else, more important than all these things. Jayne has that, often rare, quality that elevates good managers to great leaders: Kindness and empathy! This is the reason for this nomination.

Jayne has repeatedly gone above and beyond what could be expected of any manager and has supported a number of members of the Team at Warwickshire County Council through some of the worst times possible. I know this, because I am one of them!

In 2015, we lost our son during childbirth and Jayne was one of the first people I told what had happened as I needed to make her aware that I probably wouldn’t be back in the office for a while. From that point the level of support that Jayne provided to both myself and my wife (who was also quite poorly) was incredible! A few days after our discharge from hospital, Jayne visited at a time we were at our lowest with a big hamper of food and a lot of support. The positive effect that had is us is something I struggle to articulate, even now. Hopefully this last paragraph being an exception!

When I was putting this nomination together, I spoke to a number of people who had similar stories to mine. They all echoed the same: When the chips are down Jayne Surman is one of the best people to have in your corner. I can think of no one who better deserves a lifetime achievement award more than Jayne!