

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Richard Samuel, Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader	
DECISION DATE:	On or after 13 th February 2021 (for single Member decision)	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: E3269
TITLE:	RULE 15 Bath Business Improvement District Renewal 2021	
WARD:	Abbey, Kingsmead	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1 - Operating Agreement		
Appendix 2 - BID Business Plan 2021 – 2026		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report seeks a single member decision as to how to vote in the forthcoming Bath Business Improvement District (BID) ballot.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is asked to agree that;

- 2.1 That the Chief Executive is authorised to vote 'yes' on behalf of the Council in the BID renewal ballot;

3 THE REPORT

Purpose of the BID

- 3.1 The Bath Business Improvement District (BID) is an independent, not-for-profit business-led company working to provide the environment for businesses within the BID area (shown below) in Bath to succeed.



3.2 Business Improvement Districts nationwide provide a mechanism for businesses in a designated area to pool their resources and invest in agreed products and services. The Bath BID is one of 328 BIDs across the UK and Ireland, which collectively deliver over £130 million of investment and improvement into towns and city centres.

3.3 Bath BID was established in 2011. Following a renewal ballot in 2015, the Bath BID was given the mandate to continue working in the city for a further five years.

3.4 The BID's initiatives in the city are funded by the Levy Payers who pool their resources via an annual contribution based on their rateable value.

3.5 As well as Levy Payers, the Bath BID also works with a number of smaller businesses in the city who choose to participate. These are known as voluntary Levy Payers.

BID 2021-2026 Business Plan Summary – Full document attached at Appendix 2

- 3.6 Bath BID III will see a continuation of their key purpose, which is to improve the environment for businesses in Bath. They will seek to build on the excellent foundations of the last ten years, in providing a welcoming, safe and clean city.
- 3.7 They will work to support the city in its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and to 'build back better', using strong place management principles, which create increased pride in the city as a place to be enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike, and in which businesses are supported to flourish.
- 3.8 The challenges faced in Bath city centre are complex, and the pace of the changes impacting the city has been accelerated by the pandemic. The Bath BID is well-placed to help deal with the challenges and support positive change through comprehensive and innovative partnership programmes that
- (1) improve the public realm
 - (2) help tackle environmental issues
 - (3) make the best of development opportunities
 - (4) increase the profile of the city as a place to do business
 - (5) improve the quality of life for the people who use the place.
- 3.9 Their key aim is to improve the area for the benefit of its users, making it more accessible to more of the communities surrounding Bath and to reflect the principles at the heart of place management – the process of making places better.
- 3.10 Their mission is to deliver in four key areas:

A Welcoming City

- 3.11 For business staff and customers, visitors, clients, tourists, and the local community.
- (1) Providing cleaning and security services.
 - (2) Investing in the public realm and tackling empty shops.
 - (3) Providing an enthusiastic team of volunteer Welcome Ambassadors
 - (4) Promoting businesses and events in the city.

A Smart City

- 3.12 Using technology to enhance understanding of the city's performance.
- (1) Providing footfall and related business intelligence, which supports businesses to make informed decisions on investments in the city, recruitment and campaigns.
 - (2) Measuring the impact of events and activities.
 - (3) Supporting Bath's regional and local partners with preparations for longer-term city placemaking.

A Connected City

3.13 Bringing together the business partnership of 680 local businesses.

- (1) Seeking opportunities for Bath businesses to work together for mutual benefit – collective purchasing, shared events, local associations and collaborative activities.
- (2) Proactively reaching out to the local community to improve the connections between residents and the city's businesses.

A Successful City

3.14 A programme of work to create the environment for businesses to succeed.

- (1) Promoting the Bath brand to deliver targeted footfall growth.
- (2) Supporting inward investment with information and support.
- (3) Working with training and skills providers to create business opportunities.
- (4) Seeking external funding and sponsorship for new work in Bath.

3.15 Going into the Bath BID III, they will continue their current base programmes:

- (1) Free responsive and planned cleaning (working alongside Bath & North East Somerset Council to boost services to businesses).
- (2) Trade waste discount.
- (3) Provision of business intelligence.
- (4) City promotion, events and campaigns.
- (5) Welcome Ambassadors.

3.16 Additionally, they will seek to further develop:

- (1) Trade waste management and cost savings – a new sustainable partnership to include food waste.
- (2) Increase 'Tap to Donate' opportunities to address antisocial and aggressive begging.
- (3) Stronger partnership working with the Council, WECA and organisations responsible for managing physical change and development in the city.
- (4) Develop the Welcome to Bath website, promoting events, special offers and job vacancies.
- (5) Proactive solutions to improve the streetscape and tackle empty shops.

3.17 They are also creating the following new projects for Bath BID III:

- (1) Daytime Security Marshals – providing a cost-saving seven-day-a-week security support to all businesses in the city.
- (2) Free training opportunities for staff.
- (3) A new independent business partnership.
- (4) Externally funded projects – seeking investment for the city.
- (5) A programme of campaigns, networking and social activities to build links between different sectors in the city and make Bath a great place to work.

Operating agreement

3.18 In advance of the BID renewal process starting the Council and the BID worked up and signed off an operating agreement. The purpose of this Agreement is to:

- (1) establish the procedure for setting the BID Levy
- (2) confirm the basis upon which the Council will be responsible for collecting the BID Levy
- (3) set out the enforcement mechanisms available for collection of the BID Levy
- (4) set out the procedures for accounting and transference of the BID Levy
- (5) provide for the monitoring and review of the collection of the BID Levy
- (6) confirm the manner in which the Council's expenses incurred in collecting the BID Levy shall be paid

3.19 The agreement was reviewed and approved by the Council's Monitoring officer and Director of Economy and Growth and signed by the S151 officer.

3.20 The agreement is attached at appendix 1.

COUNCIL STRATEGY

3.21 The proposals listed above are in line with the strategic aims of the Council to improve people's lives and deliver for local residents. There is no conflict with any local policies of strategies and the work of the BID does not replicate that of the Council.

Council Vote

3.22 Based on the benefits listed in this report it is recommended that the Council use all of the votes from the properties it own within the BID area to vote 'yes' in the BID renewal ballot.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Councils have the power to address the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of their area.

- 4.2 This decision is being dealt under Urgency Rule 15 (Constitution 4B Access to Information Rules) for the Council to exercise its BID ballot vote right by 25th February 2021.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 If successful at ballot, the Bath Business Improvement District will raise roughly £3m in levy contributions over a five year BID term for the Bath BID Company.
- 5.2 In addition to levy income, the BID is likely to attract further voluntary financial and in-kind contributions from the private sector (including local landlords) and other partners and stakeholders. This is anticipated to deliver an additional £460,000, making a total extra investment in City centre management activities of almost £3.5m over the period.
- 5.3 It is currently estimated that the Council, as a non-domestic ratepayer with properties within the BID area, will be liable for roughly £40,000 in annual BID levy payments. This cost will continue to be met from existing budgets. [this amount is based on the Non Domestic Rates List at the time of billing].
- 5.4 The BID currently provides footfall and data compilation which the Council utilises for funding bids and as part of its general business intelligence work. If the Council had to complete this work itself there will be an immediate cost of at least £32k per annum if the Council wishes to continue with it. This helps to offset the levy payment made by the Council.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 The BID will comply with equality legislation.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 Proposals within the business plan seek to develop and improve the trade waste service, particularly adding food waste collection.
- 8.2 One of the stated aims for the new business plan is to help tackle environmental issues.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 S151, Monitoring Officer, Renewal Board
- 10.2 As part of the BID renewal Process the BID undertook significant consultation on its business plan for the 2021-2026 period through drop in sessions, focus groups and email communication.

- 10.1 In order to develop the new five-year plan, they have been consulting with Levy Payers through surveys, face-to-face conversations and webinars.
- 10.2 Business were asked to review current activities and feedback on their own business priorities. They were asked to score each current BID activity and business priority. In addition to this, businesses were able to add their own observations and offer comments and ideas.
- 10.3 Overall, feedback from businesses was positive, with the Bath BID achieving an 80% satisfaction score and 82% of respondents indicating that they would vote to extend the BID for a further five years.

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Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	