

# HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET**  
**MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2002 AT 2.00 P.M.**

Agenda Item No.

**7**

## **CORPORATE IDENTITY**

### Report of the Chief Executive

Author: Seth Brook

Tel: 01992 588600

Executive Member: Robert Ellis

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To recommend the adoption and implementation of a revised corporate identity for the County Council.

#### **2. Summary**

- 2.1 The Best Value Review of Communications recognised that corporate identity is a cost-effective way of building positive public awareness of an organisation and the services it provides. It forms an essential component of building reputation and goodwill with key audiences. However, the Review found many instances of poor and inconsistent application of the County Council's identity and concluded that it should be developed by building upon the current identity.
- 2.2 A specialist design agency has been commissioned to take the development forward. Following testing design prototypes with staff and the public, a clear favourite emerged which has subsequently been refined to meet rigorous design standards. To support the implementation of the identity, a new comprehensive style guide is being prepared so that the County Council communicates its services positively, with enthusiasm and in line with its values.
- 2.3 A broad implementation programme has been compiled to indicate where and when the new identity will be applied to County Council services and products. Departments will be asked to provide detailed implementation programmes. A key principle behind its implementation is the intention to introduce it as comprehensively as possible within current resources.

#### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to consider the recommended revised corporate identity for the County Council and the accompanying implementation programme.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Best Value Review (BVR) of Communications which reported to Cabinet in March this year recognised that a well-designed, highly recognisable and widely used corporate identity is a cost-effective way of building positive public awareness of an organisation and the services it provides. It forms an essential component of building reputation and goodwill and as such it must communicate the values of the organisation.
- 1.2 However, the review found inconsistent application of the County Council's identity, many examples of abuse, emergence of new identities, poor application within electronic media, weakness in comparison with many partners' identities and, according to professional advice, gave the impression that the authority is worthy but rather old fashioned. It concluded that the corporate identity should be updated, building upon the existing identity.
- 1.3 Hence, the BVR recommended that the development of the corporate identity should consider a review of the design of the hart, the colour, the typeface, departmental sub-branding and the words used to give maximum impact in all media. The development should be informed by the County Council's values, that is, the vision of Strategic Management Board.
- 1.4 The tests for a successful outcome will be a corporate identity that reflects the values of the organisation, is immediately recognisable, is effective in all types of media and against partners' identities, is supported internally and externally and will last the organisation well over time.
- 1.5 Research shows that many residents are not aware of the range of services the County Council provides. A strong, highly visible visual identity will make the link much clearer with the aim of increasing satisfaction with services and raise the profile of the County Council within and beyond Hertfordshire.
- 1.6 Following a formal tender, specialist design agency Four IV were appointed to take the development process forward. In line with their brief (which is essentially captured in 1.3 and 1.4 above), a range of design prototypes were prepared and tested with focus groups of staff, the public, the communications team and with Chief Officers. A clear favourite emerged from this process which retains the stag in its present stance, the colour green (albeit in another, more modern shade), the prohibition of organisational sub-branding and dropping the words "County Council" so retaining just "Hertfordshire".
- 1.7 The favoured design prototype has been refined to ensure that it meets tough design performance standards, particularly its use in electronic media, reproduction in publications (including a black and white version), its use on buildings and legibility, especially for partially sighted people. Visuals of the design will be displayed in the Cabinet meeting room.

- 1.8 To support the implementation of the identity, a new comprehensive style guide is being prepared to ensure consistent application of the identity so that County Council always communicates its services positively, with enthusiasm and in line with its values. This is being developed in partnership between Four IV, the in-house graphic design teams and the communications team.
- 1.9 A broad implementation programme (Appendix I) has been compiled to indicate where and when the new identity will be applied to County Council services and products. It is not an exhaustive list. Given the numerous applications of visual identity that take place every day, departments will be asked to provide much more detailed implementation programmes (see 3.2 below) which will be monitored as they are delivered.
- 1.10 A communications plan has been prepared to ensure that key audiences are aware of the project and its rationale and benefits are clearly explained.

## **2. Further Developments**

- 2.1 The outcome of this project is an essential building block for developing an identity for the new highways arrangements and an employer brand for recruitment. Discussions are also underway with the Chief Fire Officer to ensure that a common visual identity is developed for Fire and Rescue that brings together the national fire service emblem, the eight point star, with the recommended corporate identity.

## **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 A key principle behind implementing the identity is the intention to introduce it as comprehensively and quickly as possible within current resources. For example, stationery and leaflet stocks are being run down, products such as all new vehicles will meet the new identity while all new reports, leaflets, displays, name badges, building signage etc. will also conform to the identity. It will take longer to introduce it to premises; these will be firmed up in the detailed plans.
- 3.2 A factor in measuring the effectiveness of the new identity will be its application throughout the wider community across all services over a period of time. Departments will bring forward detailed implementation programmes and will be encouraged to replace all products which are clearly beyond their normal working life within the next 12 months.

## APPENDIX I – Corporate identity implementation programme

WHAT	DESCRIPTION	TIMESCALES	COMMENTS
<b>CORPORATE</b>			
<b>Herts Direct</b>	Residents' quarterly newspaper	October	
<b>hertsdirect.org</b>	Website	October onwards	Review of website currently underway
<b>IDTV</b>	HCC's digital TV channel	October onwards	Update icon
<b>Connect</b>	Intranet	Late September	Update icon
<b>Connect Extra</b>	Staff newsletter to support Connect	October	Update masthead
<b>Newsflash</b>	News management system	October	Update news release format
<b>Recruitment</b>	New employer branding	Autumn/Winter	Major review of recruitment products/services. Corporate Personnel is client
<b>Publications, reports etc.</b>	New and regular publications	October onwards	E.g. budget book, Personnel publications etc
<b>Stationery</b>	All HCC stationery	October	Stationery buyers asked to run down stock
<b>Business systems/stationery</b>	Invoices, order forms, log-ons etc	October onwards	Corporate financial systems
<b>ID badges</b>	Visitors and staff	October onwards	Staff badges in new format as and when
<b>Business cards</b>	For staff	October onwards	As and when
	HCC establishments	October onwards	Update signage at key locations e.g. County Hall,

<b>Building signage</b>			and New Barnfield. Encourage new signage for all buildings/services. Install at new buildings
<b>Major building projects</b>	Prominent scheme boards	October onwards	For all major building/refurbishment projects
<b>VEHICLES</b>			
<b>County transport fleet</b>	All new vehicles	October onwards	<p>Applies only to new vehicles. Existing vehicles will remain in their current livery</p> <p>County Graphics to advise and assist departments or the county fleet manager</p> <p>Parallel discussions ongoing with Chief Fire Officer regarding implementation of revised Fire and Rescue identity</p>

<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<b>Hertfordshire Highways</b>	New highways arrangements	October	Application of visual identity to all services and Products under the new arrangements
<b>Publications, reports etc.</b>	New and regular publications	October onwards	
<b>Departmental leaflets</b>	Suite of 12 information leaflets	November	Review currently underway
<b>Household waste sites</b>	New signage at all HWSs	February	Details of new opening times etc
<b>County boundary signs</b>	Replacement of signs	October	Highways Agency has budget to replace signs on motorways and trunk roads this year. Signs on county roads will also be reviewed
<b>EM</b>	Staff/stakeholder newsletter	November	Update masthead
<b>Interpretation boards</b>	On site interpretation	October onwards	Several projects in hand
<b>ADULT CARE SERVICES</b>			
<b>Publications, reports etc.</b>	New and regular publications	October onwards	ACS has a high production rate of service leaflets
<b>Briefing</b>	Staff newsletter	November/December	Update masthead
<b>Special briefings</b>	Service/departmental updates	October onwards	Update masthead
<b>Building signage</b>	29 day centres and 20 office sites	Autumn onwards	Correct ACS signage is needed as it is not been Updated following ASC/CSF
<b>CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES</b>			

<b>Publications, reports etc.</b>	New and regular publications	October onwards	Includes several service leaflets in the pipeline
<b>Inform</b>	Newsletter for schools	January	Update masthead
<b>Inform Extra</b>	One-off publication for schools on major issues	November	Update masthead
<b>CSF News</b>	Staff newsletter	October	Update masthead
<b>CSF Matters</b>	Summary of Board meetings for Staff	October	Update masthead
<b>Recruitment</b>	Campaign	Late September	Leaflet and exhibition
<b>Planning</b>	New signage	November onwards	Various schools developments e.g. St Catherine's and Knights Templar
<b>FIRE AND RESCUE</b>			
<b>Publications, reports etc.</b>	New and regular publications	October onwards	
<b>Winter safety</b>	Campaign	Late October	Publications including newsletter
<b>Arson strategy</b>	Joint strategy with the Police	October	Publication
<b>Vehicles</b>	See above under "Vehicles"		
<b>Recruitment</b>	Advertising	October onwards	

<b>COMMUNITY INFORMATION</b>			
<b>Publications, reports etc.</b>	New and regular publications	October onwards	
<b>Home Library Service</b>	Newsletter	October onwards	Update masthead
<b>Libraries</b>	Signage	October onwards	For refurbished buildings
<b>Membership badges</b>	Cards	October onwards	When stocks run down
<b>CI bulletin</b>	Newsletter	October	Update masthead