

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING
27TH JULY 2006

Framework for Developing a Brand Strategy for Wyre Forest District Council

OPEN	
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	Delivering Quality Services
KEY PRIORITY:	Communication and Consultation
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr John-Paul Campion
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Jane Doyle Ext. 2745 Jane.doyle@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDIX	Draft framework for developing a Brand Strategy for Wyre Forest District Council

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on the development of the Council's draft framework for developing a Brand Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 **The work progressed to date in the development of the Council's first Brand Strategy, as detailed in the report, be noted.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Brand is much more than visual identity. It is about every contact the customer has with us, face to face, by phone or email, on a poster or via our website. Brand values are powerfully present in the manner in which we deliver our services, and in the stories that are told about us on the street, in the media or over a coffee.
- 3.2 Brand is intrinsically linked to reputation as highlighted in the Local Government Association's (LGA) research and subsequent national action plan 'Local Government Reputation', launched in July 2005. This provides a measurement framework for Councils on how they can act to improve their standing with local people.
- 3.3 The LGA findings state that if Councils focus on doing certain things well, for example cleaning the streets and communicating with key audiences, it improves overall resident satisfaction and impacts on reputation.

- 3.4 Therefore the purpose of developing a Brand Strategy is so that we can further enhance our reputation and positioning with all our audiences, both internally and externally. To achieve this, we need to gain a clear understanding of present perceptions of the Council and the Wyre Forest District in general so we can assess what changes we need to make to support delivery of the aims and priorities of the Corporate Plan.
- 3.5 Brand also links very closely with Customer Service which is why a Customer Service Strategy is currently being developed alongside this Strategy.
- 3.6 There are a number of internal and external factors that are driving the need to develop a Wyre Forest District Council Brand Strategy and include:
- a) **Partnership Working** – in some instances identity has been lost due to the development of partnership logos, whilst in other cases confusion has been caused through the use of a multitude of logos;
 - b) **Various Hybrid Brands of the Council's logo** – over the years there has been inconsistent use of the Council's logo which causes confusion of 'ownership' of services and initiatives;
 - c) **Centralised Office Accommodation** – there is a need to establish unified values, a sense of place and identity for Members and employees; and
 - d) **Pending Local Government Review on Councils** – establishing clarity of purpose is essential depending upon the outcome of the review

4. PROGRESS

- 4.1 In May 2005 an Officer Customer Service and Branding Working Group was set up to develop a Customer Service and Branding Strategy. The Group comprises of Officers from each Division in order to establish a corporate approach towards this issue across the whole authority.
- 4.2 In October 2005, the Working Group commissioned a one day workshop by consultants Solace Enterprises who facilitated the development of a strategic framework and discussion paper for supporting the preparation of a Customer Services and Branding Strategy.
- 4.3 Following further work and having reviewed best practice across the country, the Group have now decided to develop two mutually exclusive strategies in order to demonstrate the wider realms of both branding and customer service. This approach was endorsed by Audit Commission Inspectors when they recently undertook an inspection on the authority's environment and communication services.
- 4.4 In June 2006, a detailed draft framework for the Brand Strategy was completed and has been placed in Members' Group Rooms. The framework currently includes the following areas: brand definition, our objectives, baseline information, proposed brand values, and our strategic approach which is broken down into the following categories:

- a) People who live in the Wyre Forest District;
- b) People who run businesses in the Wyre Forest District;
- c) People who work in the Wyre Forest District;
- d) People who visit the Wyre Forest District;
- e) People who may invest in the Wyre Forest District; and
- f) People who have leadership roles in the community and organisations.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 In order to develop a comprehensive Brand Strategy we need to have a clear understanding of perceptions across all our audiences. Therefore a comprehensive consultation exercise will be undertaken during July, August and September 2006 with each of the categories listed in paragraph 4.4 (a to f). The information gathered will be analysed and fed into the development of the Brand Strategy. It will also support the ongoing development of the Customer Services Strategy.
- 5.2 Member consultation on the Brand Strategy is currently being scheduled for September 2006 with a view to having the Strategy completed by October 2006.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 At this stage it is too early to identify any specific financial implications.

7. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Brand Strategy will support the delivery of both the Corporate Communications Strategy 2006 – 2010 and the pending Customer Services Strategy.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 It is too early to identify any specific risk management implications.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Brand Strategy will further enhance our ability to meet the Council's corporate aims and priorities in partnership with our communities and other stakeholders.

10. CONSULTEES

- Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs
- Corporate Management Team

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- CPA Improvement Plan 2006 – 2007

- Solace Enterprises Report – October 2005