

Small Change Big Difference Week

Summary

1. This report provides an overview of the Small Change Big Difference campaign week which ran this summer, the results of a survey undertaken of this year's participants, and recommendations for next year's campaign.

Recommendations

Members are asked to comment on and approve the recommendations in the report. These recommendations are:

- To run the week again in 2010, focusing more on raising the profile of the work local government is undertaking to address climate change and building on the work in 2009.
- To provide councils with better campaigning material and branding that can be modified to reflect local information and priorities.
- To change the name to directly reference climate change
- To ensure councils receive a greater lead-in time to the event, making clear the aims of the campaign, its key messages, how councils are expected to be involved, and what resources will be provided for them.
- That officers from the LGA, EST and IDeA work together on the campaign to utilise resources and expertise from each organisation.
- That an information sheet for working with the media on climate change be given to participating councils.

Actions

Officers will take forward Member's comments and suggestions in planning the 2010 week.

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Small Change Big Difference Week

Background

1. Small Change Big Difference Week took place from the 13th- 17th July 2009. The aims of the campaign were:
 - To show how councils can, and do, support householders to reduce their carbon footprint;
 - To increase the take up of council services that will help tackle climate change;
 - To raise awareness of the need to tackle climate change and to show councils as central to the solution.
2. Forty-two councils took part, holding activities, events and sending out communications to their residents as part of the campaign, and a case study on each council taking part was put on the LGA website. The LGA worked in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust to promote and provide resources for the campaign.
3. During the week the LGA launched two publications: 'From Kyoto to Kettering, Copenhagen to Croydon: local government's manifesto for building low-carbon communities', which sets out the framework needed to enable local government to develop low carbon communities; and 'Cutting through the green tape III: The economy or the environment – do I need to choose?', which is aimed at members and highlights the importance of the climate change agenda. Copies of this were included for all members with their issue of First magazine during the campaign week.

Summary of survey results and recommendations:

4. Following the campaign, a survey was undertaken of all councils that had expressed an interest in taking part. Twenty-five responses were received and the results show that councils appreciated being part of the campaign and supported its premise, but that some improvements could be made to improve support and increase its effectiveness.
5. In summary, councils reported that:
 - The main benefit of taking part in the campaign was the opportunity for promotion and communication of their work on climate change;
 - They would appreciate more campaign materials to be provided, and for there to be clear aims and objectives which bring the campaign together nationally;

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- They would like to see the campaign impacting on a national platform, either with government or national press;
- They thought the name of the campaign was too vague and that more reference to climate change was needed;

6. Following an analysis of the responses, it is recommended:

- To run the week again in 2010, focusing more on raising the profile of the work local government is undertaking to address climate change and building on the work in 2009;
- To provide councils with better campaigning material and branding that can be modified to reflect local information and priorities;
- To change the name to directly reference climate change;
- To ensure councils receive a greater lead-in time to the event, making clear the aims of the campaign, its key messages, how councils are expected to be involved, and what resources will be provided for them;
- That officers from the LGA, EST and IDeA work together on the campaign to utilise resources and expertise from each organisation;
- That an information sheet for working with the media on climate change be given to participating councils.

The recommended dates for next years campaign are 12th-16th July, and an invitation will be issued to key environment officers and members to take part.

Financial Implications

7. The costs of running the campaign week will be met within existing budgets.

Implications for Wales

8. The invitation to take part in the week is issued to all LGA member councils so Welsh Authorities may participate.

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