

STAFF REPORT

TO: Information and Publicity Subcommittee
FROM: Mary-Anne Baker
REFERENCE: C301
DATE: 18 July 2007
SUBJECT: Clean Air Advertising

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's approval for good practice education that utilises a car in the Council's vehicle fleet to provide advertising space.

BACKGROUND

The Council is required to meet the ambient air quality standards in Richmond by 2013. Some of the Council's strategy depends on improving operation of existing woodburners to reduce the amount of particulates from poorly operated woodburners.

A good practice guide has already been produced and radio and Newline advertising ensure regular reminders of the need to operate woodburners without excessive smoke. This effort is complemented by the Good Wood Supplier project where wood retailers commit to supplying dry, seasoned wood.

PROPOSAL

You may have already seen the Evening Mail fleet about town. They have various advertising displays painted onto their cars. I rang to see what kind of response they get (they have had no bad feedback, the staff like it and they generally get positive feedback). Apparently nearly all of the Evening Mail parent company cars (some 420 of them) are now painted that way.

What I am seeking Committee approval for is to have at least one of the TDC cars to be painted on both sides with the "Chimney Checker" picture and an "enjoy the heat not the smoke" message on the back and/or front (or something like that).

While the department already has a wide scope to carry out advertising and information transfer of environmental messages, we felt this advertising idea has more significance and potential impact. Approval of the concept is therefore being sought from the Committee.

COSTS

The Mail have their own graphic artists (their help in designing something for TDC was offered, but DryCrust artists may be up to the task). They have used Cutting Edge Graphics, a local firm to do the paint job.

A draft layout was sought from Cutting Edge design to give some idea what it might look like – see attached page.

I'm sure there are other environmental messages we could spread this way, but we could use this one as a test case.

The costs per car will vary depending on what is required and the nature of the graphics etc.

The approximate cost given for the attached draft is \$1000.

The paint job lasts for at least 3 years depending on exposure. It costs about \$250 to remove again.

There is money available in the enviro-education budget (and the project is supported by Rob Smith). The committee might like to consider whether the wider publicity/information budget is the more appropriate budget, and whether there are other environmental messages that might be suited to this sort of advertising.

SIGNIFICANCE

The graphic “chimney checker” is a very effective way of demonstrating to people what we mean by ‘good practice’. It shows very clearly the level of performance we are expecting people to meet in order to reach the required ambient air quality standard. Additional text being considered is to include the words “chimney checker” on the car as well. It is a slightly ambiguous reference to the need to check for excessive smoke by the homeowner but it could also refer to Council. It is a car ideally suited to the compliance officer responsible for checking compliance with the new woodburner rules!

It also complements other work already being done.

Good practice is a key part of the Council’s strategy. Changing people’s behaviour is notoriously difficult and it is clear from observation, public opinion survey and our complaints database that many fires are not being operated correctly.

OPTIONS

As noted above, 'Clean Air' related messages are already part of radio, Newline and newspaper advertising. Richmond Mall displays articles and information is also to be displayed at Eco-fest. We are looking to ensure the message gets across in as many ways as possible.

There are probably a whole range of environmental messages that could be considered for car displays. The "Chimney Checker" is considered the best option because of the significance noted above.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the Committee approve advertising on a council fleet vehicle as per the attached draft design.**

Mary-Anne Baker
POLICY PLANNER