

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

8 November 2022

Brand Design and Deployment for the new North Yorkshire Council

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To outline a recommended best value approach to the brand design and brand deployment for the new North Yorkshire Council, based on the following four main criteria:

- Incurring minimum costs;
- Ensuring North Yorkshire Council is safe and legal for day one;
- Providing appropriate clarity for our customers;
- Capitalising on low-cost but high-value cultural opportunities so that all employees feel like one team from the outset.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 From 1 April 2023, a new single council will replace the eight councils currently operating across the county. North Yorkshire Council will provide all the services currently delivered by the county, five district and two borough councils. Restructuring local government in North Yorkshire was a prerequisite for being eligible for the strongest possible devolution deal. A draft deal for a Mayoral-led Combined Authority with City of York is currently out for public consultation. Ending the two-tier system of county and district councils will also deliver tens of millions in financial savings to shore up public services over the coming years. North Yorkshire Council will be geographically the largest council in England and the third largest by population.
- 2.2 The new North Yorkshire Council is legally required to adopt an identity. It is not possible to utilise any of the eight council brands currently in place. Therefore, this paper suggests a staged and proportionate approach to satisfying those legal requirements, while recommending a relatively low-cost approach to limited symbolic branding. Legal requirements include areas such as finance, licensing, public protection and safeguarding, planning and certain public facing signage, including some relating to public parking etc.
- 2.3 To ensure the recommended approach is proportionate and in line with other similar exercises elsewhere, the approach and costs incurred by other unitised councils have been explored. Costs for rebranding exercises for seven councils looked at range from circa **£475,000 to circa £727,000**.
- 2.4 Applying the four main considerations to the detailed cost analysis which has been completed for this paper, it is estimated that the cost of branding deployment for North Yorkshire Council **will not exceed £400,000, as outlined in the table below**.

Category	Cost
Legal – listed later in paper	£125,669
Customer - signage including main access points, libraries, registrar offices, crematoriums, adult social care venues and county records office. Waste fleet door vinyl panels only (to be phased in over next 12 months).	£60,450
Staff – lanyards and ID badges only.	£21,475
System output changes – letterhead, email, certificate, licences, consents, permissions and orders. Paper and online. Any other form of communications issued from, and after, the launch date, that has a legal impact or from which legal consequences flow.	£186,375
TOTAL	£393,969

- 2.5 **For context, there are currently 545 IT systems** in place across the eight councils.
- 2.6 **It is important to note that the vast majority of costs association with rebranding and system output changes in this paper are legal requirements.** However, while some systems and assets will be required to display the new council's identity from day one, where it is appropriate, a staged approach to the deployment of brand is recommended. This will ensure costs are spread across multiple financial years, that every opportunity to reduce costs is explored and that staff are not unnecessarily diverted onto rebranding activity instead of providing public services.
- 2.7 This report outlines the approach taken to date to identify, categorise and prioritise items and assets for rebranding for day one of North Yorkshire Council.
- 2.8 **To note** - It is not proposed that a wholesale rebranding exercise of council assets is undertaken. This would not be best value for money or make the most of the time of council officers. The vast majority of assets carrying branding will only be replaced as they wear out. This includes many public-facing assets, including bins, most signage and many buildings, bus stops, schools and vehicles. **These may carry retired brands for many years.**
- 2.9 The research, preparation and evidence supporting this paper has been led by the Communications, Engagement and Branding workstream, which is one of the 15 workstreams established to support the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme in North Yorkshire. It has involved colleagues from across the marketing, communications and graphic design functions from all eight councils, as well as a much broader staff base in terms of testing ideas and designing the identity. In preparing the approach to brand design and deployment, considerable effort has gone into ensuring input from staff is reflected in the recommendations. This inclusive approach is important to support the building of a single team spirit as well as the formation of the new council's culture and values. Our staff are our greatest asset and the progress and success to date of the LGR programme is only possible because of their concerted efforts and professionalism. Becoming one team for a new council is integral to the new council's culture and values and staff from all eight councils have been clear this matters to them.
- 2.10 A branding audit has taken place across the existing eight councils to determine the type and the extent of assets that display an existing brand identity. The audit data has been reviewed and analysed and the results have been grouped into a number of logical categories and sub categories. The subject matter experts in each area have also been asked to evaluate the risks versus benefits of the timing of any rebrand on their assets which are legally required. Therefore, no opportunity to evaluate, reduce and manage costs has been missed.

2.11 Work will now continue across all workstreams to manage the deployment of the legally required items and so that the proportionate approach outlined is consistently applied.

3.0 BRAND IDENTITY

3.1 The term 'brand' represents and articulates an organisation's purpose, proposition, positioning, and personality. The brand includes the organisational vision, values, behaviours, strategic goals and tone of voice. A 'brand identity' is the visible elements of a brand, such as colour, design and logo that identify and distinguish the organisation in residents' or stakeholders' minds.

3.2 A corporate brand identity plays an important role in the way the council will present itself to internal and external stakeholders. The brand identity comprises four functions:

- Provides a quality assurance mark ensuring residents know that the new authority exists, what services are available, how to access services and where to go for information;
- Contributes to the image of the council and therefore its reputation;
- Enables a relationship between external stakeholders and the council to be easily identified;
- Allows employees to identify with the organisation and represent it with pride.

3.3 The design of an identity for North Yorkshire Council has been developed entirely using internal experience and expertise from the eight councils involved in LGR. There have therefore been **no external costs incurred**.



North Yorkshire Council Brand concept



North Yorkshire Council Brand concept

4.0 DEPLOYMENT OF BRANDING

4.1 As outlined at the start of this report, in recommending an approach to deploying a new brand the options were benchmarked against the following criteria:

- Incurring minimum costs;
- Ensuring we are safe and legal for day one;
- Providing appropriate clarity for our customers;
- Capitalising on low-cost but high-value cultural opportunities so that all employees feel like one team from the outset.

4.2 Legal

A range of assets are legally required to be rebranded, including some categories of signage, documentation, taxi licences and warrant cards. Full details can be seen in the legal implication section below.

4.3 Customer

To provide clarity for customers, a number of areas have been prioritised, such as external directional signage at key buildings and customer access points and rebranding of online services.

4.4 Staff

To bring staff together to feel like one team, staff lanyards and ID badges have been prioritised.

4.5 Natural wastage/replacement/worn out - a no additional cost approach to rebranding.

These are items which either turnover relatively quickly or the impact of old branding is minimal. We are proposing that existing authority brand identities will still be visible on

many assets for many years to come, and that replacement for some assets will take place only when they have worn out.

- Bus stops/shelters
- Caravan parks and beach chalets
- Cemeteries
- Cultural venues
- Domestic and commercial wheeled bins, refuse/recycling bags, boxes and/or sacks
- Elderly people's homes, extra cares, supported living, short breaks
- Flags and banners
- Highways signage
- Household waste recycling centres
- Interpretation boards
- Lower-priority vehicle fleet
- Park and ride sites
- Parks, outdoor spaces and children's play area signage
- Public rubbish/waste/recycling/litter bins
- Road and street signage
- Schools
- Staff uniform
- Tourist information centres

5.0 OTHER BRAND IDENTITIES

5.1 In addition to the main North Yorkshire Council brand, the eight councils have more than 100 other brand identities in use.

5.2 These other brands and sub brands will continue until they are reviewed as part of the transformation programmes after the new council is launched.

5.3 Use of existing brand assets

Existing brand identities remain legally valid until 11.59pm on 31 March 2023.

5.4 Principles for owners of existing branded assets are set out below:

- Don't waste perfectly useable materials. Run down existing physical stock (such as headed paper) and consider switching to a digital version when physical stock is exhausted. Do not order more unless needed, and only order what you need on these occasions.
- Look for opportunities to remove existing main brand identities where possible (internal notices/signs, graphics on windows or signage) where the removal will have no material effect or it is not customer facing.
- If you need to order essential new uniform/PPE, continue to do so. For large assets, such as vehicles, consider whether any new additions to the fleet can initially be put on the road unbranded.
- Only replace existing branded assets on a like-for-like basis when there is compelling reason to do so (for example a sign on a building is worn out or needs to be removed for safety).
- If possible, wait and order replacements when the new branding is available.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 This paper outlines a practical and proportionate approach to the deployment of branding for North Yorkshire Council which makes the most of the new council's resources. It also ensures we do not miss relatively small but valuable opportunities to assist customers and to reflect the views of the staff working for all eight councils. By using only in-house expertise and consulting with our staff on the design, we have also taken every opportunity to be inclusive and reduce costs.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The cost of not being legally compliant for launch day is not included in this paper and is impossible to estimate. The estimated costs for the approach recommended is not more than £400,000.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Legal advice has been sought on what items will need to be legally branded with the new identity for launch day. The full legal advice is set out below:

8.2 North Yorkshire Council is a local authority created under The North Yorkshire (Structural Changes) Order 2022 SI No. 328. The new council will come into being on 1 April 2023 and will exist as a legal entity from that date. From 1 April 2023, the new council becomes responsible for all the functions previously carried out by the district councils and county council.

8.3 It is not a legislative requirement for local authorities to use a logo/brand in addition to their name. However, this is standard practice and the logo/brand should be available in readiness for 1 April 2023. **The new council must, however, identify itself on a broad number of assets as a legal requirement.**

8.4 Legal Matters

The following lists the assets where it is legally necessary for the new council to display its identity to be legally compliant on the launch date:

- Letterheads, email sign-offs, templates for notices, licences, consents, permissions, certificates, orders, and any other form of communications issued from and after the vesting date that has a legal impact or from which legal consequences flow.
- All paper or online application forms made available to the public.
- Employee IDs and warrant cards used by officers for rights of entry on to sites for inspection and enforcement purposes.
- All bills, invoices, reminders, formal demands and legal proceedings.
- Statutory registers which are open to public inspection in hard copy form or displayed on the council's website.
- Tariff boards in all council owned or operated car parks, all tickets, all enforcement/penalty charge notices, all civil enforcement officer uniforms and all signs subject to enforcement control that state the enforcing authority's name i.e. suspension of parking bays.
- CCTV notices
- Council's constitution, register of members' interests, and agenda/report templates for committee and council meetings.
- Registers of gifts and hospitality for members and officers.
- Registers for births, deaths and marriages.
- New corporate seal for sealing legal documents

8.5 Please also note that the following legal matters (currently being actioned by other workstreams) relate to the corporate identity of the new council and are required in readiness for 1 April 2023:

- Postal, DX and email addresses and telephone numbers.
- VAT registration number and any other registrations with HM Revenues and Customs for tax purposes.
- Data protection number.
- Public indemnity insurance and any other insurance policies required for the new council.
- Any statutory or compulsory registrations of the new council as a local authority with third parties.
- Any statutory or compulsory IT systems or applications that must be available for use by the new council on the vesting date.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Avoiding a wholesale brand deployment limits environmental impact by reducing unnecessary journeys to deploy brand where it can be done under natural wastage as assets wear out.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The approach to the brand design and deployment has been inclusive. It has utilised the expertise and experience of all eight communications teams and involved engagement with staff from all eight councils via focus groups. As part of the Organisational Development workstream, 277 colleagues from across the county, five district and two borough councils participated in the brand development.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 The paper outlines the significant work undertaken to ensure a pragmatic, proportionate and value-for-money approach to ensuring the new council is legally compliant for day one.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 That the Executive agree:

- i. The brand design for North Yorkshire Council.
- ii The approach and costs outlined for the deployment of branding.

Richard Flinton, Chief Executive, North Yorkshire County Council.

28 October 2022.

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