



TITLE:	INTRODUCING A NEW CORPORATE IDENTITY FOR ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
TO/ON:	THE CABINET / 9th NOVEMBER 2005
BY:	HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES AND E-GOVERNMENT
LEAD MEMBER:	COUNCILLOR DUNCAN RUDDICK, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
STATUS:	FOR PURIFICATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress that has been made in developing a new corporate identity for Rossendale Borough Council and to seek Members support for the full roll out of the new brand.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to choose between the Council's legacy logo and the new 'Rossendale Alive' brand and corporate identity that have been developed for the Council.
- 2.2 If Members support the new identity they are asked to agree to its phased introduction over the next five years.

3. REPORT AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS AND TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 Research carried out by the IDeA has demonstrated that customer perceptions of Local Authorities and customer satisfaction are linked to council's image and branding and whether they are effective at providing community leadership. A positive image and a strong brand, together with effective community leadership, can help council's to raise their customer satisfaction levels and improve their reputation.
- 3.1.2 Consultation work undertaken as part of the Best Value Review of Customer Services during the later part of 2004 identified that Rossendale's legacy logo was associated with a council that had a poor reputation primarily because it had historically delivered poor customer service and weak community leadership.

The review indicated that the improvements that were underway at the Council would be undermined without a strong unifying brand identity.

- 3.1.3 Furthermore, Local Government Minister Nick Raynsford highlighted the importance of improving the Council's reputation in order to support the Council's Improvement Plan. His letter of 4th April 2005 advises Rossendale Council that: "There is also a public relations job to be done involving the community – communicating the council's achievements and its positive approach for the future." He continues by highlighting the importance of improving the public presentation of the council, shifting our focus to our customers and of winning over local residents.
- 3.1.4 Our challenge then is to raise customer satisfaction, demonstrate community leadership, and improve the Council's reputation, but the IDeA research and the Best Value Review of Customer Services indicate that negative perceptions of the legacy logo will be a major barrier to progress.
- 3.1.5 As a result of the Best Value Review of Customer Services, Improvement Plans were drawn up which included a firm commitment to introduce a new corporate brand with linkages to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) branding. These plans were adopted at Executive in December 2004.

3.2 BRAND AUDIT

- 3.2.1 A Brand Audit carried out during summer 2005 identified that the Council's legacy logo had been applied so inconsistently and misused to such an extent that, in the view of several graphic designers consulted, it was no longer tenable as an effective communications device. This situation appears to have arisen as a result of a historic lack of clear guidelines for the logo's use and as a result of not having a dedicated professional communications resource to support the brand.

3.3 ROSSENDALE ALIVE AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 3.3.1 As part of the development of Rossendale's Local Strategic Partnership a new logo was developed during 2005. The logo was intended to be used as a generic Rossendale wide logo that all partners could promote jointly, as well as being an identity for the Partnership itself and providing a title for the community strategy.
- 3.3.2 Therefore, the Rossendale Alive branding has purposefully been designed with the intention of being able to approach LSP members and the Council's own partnership agencies such as Greenvale Homes and Rossendale Leisure Trust, to encourage them to promote the Rossendale Alive branding on their publicity materials. Similarly if the Council enters into any further partnership arrangements in the future, the Rossendale Alive branding can be incorporated into any new branding. The brand guidelines that are being developed for the Rossendale Alive logo will facilitate our partners being able to use the Rossendale Alive branding to promote their own organisation and their support for the wider Rossendale Alive vision.

- 3.3.3 The Council has already demonstrated its support for the Rossendale Alive logo by using it to promote the borough during the general election count and on the Council's first Citizens Newsletter produced in August.
- 3.3.4 As the Council's 'Golden Thread' and corporate planning framework clearly demonstrate, Rossendale Council is fully committed to supporting the Rossendale Alive Community Strategy and has aligned its corporate planning so that five of the LSP's eight strategic priorities are shared with the Council. The adoption of the Rossendale Alive branding for use by the Council is an extension of this alignment and the Rossendale Alive has been designed in such a way as to allow the Council to adapt this logo as its new corporate identity.

3.4 BRANDING AND CPA

- 3.4.1 The new Rossendale Alive branding will play a key part in demonstrating the unity and common purpose between the Council and the Local Strategic Partnership which is a vitally important part of the CPA inspection process.
- 3.4.2 Guidance in the Audit Commission's Key Lines Of Enquiry (KLOE) in relation to the 'Ambition for the community' criteria asks 'Are there clear and challenging ambitions for the area and its communities?' The inspection focus is looking for evidence that ambitions for the community 'are shared amongst partner organisations and understood by staff and the local community'.
- 3.4.3 In order to achieve a Level 3 Judgement the Council must demonstrate that it 'effectively communicates decisions about its ambitions, and changes in these decisions, to its members, officers and staff, to local people and communities, and to partners and stakeholders. As a result members, officers and other staff, partners and stakeholders share a common purpose'.
- 3.4.4 Given the low levels of stakeholder understanding that currently exist about the LSP and the Community Strategy, the most obvious way to demonstrate a common purpose and to provide evidence that the LSP and the Council are working together is through common shared branding, in the same way that the "Virgin" brand works across separate companies covering mobile phones, records, perfume and trains.

3.5 BRANDING AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- 3.5.1 The profile of the Council, the way that we communicate, and having a strong brand for Rossendale and for the Council are key elements of effective community leadership. Our legacy logo hampers our ability to provide this and restricts our ability to manage our reputation effectively. A new identity for the Council provides an opportunity to start with a clean slate and manage our reputation more effectively in the future.

3.6 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.6.1 Following the work done with the LSP to develop the Rossendale Alive logo, a variation of the new logo has now been developed for use by Rossendale Borough Council.

3.6.2 The logo clearly demonstrates the linkages with the Rossendale Alive strategy and has a modern and energetic design. The colours chosen are associated with values that are appropriate for Rossendale Council - fresh, modern, free thinking, productive, warm, eye catching, friendly, trustworthy, and optimistic. Furthermore, the 'Alive' brand is positive and inspirational and purposefully demonstrates community leadership.

3.7 ONE STOP SHOP OPENING

3.7.1 The planned opening of the One Stop Shop in November presents us with an excellent opportunity to launch the new brand. The One Stop Shop represents a significant investment in improving the quality of the services our customers receive. However, the impact of the One Stop Shop will be weakened if it is associated with the old Rossendale Branding. The new brand will play a vital part in the design and promotion of a successful One Stop Shop. Without a new brand, the One Stop Shop will not be as effective in raising customer satisfaction.

3.8 INTRODUCING THE NEW LOGO

3.8.1 A detailed implementation plan is being drawn up. Following endorsement by Members the logo will be applied to Council branded activities and materials on a phased basis, thus minimising the cost of adopting the new logo.

3.8.2 Further consultation with Service Managers is underway to ascertain the full range of materials that the branding will be applied to and when it will be appropriate to phase them in so that the introduction is cost neutral.

3.8.3 A branding guidelines publication will be available on the Council's Intranet along with copies of the logo and downloadable templates for letterheads, compliments slips, business cards, faxes and PowerPoint presentations.

3.9 SENSITIVE USAGE

3.9.1 There are occasions when it may not be appropriate to use the 'Alive' branding. In these circumstances the word 'Alive' will be dropped from the logo.

4. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

4.1 FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1.1 Initial estimates are that the logo can be introduced on a cost neutral basis as a result of a phased implementation and replacing old materials with new materials when they become life expired.

4.2 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS

4.2.1 Introducing new branding will provide two clear opportunities for Member Development. Firstly, as part of the roll out of the brand, Members will learn more about the brand values that are associated with the new logo and how the

new branding will serve its purpose for a modern forward looking authority. Secondly, Members will be able to gain a greater understanding of the importance of having a strong positive brand with a high profile which will help them to fulfil their responsibilities to provide effective community leadership and provide an opportunity for the Council to manage its reputation more effectively.

4.3 HUMAN RESOURCES

4.3.1 By explaining the reasons for the change of branding to staff it will be possible to gain buy-in to the brand. This will have a positive impact on staff morale and help to foster greater pride amongst staff who work for the council. The new logo will help to signal to staff that the Council is changing and that the improvement agenda is progressing well.

4.4 ANY OTHER RELEVANT CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.4.1 Customers - Introducing a new corporate identity will help to improve perceptions of the Council's customer services and present a more consistent image to our customers. Furthermore, it will help us to fulfil one of our customer service promises - 'Improved recognition of Rossendale Council branding and association with professional quality services'.

4.4.2 Improvement – A new corporate identity will provide a visual signal that the council has made rapid improvements.

4.4.3 Partnership – By adopting the Rossendale Alive branding we will demonstrate visually that we are a fully committed partner in the Local Strategic Partnership.

5. RISK

5.1 The main risk is that the new branding will not be correctly applied. This will be managed by ensuring that strong guidelines are in place for its use.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM THE REPORT

6.1 None

7. EQUALITIES ISSUES ARISING FROM THE REPORT

7.1 There are no equalities issues.

8. WARDS AFFECTED

8.1 All wards are affected.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 Chief Executive, Council Leader, Chair of the LSP, Senior Management Team

Background documents:

Best Value Review of Customer Services – Improvement Plans

For further information on the details of this report, please contact:
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