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**Report 02.406**

4 July 2002

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Report to Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee  
from Andrew Cutler, Strategic Communication Manager

## **Rebranding – Recommendation to Adopt a Brand Identity**

### **1. Purpose**

To seek approval to proceed with rebranding of the organisation so as to support the Council's purpose of achieving a sustainable region.

### **2. Background**

Over the last four months Councillors have fully discussed the rationale and process of rebranding the organisation so as to support the goal of achieving a sustainable region. As a consequence of these discussions, we are recommending that Council adopt the promotional brand "Greater Wellington – The Regional Council" (**Attachment 1**).

### **3. Rationale**

There are several reasons for adopting Greater Wellington as the Regional Council's promotional brand.

- It is important to develop a name and identity that better communicates the organisation's reason for being (working toward a sustainable region), better describes its geographical responsibility (Greater Wellington), and recognises its role (The Regional Council).
- The proposed brand reflects internal and external changes in attitudes toward the Wellington Region, and the issue of sustainable development in its broadest sense. The time is right to adopt a new promotional brand that reflects and enhances the energy and confidence of the Region, and harnesses staff and community commitment to working for a sustainable region.
- Research shows that the existing brand identity has not been successful in communicating the organisation's message or purpose. There is little enthusiasm

for the logo and slogan externally, and public knowledge of our purpose has changed little in the last decade. Internal focus groups have given the clear message that staff are enthusiastic for a brand that communicates our purpose and supports the work of divisions.

The proposed brand has the following strengths:

- It can be easily and attractively applied to the work of Committees to create sub-brands such as Greater Wellington Transport, Greater Wellington Parks, Greater Wellington Water, and so on. The sub-brands are clearly related to the parent-brand, “Greater Wellington – The Regional Council”, and will therefore provide a consistency of image to the organisation. The parent brand and sub brands will support each other.
- The proposed brand is an opportunity to emphasise the complementary nature of our role with regard to other local authorities. It can be used to differentiate our work and purpose where necessary, and it can be used to emphasise regional co-operation where appropriate.

#### **4. Implementation of the Proposed Brand**

Development of the brand has been funded from a \$134,000 budget, carried forward on 11 October 2001 from an underspend in the 2000/2001 Communications budget. \$20,000 has been rebudgeted to the 2002/03 financial year as a result of the timing of the process.

If approved, we will begin development of a brand design guide that will specify how the brand will be applied to publications, signage, vehicles, and so on. The cost of the design guide is estimated at \$40,000 and will come from the rebudgeted monies for branding, and from the existing External Communications budget.

A number of projects and replacement of signage have been delayed pending a decision on branding. Utility Services and Landcare Divisions have \$90,000 of signage and capital expenditure budgeted for 2002/03. Once the design guide is complete development and replacement of signage can commence.

We have ensured that stocks of stationery have been kept to a minimum during the process of discussing the brand. There will be little additional cost as existing stocks will be used up before being replaced. Similarly, the new brand will be applied to publications as they are required.

Where possible and practical we will replace signage, vehicle liveries, uniforms and other assets as they come due for replacement. It will also be possible to effect short-term solutions on some assets using stickers, badges and so on.

#### **5. Comment**

In considering the recommendation below, it is important to emphasise that the rebranding is merely a vehicle to support the achievement of the Council’s strategic goal – the progressive movement towards a sustainable region. Such a challenging goal will not be achieved solely by the Regional Council. It will require a significant shift in attitudes and behaviours amongst individuals. The promotion of such a change

needs a clear focus and the new brand is merely that. The real effect will be determined by how the Council sets its priorities when developing its Long Term Council Community Plan over the months to come.

## **6. Communication**

A media release has been prepared and an explanatory letter written for distribution to stakeholders, should the Recommendations be adopted.

## **7. Recommendations**

*That the Committee recommend that the Council:*

- (1) Accept the report and note its contents.*
- (2) Agree to adopt the new promotional brand.*

Prepared by:

Approved by:

ANDREW CUTLER  
Strategic Communications Manager

JOHN ALLARD  
Corporate Policy Manager

**Attachment 1: Proposed brand**