



**CORPORATE AND FINANCE REVIEW PANEL – NOVEMBER 22, 2001
CABINET – DECEMBER 5, 2001**

CORPORATE IDENTITY AND REBRANDING OF THE COUNCIL'S IMAGE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to put forward proposals for renewing the corporate identity and rebranding the council's image. This will have considerable benefits and also produce cost savings.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The idea to revamp the corporate identity and rebrand the council's image coincided with the revision and development of a new corporate plan – The Heart of the Forest; and comes at a time when the council is being asked to make savings in all areas of its business.
- 2.2 In the light of current financial constraints, it was made clear that any change in the corporate identity should be broadly cost neutral or attract cost savings.
- 2.3 If the council approve the change the first stages of the transition from the existing identity to the new one will take place at the beginning of 2002. The revamped style will be phased in over a period of time; thus allowing for the natural wastage of equipment and signage.
- 2.4 Paper and material for uniforms are soon to run out but must be reordered, so no additional expenditure in this area is expected.
- 2.5 Thus the gradual disappearance of the old style of branding from the public's memory will take place.

3. HISTORY OF THE CURRENT STRAPLINE

- 3.1 Introduced over a decade ago, the current strapline encapsulated the declared image of the council. The use of the green customized font juxtapositioned against a black serif font transmitted traditional values and signifiers of a rural economy and pastoral lifestyle.

- 3.2 Rather than combine a logo and a strapline, the distinctive customized font used for the words *New Forest* on a background matrix of vertical lines with the words *District Council* in a serif font was chosen to represent the council in the local government market place.
- 3.3 Looking at the current style, the messages it is giving are now somewhat dated and project an image which does not appear to be at the cutting edge of social innovation nor in line with the Disability Discrimination Act. The current strapline does not take into account recommendations for people with learning disabilities and/or sight impairment and presents a confusing image that is difficult to read and understand; furthermore, it does not lend itself to electronic branding and the electronic exchange of information.
- 3.4 Following external consultation on the present style, comments were received which included: conjures up images of rusticity, bucolic sleepiness, a country signpost, and days of a bygone era.

4. REBRANDING AND A FRESH CORPORATE IDENTITY

- 4.1 The way in which an organisation identifies itself affects all its images among all its different publics; that is, the way it is perceived by its customers and suppliers, partners and stakeholders, local politicians, town and parish councils, central government, potential recruits and, above all by its own employees.
- 4.2 Its corporate visual identity is its logo, name and strapline and the sum of all the ways in which this is manifested: namestyle, symbol, corporate colour, typeface, electronic identity, and graphic design format of all material carrying the name New Forest District Council.
- 4.3 Identity and image are not one and the same. Changing the corporate identity and rebranding will not necessarily affect the image of the council. How the council is perceived, its image, depends on all its activities, its services, employment policies, handling of complaints and customer care.
- 4.4 To be effective the corporate identity must be used consistently on all appropriate material: stationery and forms, literature, leaflets, other print, recruitment and advertising, vehicles, buildings, and signs.
- 4.5 Only by these can the council hope to build recognition of its new identity amid all the competition for attention from the media and our customers.

5. PROPOSED NEW CORPORATE IDENTITY

- 5.1 The administration wanted to make more use of the heraldic device awarded to the New Forest District Council in 1974 and perpetuate the motto *Old Yet Ever New*, believing that they encapsulate how the traditional values of the authority remain valid in a modern context.

- 5.2 An additional slogan: *New Forest District Council – The Heart of the Forest* has also been suggested as epitomizing the position the council holds among the many communities within the district.
- 5.3 The coat of arms was designed to show the union of the forest and the coastline; this is achieved by using elements from the shields of earlier authorities which became part of the larger NFDC.
- 5.4 From the former rural district council comes the head of a stag, while the ancient ship cupped in the antlers of the stag comes from the crest of Lymington; the colouring azure and white is taken from the arms of Ringwood and Fordingbridge.
- 5.5 Following a number of creative meetings between the corporate design manager, the design team, and head of public relations a version of the council's coat of arms, vis-à-vis a simplified and cutting edge adaptation of the heraldic device or badge, has been produced to satisfy the requirements of a fresh, crisp and up-to-date logo.
- 5.6 Examples of the new logo are available from the head of public relations or the corporate design manager and show how the new style device is used in a variety of settings, particularly in the electronic medium.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 If the Council adopts a gradual approach to the introduction of the new logo, the change will generate savings rather than costing money.
- 6.2 Paper and printing:
 - 6.2.1 The area in which the greatest savings can be made is that of paper stocks and printing.
 - 6.2.2 Rather than costing the authority money to change the corporate identity in this area immediate savings can be made. For example letterheads alone cost the authority £13,500 per annum (we use about 100,000 letterheads a year), a saving of £10000 (ten thousand pounds) can be made simply by buying paper from an alternative stationery specialist who will print and overprint the paper, cutting out the need for paper to be handled by an approved printer.
 - 6.2.3 New stocks of security watermarked letterheads supplied by a corporate stationery specialist, **printed in 2 colours**, could cost the authority as little **£33** per 1000.

6.2.4 **The favourable cost saving can only be made in this area because the proposed logo will be printed in two colours and not three, thus avoiding another costly printing process.**

6.2.5 Furthermore, in line with the council's policy on e-government and e-procurement, if a corporate stationery specialist is chosen, all design and repro work can be done on-line by print services thus reducing paperwork and avoiding time consuming visits by and to printers.

6.2.6 This cost saving does not take into account the production of business cards, compliment slips, and other corporate stationery; nor the purchase of photocopying paper at reduced cost .

6.3 Electronic:

6.3.1 The cost of electronic conversion of the proposed logo will be free on charge. There are no costs involved in removing the old logo and replacing it on the internet and intranet with the new one.

6.4 Vehicle fleet:

6.4.1 Savings can also be made in the area vehicle livery; once again the use of two colours means that signs do not cost so much.

6.4.2 In anticipation of a possible change in the corporate identity, Commercial Services have not purchased the old style logos for the corporate fleet.

6.4.3 Once a decision has been made vis-à-vis the corporate identity, two new large logos and one small logo could be purchased at a cost of £10 per vehicle. This price includes the set-up costs, after which the price would go down for re-orders.

6.5 Uniform:

6.5.1 The jade green sweat shirts, polo shirts, and recreation centre uniform, currently in use can continue to be worn after the proposed change because the colour is so similar to the proposed pantone PMS 321

6.5.2 The employees in the information offices have indicated that they wish to continue to wear uniform and the administration has indicated that they also wish for this to continue. Employees have suggested that a new, more flattering, colour scheme should be adopted and as it is now time to purchase new material (because the material currently used is no longer being manufactured) and, as uniform will continue to be worn, the cost of new stock can be contained within existing budgets.

6.6 Flags:

6.6.1 Two white woven polyester flags with new logo and New Forest District Council appliquéd both sides - £270

6.6.2 Two white woven polyester flags as above but fully dye printed - £135

6.7 Signage:

6.7.1 Large sign replacement (strip existing logo and replace with new style) - £192 each

6.7.2 Medium sized sign replacement (strip existing logo and replace with new style) - £124 each

6.7.3 The current signs around the Appletree Court campus and at the town hall are in a very poor state of repair and will need to be replaced within the next 12 months. A programme to do this is in place and is part of the expenditure bids for both locations.

6.8 Identity badges:

6.8.1 Current cost of a single identity badge is £3.50 plus the cost of clip/chain @ 50p - £4 each

6.8.2 Photograph identity badge with new logo and cost of clip/chain - £1.50 each.

6.9 Road signs:

6.9.1 Road signs either being replaced or new ones being sited could carry the new logo, there is no cost involved with this at present as, once again, letting the supply contract for these items is waiting for a decision to be made about the new corporate identity.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The cost savings identified are made because the proposed logo will only be reproduced in two colours instead of three. The addition of just one other colour increased colour reproduction costs dramatically.

7.2 The old NFDC strapline has served the authority well for over a decade, but times are changing and so are attitudes towards identity and what is customer friendly and what is highly recognisable. The proposed new logo satisfies the many demands made on the council to show itself as being at the cutting edge of innovation and service to the community. It will be more helpful to people with visual and learning disabilities.

7.3 It is recommended that the modernized heraldic device/badge, motto and slogan are adopted by the authority and is introduced immediately in the areas where cost savings can be made.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The new chlorine and bleach free paper stocks for hard copy stationery are environmentally sensitive and produced from sustainable forest specially harvested and replenished.
- 8.2 The introduction of the new logo and strapline/motto is not expected to adversely impact on the environment.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None

10. PORTFOLIO HOLDER INVOLVEMENT

- 10.1 The portfolio holder (leader of the council) has been advised of the recommendation and has agreed that this item should be put forward for consideration.

11. REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

- 11.1 The corporate and finance review panel supported all the proposals contained within this report.

12. RECOMMENDATION

- 12.1 Considering the positive benefits and savings outlined in this report, it is recommended that:

- (i) The council adopt the modernized heraldic device/badge, motto and slogan, and the change in identity be introduced in the areas where cost savings can be made Immediately.

- (ii) Gradually phase in change when and where necessary thus allowing for wastage of equipment and signage, and its natural replacement within budgets.

For further information:

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Background papers:

Proposed design
available from head of
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