

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Leader and Cabinet 19 February 2004  
**AUTHOR/S:** Communications Manager

NB. This report is printed in Gill Sans, the recommended corporate identity font.

**Corporate Identity**

Purpose

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

Effect on Corporate Objectives

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

Background

3. In view of our imminent office move it is the most appropriate time to re-address our corporate identity, which includes our 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 our 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. It 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.
10. An established corporate identity will help towards standardising our approach to the council's stationery. Part of the project is to provide all departments with computer-based templates for printing off stationery together with a style guide detailing how and when designs, colours and fonts are to be used.

#### Options

11. Officers and members formed a Corporate Identity Sub Group. The process for selecting a shortlist of two brand options was a refining process over a number of months.
12. The two final designs are one based on the Council's crest and another alternative, modern 'S' design.
13. It should be noted that the Council will retain the heraldic crest. The official Coat of Arms is owned by South Cambridgeshire District Council. It will be mounted on the front of the new Cambourne building and be used on the Chairman's official letterhead.
14. Management team and Cabinet have both recommended the alternative, modern 'S' design.

#### Financial Implications

15. The move to Cambourne means that all stationery has to be updated with revised addresses, telephone numbers etc. The amount we are investing in this exercise, £8,800, covers all the basic requirements as well as design layouts, training and on-going support. 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

16. 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.
17. 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

18. 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.
19. Style 'champions' will be identified within departments to ensure effective roll out and 'police' the new identity within their sections.

#### Consultations

20. Residents were consulted on their views concerning our identity as part of the Best Value Review of Media, Information and Communications. These views formed part of the initial brief.

21. 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.
22. The Information and Customer Services portfolio holder was consulted on presentation of first designs.
23. Management team was presented with two final options for recommendation.
24. Cabinet was presented with the two final options for approval.

#### Conclusions/Summary

25. 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 19 April, together with further training workshops as required.
26. In addition, letter templates will be accessible via everyone's PC's, which adhere to the new identity, in time for May 2004.
27. Approval of this first stage is urgently needed in order to ensure adequate time to roll out further phases of the project.

#### Recommendations

28. Council is invited to approve ONE overall re-brand style and stationery layout, based on Cabinet's recommendation.

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