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**Committee** Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee  
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## ***Be the Difference Campaign – Further Information***

### **1. Introduction**

This report provides further information on the social marketing programme requested by Councillors at Policy, Finance and Strategy and Utility Services Committee meetings.

### **2. Background**

At Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee meeting on 20 November (Report 03.684) the Committee:

1. Noted progress on the development of the social marketing programme
2. Endorsed the programme as outlined in the report
3. Agreed that a further report be provided to inform Council on:
  - (a) the intended outcomes
  - (b) the ex post evaluation criteria; and
  - (c) the possible range of costs for the Social Marketing Programme on public education in water quality with some reference to water conservation.

In addition at Utility Services Committee on 25 November, in the context of discussion on Greater Wellington Water's Business Report (report 03.693), Councillors requested information on how water conservation fits within the social marketing programme.

### **3. Be the Difference Social Marketing Programme**

#### **3.1 Context**

The social marketing campaign was developed in recognition that the Council cannot achieve all the goals now represented in *Towards a Sustainable Region* through its traditional tools of direct operation, regulation etc. Councillors will recall discussion at their workshop in November 2002 at Solway Park that additional tools of a more educational nature leading to long-term behavioural change would be needed. It was explicitly acknowledged that some such tools were long-term in nature and that they were still under development. Recognising that fact this project is most unusual in the relatively large proportion of expenditure on monitoring and research (some 16% of the total to allow learning as the programme progresses).

#### **3.2 First campaign topic**

The *Be the Difference* social marketing programme is designed to encourage voluntary attitude and behaviour change among individuals and groups in the region. The objective is to make personal contributions towards a sustainable region a normal and beneficial way of life. The programme is directly linked to the achievement of the Take Ten and its long-term targets and will work in concert with divisional programmes. It is envisaged that the programme will address different topic areas related to the Take Ten across the initial three years of the programme, but taking care not to spread resources too thinly. As noted in Report 03.684 to this committee, the programme will be based on a sign-up approach, which will aim to get over 30,000 people involved in demonstrating what behaviour changes are possible and being, to an extent, trend setters.

A staff advisory group, comprising representatives of all divisions, considered which issue should form the focus of the first campaign against the following set of criteria:

- Potential for quick wins (i.e. ease of achieving desired behavioural change, choosing topics where there is already developed “top of mind” awareness of the issue)
- Simplicity of messages / link to easily achieved behaviours
- Good research-base on attitudes and behaviour for the issue
- Seasonality (summer 2004 being the launch period)
- Alignment with Greater Wellington’s priorities and work programmes
- Potential alignment with priorities of territorial authorities and central government

The staff group concluded that water quality was the area that could be the major focus of the first campaign. Water supply / quantity could be a subsidiary focus. After debate, that focus was endorsed by the Councillors Reference Group, comprising the Committee chairs of Environment, Utility Services, Landcare and Passenger Transport.

Our research shows that the desire for clean rivers and coasts is a powerful underlying attitude among the public that we have an opportunity to tap into. There is no strong view that water supply is a major problem. However, there are opportunities to change attitudes and behaviours in the longer-term that can help to prevent future pressure on the system. Accordingly the first direct mail communications to residents who have joined the *Be the Difference* campaign will focus on simple actions individuals and households can take to improve the quality of water in the sea, rivers and streams. For example not washing the car on the street where detergent flows into stormwater drains and washing paintbrushes over an inside sink. There will also be some long-term focused water conservation messages encouraging people to value water as a resource and to plan accordingly, e.g. growing plant types that are adapted to drier conditions, or installing more water efficient household appliances.

### **3.3 Outcomes**

The *Be the Difference* social marketing programme directly supports three of the five outcomes in the communication strategy approved by the Council on 30 June 2003 (Report 03.341).

Outcome Two – Individuals, communities and organisations in the regional community have made long-term behaviour and attitude changes that support achieving a sustainable region.

Specific targets for the *Be the Difference* programme are:

- That 8% of the households of the region have signed up to it by 30/06/06 and are taking [additional] positive action, and
- That 80% of people surveyed are doing something positive for the environment

(Source: Approved Communications Department Business Plan 2003 –2013)

Outcome Three – The organisation has partnerships and collaborations with communities and organisations in support of the goal of a sustainable region.

Outcome Five – Communications supports the programmes that make up the Take Ten.

As noted in the Communications Strategy, influencing attitude and behaviour (outcome two) is the most challenging communications outcome in the strategy. Achieving behaviour change requires a long-term approach and the use of a wide range of communication tools. We are endeavouring to ensure that the *Be the Difference* programme complements other education-type programmes both of this council (e.g. *Take Action for Water*) and of other organisations.

### **3.4 Evaluation strategy**

The *Be the Difference* programme will employ direct communication tools that have not been previously used by Greater Wellington. These tools include database-managed direct mail and direct outreach to community organisations. This is a new concept for the Council and we will be learning as we go along.

As noted in Report 03.684, officers are working with the market research company TNS (formerly NFO New Zealand) on a research strategy to evaluate the success of the programme over the three-year horizon of the programme.

In addition to allowing assessment of the key targets noted above, the research strategy includes:

- A benchmark telephone survey measuring current attitudes to sustainability and behaviours across the whole region. This will enable us to compare the attitudes and behaviours of those who join the programme with the whole population of the region.
- Focus group testing of draft communications material to ensure that the messages are understood and will encourage behaviour change.
- Ongoing research (both quantitative and qualitative) with residents that have signed-up to the programme to measure changes in attitudes and behaviour and identify how the communications material can be improved or enhanced.

An overview of the research strategy is attached.

### **3.5 Costs of water campaign**

In this first year of the *Be the Difference* programme the majority of the social marketing budget (\$325k) is being spent on planning and development of resources for the three-year programme, for example setting up the database, designing the look and feel of the communications material (both printed and web) and designing the research to monitor the programme.

The water quality communications material is still under development. It is anticipated that around \$30k to \$50k will be spent on communications materials for the water campaign.

## **4. Issues raised at Utility Services Committee**

### **4.1 Allocation of costs within Greater Wellington**

The costs of the social marketing campaign are distributed on the same formula as all other communications costs. That is, after a portion is attributed to Elected Members the balance is allocated evenly across the five divisions. Such an allocation is on the basis that all activities of the Council will benefit in the longer-term by the types of behaviour change being sought.

## **4.2 Comparisons with previous practice**

In previous years there has been a specific allocation within the Utility Services budget for a summer water conservation programme. In 2003 the Council agreed to omit \$60,000 from the Utility Services budget, recognising that the social marketing campaign was likely to include a water dimension that would include a conservation element and to avoid pressure on the costs of the business.

It should be noted that the previous practice related to immediate actions that could be taken in the summer period (e.g. how plants should be deeply watered at their roots every three or four days) giving consistent messages leading to certain behaviour changes. The social marketing campaign would have a different, less immediate, focus (e.g. not growing plants that need much water in the first place).

A contingency sum of \$10,000 for emergency advertising in the event of a summer drought has been retained in the Utility Services budget.

Councillors will have an opportunity to look at the appropriateness or otherwise of not having the specific summer programme when the Annual Plan for 2004/05 is considered in February next year. It could be that the two types of programmes are considered complementary rather than as alternatives.

## **5. Recommendations**

*That the report be received and the information noted.*

Report prepared by:

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