

# CHESHIRE EAST

## CABINET REPORT

---

**Date of meeting:** 8<sup>th</sup> September 2008  
**Report of:** Communications & Marketing Group  
**Title:** Corporate Identity/Branding Development

---

### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This paper updates Members on the outcome of the public and staff feedback to the shortlist of 3 designs for the new brand for Cheshire East Council.

### **2.0 Decision Required**

- 2.1 Members are invited to make a selection as to which option they would like to be implemented as the brand for the new Council. See 7.4 for the 3 options.

The recommendation of the Marketing & Communications Group is to select option 3, a refinement of the original Wheatsheaf design into a 2 colour format for ease of implementation.

### **3.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs**

- 3.1 The public feedback process has cost approximately £4,000 pounds as per the budget. The cost of implementing the new brand will be significant and work is ongoing on estimating the likely cost and optimum implementation process.

### **4.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond**

- 4.1 The implementation of the brand will be a considerable undertaking irrespective of which brand option is selected. A report will be produced in order to provide a clearer idea of the scope of this undertaking.

### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 Once a brand is selected it would be prudent to apply for Trade Mark registration to ensure we can gain formal design protection for the brand.

### **6.0 Risk Assessment**

- 6.1 Should the selected brand inadvertently contravene any existing brand owners' designs it may need to be modified.

## 7.0 Background and Options

7.1 At the Cabinet meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008, Members selected a shortlist of 3 options – Hills & Water, Wheatsheaf and Rising Sun to be subject to staff and public feedback in order to recommend a favoured option.

7.2 Shortlisted logos:

		
Logo A - "Hills & Water"	Logo B – "Wheatsheaf"	Logo C – "Rising Sun"

7.3 The County Council's Research & Intelligence Unit managed the project which involved facilitated focus groups held in each of the 3 current districts with a wide range of age groups including teenagers and an online questionnaire which received over 2,100 responses. The local media extensively featured the shortlist following a press launch by the portfolio holder on 18<sup>th</sup> July. The full report is available in Appendix 1. A summary of the findings are as follows:

- The online questionnaire responses favoured the Wheatsheaf design (54%) against 35% for Hills & Water and 11% for Rising Sun
- The majority of the focus groups also favoured the Wheatsheaf design
- The Rising Sun design was the least favoured by all respondents
- Extract from the report summary – *"Participants had varying views about the three logos but overall the Logo B, the Wheatsheaf, was the most preferred. Generally they thought it was clear what the symbol was, a modern interpretation of a traditional icon, and was easy to recognise. For many it was a clear winner and the logo that most represented the place of Cheshire East."*
- Some of the participants' responses in relation to the Wheatsheaf included – 'representative of Cheshire'; 'it is approachable and relevant to the people of East Cheshire' and that it is 'professional, clean and smart'.

Although the Wheatsheaf design was the favoured option it did receive some negative comments:

- It looks too rural or a cereals company
- The proposed van livery looks like a bakery
- A four colour logo would be more costly to implement
- Would it look better with the Wheatsheaf to the left?
- Is it relevant to urban communities?

7.4 In view of these responses the logo designers have developed 2 alternative refinements to the original Wheatsheaf design for consideration:

- **Option 1 – original Wheatsheaf design**



- **Option 2 – amended design with Wheatsheaf to the left**



- **Option 3 – original Wheatsheaf layout amended into a 2 colour format**



N.B. Larger versions of these 3 options, with more accurate colour reproduction, can be provided for Members to view at the meeting.

## **8.0 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 8.1 Option 3 above provides a simpler refinement of the original design and would enable applications such as stationery printing, vehicle liveries and signage to be produced using only two colours as opposed to 4 in the original, thus reducing the costs substantially. Also by converting one of the wheatsheafs to a green tint, it should reduce the perception of being linked to a cereal producer or food/bakery manufacturer.

Option 2 creates a more unbalanced design, and could be more difficult when applied to stationery as logos generally look better on the right-hand side of the page.

## **9.0 Next Steps**

- 9.1 Should Members make a decision on a choice of brand, the key subsequent task will be to develop a Brand Manual. This will be a comprehensive document that sets out the scope and procedures that will govern how the brand will be implemented. Everything from stationery templates, uniforms, vehicle liveries and publicity material will need to be branded in a consistent and managed process. The Brand Manual will be the principal method of ensuring the new brand is effectively managed and controlled throughout the Council.

The Marketing & Communications Group propose to follow a similar process as was used to create the brand shortlist, by utilising the in-house resources of the Graphic Design staff of the existing Councils to develop the Brand Manual.

- 9.2 For specific civic and ceremonial activities only a Borough coat of arms or crest logo will be developed with reference to the heritage of East Cheshire. This will be progressed with the relevant authorities for approving issuing such designs.
- 9.3 Members will also wish to consider how the new brand is launched to the public and media. A launch in the coming weeks will enable the development of initial Council publications such as a customer newspaper and Shadow Authority material incorporating the new brand.
- 9.4 A process for managing the implementation of the new brand will also be developed for Member approval. This would encompass the scope of which items should be branded before vesting day and how a programme of rolling implementation would be managed thereafter. As the financial implications will be uppermost in how this process can be achieved, we therefore propose to produce a report for Members outlining the options and likely costs in the coming months.

### ***For further information:***

*Portfolio Holder: Councillor D. Brown*

*Officer: Andrew Arditti*

*Tel No: 01244 972441*

*Email: [andrew.arditti@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.arditti@cheshire.gov.uk)*