

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BETTER VALUE FOR MONEY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION THROUGH A STRONGER CORPORATE IDENTITY

Purpose of the Report

1. For the County Council to consider the introduction of a Corporate Identity Policy (attached as an appendix), as part of:
 - improving information provision;
 - increasing customer satisfaction; and
 - securing better value for money.

Information and Advice

2. The Communications and Marketing service was centralised in April 2011, saving the Council £639k in 2011-12. In addition, the Council's marketing spend has reduced from £1.3m in 2009-10. The marketing budget for the current financial year 2011-12 is £385k (a reduction of £915k compared with 2009-10). A reduced marketing budget has been achieved by:
 - taking an audience approach (5 key audiences) to communications, rather than a service approach (over 500 individual services)
 - reducing the number of logos being used by the County Council from 100 to 1 (these service or project logos detracted from a single One Council brand, plus a number of historical versions of the Council's logo were being used)
 - rationalising literature and establishing a clear hierarchy for publications and leaflets (the difference between basic information provision and marketing materials)
3. The Council has not had a Corporate Identity Policy before. As mentioned in the paragraph above, a multitude of logos meant that the Council's corporate identity was weak and being used inconsistently. Corporate identity, however, is about much more than just a logo.
4. A stronger, more consistent corporate identity enables people to recognise Council services, access them and shows public accountability. Therefore it is important to reputation. A clear corporate identity is also part of the Council's drive to provide better information to residents, which in turn will help improve overall satisfaction with the Council.
5. MORI research has proven that the more informed people are about council services, the more satisfied they are likely to feel. Overall satisfaction with Nottinghamshire County Council

was 40% in the 2008 Place Survey, placing it in the bottom quartile of local authorities nationally in terms of satisfaction. This is despite the fact it is delivering a range of good quality services.

6. An important change has already been made. The Council's existing Brand Guidelines were updated and implemented on 3 January 2012. This document sets out the rules for how the Council's corporate identity can be used across a range of platforms, including the corporate letterhead, signage on buildings and service information literature. A summary of this document is part of the background papers to this report and the full version is a living document maintained by the Communications and Marketing service.
7. The proposed Corporate Identity Policy sets out:
 - what the Council's corporate identity is
 - how the Council's brand should be used and governed
 - how the Council's corporate identity should be appropriately endorsed and reflected (when a service is being funded or commissioned by the Council, or the Council is working in partnership with other organisations)
8. The Corporate Identity Policy will also achieve better value for money through savings in resources, time and materials. This will be done by:
 - Efficiencies in marketing a single identity rather than a range of individual service brands
 - A range of standard templates which will reduce graphic design time
 - Better information provision through an audience approach
 - Savings in print costs
9. Updating the Council's corporate identity will not incur any costs in terms of stationery or marketing activity. Updated designs will be phased in as things need to be replaced and old stocks of literature will be used up. Set up costs (to update design templates) will be picked up by Communications and Marketing, through savings made in other communications and marketing activity, as referred to in paragraph 2 above.
10. Uniforms will also be updated on a rollout basis as items need to be replaced, as part of normal service costs. When one item of clothing needs to be replaced, matching elements will also be updated to ensure employees wearing uniforms are dressed appropriately.
11. 188 priority vehicles (a third of the 564 vehicle fleet) will be updated to reflect the stronger corporate identity. These have the highest use or visibility to the public and are likely to include: passenger and commercial transport; HGVs; mobile library and youth vehicles; highways maintenance and gritters. Based on an average cost of £100 per vehicle to update vinyl branding, this amounts to a one-off cost of £18,800 - with the remaining fleet being updated on a rollout basis as part of normal service costs. However, the updated Brand Guidelines will achieve a saving of £400 per new vehicle (by eliminating the cost of spraying some doors green and the loss in sell on value by not having all-white vehicles).
12. 179 priority buildings across the county, with the highest visitor numbers and in prominent locations, will need to have their main signs updated. These are likely to include: 10 main Council offices; 60 libraries; 58 children's centres; 24 youth centres; 16 register offices; 4 visitor attractions; and 7 highways depots. This will be done in the most low-cost way using

vinyl stickers on existing signs. Based on an average cost of £325 per sign, this amounts to a one-off cost of £58,175 - with other signs being updated on a rollout basis as part of business as usual costs.

13. The estimated amounts of £18,800 to update priority vehicles and £58,175 to update priority signage, gives a total one-off cost of £77,975. Half of this amount (£38,487.50) will be found through in-year Communications and Marketing efficiencies. Therefore, the Council will need to find **£38,488**.

Other Options Considered

14. Not introducing a Corporate Identity Policy would mean it would be difficult to control and ensure consistent use of the Council's corporate identity, whether it is being used by the County Council or other organisations. This also risks reverting back to the past situation of having a multitude of sub brands, which dilute the Council's identity and lead to inconsistency in information provision. This in turn affects both reputation and satisfaction with the Council.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

15. To achieve an improvement in key reputation and satisfaction measures, specifically:
- An increase in people feeling informed or well informed about council services (from a baseline of 43% measured through the 2008 Place Survey).
 - An increase in overall customer satisfaction with the Council (from a baseline of 40% measured through the 2008 Place Survey).
 - An increase in people agreeing that the County Council provides value for money (from a baseline of 29% in the 2008 Place Survey).
16. To ensure the County Council's identity is appropriately reflected when the Council is commissioning or funding a service (for example through the Local Improvement Scheme), or when it is being used alongside partner organisations' brand marks.
17. To achieve better value for money through increased efficiency in Communications and Marketing activity, as outlined in paragraph 8.

Statutory and Policy Implications

18. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users:

19. It is not anticipated that there will be any negative impact on service users. A more consistent corporate identity will enable service users to better recognise the Council and access services.

Financial Implications:

20. The total cost to the Council is £77,975, half of which will be found through in-year Communications and Marketing efficiencies. Therefore, the Council will need to find **£38,488**. This can be funded from the County Council's overall revenue budget as a one-off cost in the current financial year.

Equalities Implications:

21. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are a means by which a public authority can assess the potential impact that proposed decisions / changes to policy could have on the community and those with protected characteristics. An EIA has been undertaken and is available as a background paper.

Human Resources Implications:

22. The Corporate Identity Policy sets out and helps explain to staff the importance of corporate identity, what the Council's brand and brand values are and how any use of its corporate identity must be signed off through a Brand Gateway (the Council's Communications and Marketing team). The Corporate Identity Policy therefore supports staff to understand the importance of people being able to recognise council services and how they represent the brand.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) To approve the introduction of the Council's Corporate Identity Policy.
- 2) To approve the resources required to implement the Corporate Identity Policy.

Councillor Kay Cutts
Leader of the Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 04/01/2012)

23. County Council has the authority to approve the recommendations set out in the report.

Financial Comments (PS 06/01/2012)

24. The one off additional cost of **£38,488** will be met from the County Council's overall revenue budget in the current financial year.

Background Papers

Equality Impact Assessment
Summary of Brand Guidelines

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

Appendix

Draft Corporate Identity Policy