

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet

16th February 2004

AUTHOR: Management Team

CORPORATE IDENTITY

Purpose

1. To obtain approval for a new corporate identity design for the Authority.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The Council's Corporate Identity impacts on the ability to deliver high quality, accessible, value for money services. From the ten Annual Priorities it helps to improve the Council's capacity to deliver improved customer service and is a part of the Council's preparations to move to Cambourne, with no disruption of services and more efficient and joined-up working.

Background

3. In view of the Council's imminent office move it is the most appropriate time to re-address our corporate identity, which includes stationery design and overall corporate style.
4. It is commonly recognised that a strong and consistent corporate identity will increase awareness and recognition of council services. However, there is currently very little consistency between departments on logo use, layouts and design and written styles. This delivers mixed and confusing messages to residents.
5. The Best Value Review of Media, Information and Communications identified that residents' overall brand awareness of the Council was low. When residents at focus groups were shown the crest the response was of general recognition, but not a direct association with the Council. Response to the circle logo was less positive with no one able to identify it with the Council. There was no affinity with either brand.
6. A corporate identity sub-group of officers was formed last year to develop a brief and tender for a design consultant to carry out this work. A local design agency from Fulbourn, 2g Ltd, was selected.

Considerations

7. The final brand must have substance, be serious yet approachable and appeal to the Council's wide ranging audiences. The logo should be aspirational and reflect the Council's environment. It needs to work in mono, duo and full colour for application on a variety of media with varying production values.

8. The design must remain flexible but immediately recognisable as the Council brand.
9. Departmental identifiers will define the source of the literature and bring cohesion to the various materials produced by different departments.

Options

10. Two final designs were selected by the Corporate Sub Group – one based on the Council's crest and another alternative, modern design.
11. These two designs are presented to Cabinet and approval is sought for one final design.

Financial Implications

12. Total cost of the project is £8,800. Finance for the project has been sourced via virement from other budgets within the Information and Customer Services portfolio, in addition to input from ITNET.

Legal Implications

13. Correct use of the heraldic crest is subject to legal scrutiny if it deviates too greatly from its original layout. The crests full identity has been maintained within the final designs.
14. The Council has a legal duty to ensure that all communications with the public are accessible to all. This means that all Council literature should take into account the needs of disabled people, ethnic minorities, the elderly and electronic communications to ensure that all South Cambs residents can access services.

Staffing Implications

15. We do not have the necessary in-house expertise to effectively design and roll out a corporate identity programme of this size and nature. The complexity of the task is emphasised by the range of 'products' affected by its introduction.
16. Style 'champions' will be identified within departments to ensure effective compliance and 'police' the new identity within their sections.

Consultations

17. Residents were consulted on their views concerning the Council's identity as part of the Best Value Review of Media, Information and Communications. These views formed part of the initial brief.
18. A Corporate Identity Sub-group of officers from the Information Unit, Graphics Dept, Printing, ICT and Administration devised the initial brief, selected the appointed agency and were consulted during the initial stages.

19. The Information and Customer Services portfolio holder was consulted on presentation of first designs.
20. The two final designs selected by the Sub Group were presented to Management Team for consideration and they preferred the alternative, modern design.

Conclusions/Summary

21. Following approval of the final identity the next work phase will involve developing a corporate standard guide for internal and external use. This guide will be rolled out to all staff via a staff seminar on 19th April, together with further training workshops as required.
22. In addition, letter templates will be accessible via everyone's PC's, which adhere to the new identity, in time for May 2004.
23. Cabinet should note that approval of this first stage is urgently needed in order to ensure adequate time to roll out further phases of the project.

Recommendation

24. Cabinet are invited to approve ONE of the following designs for:
 - (a) overall re-brand style and stationery layout
 - (b) master logo for use on all internal and external materials
 - (c) departmental identifier

Contact Officer: Sally Carroll, Communications Manager
Telephone: (01223) 443262