

Report of The Managing Director

Wellingborough Business Improvement District (BID) – New Proposal

1 Purpose of report

To provide members with an update on the Wellingborough Town Centre Business Improvement District's new Business Plan, and request a decision on how to vote in the new ballot in September for the period 2019-2024.

2 Executive summary

At the meeting of 18 March 2019 the committee resolved to instruct officers to vote against the continuation of the Business Improvement District for the upcoming period to 31 May 2024, and the BID then failed to secure a majority of votes in favour of continuation. The BID has now put forward a new Business Plan which would run from October 2019 to October 2024 if the current campaign is successful.

3 Appendices

- Appendix 1 – BID new business plan 2019 – 2024
- Appendix 2 – Previous BID plan 2019 – 2024
- Appendix 3 – BID new area map
- Appendix 4 – BID financial expenditure changes
- Appendix 5 – List of BCW properties in new BID area
- Appendix 6 – BID clarification letter
- Appendix 7 – BID Survey Results June 19
- Appendix 8 – Wellingborough Chamber of Commerce and Town Centre Partnership Letter of Support for the BID

4 Proposed action:

The Committee is invited to RESOLVE to:

- 4.1 Agree the council's vote for or against the new proposal of the Wellingborough Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) for the period of 2019-2024.**
- 4.2 Instruct the assistant director (corporate landlord) to vote as agreed in 4.1 on behalf of the council in respect of the 8 properties.**

5 Background

- 5.1 At the development committee meeting on 18 March 2019, the committee

was presented with a report providing information regarding the BID's original business plan and were asked to agree the council's vote for or against the business plan and the continuation of the BID for the 2019-2024 period.

5.2 The committee voted by majority (7 to 3) against the BID's continuation. The 18 votes that the council held were cast against the BID as instructed.

5.3 The BID ballot ended on the 28 March 2019, and the results were announced on the 29 March 2019. The BID renewal had in majority been voted against.

142 Votes Cast - £3,940,900 total rateable value of votes cast

68 Votes in Favour - £1,601,850 rateable value in favour

74 Votes Against - £2,339,050 rateable value against

5.4 As the vote was against continuation, the current BID period ended on 31 May 2019. Since then the BID has been running in a scaled back form and has made deals with their suppliers to keep running basic services between 31 May 2019 and 27 September 2019 when the decision of the vote will be known.

5.5 The BID has submitted a new business plan (appendix 1). Please also see the previous business plan (appendix 2) for comparison purposes. The main differences can be summarised as below:

- Providing Clarity to their events and who ran them.
- Making the consultation results available on request
- Including the councils 10 point plan and a partnership statement
- Amending the BID area (appendix 3)

6 Discussion

6.1 In the previous report to development committee on the 18 March, the BID achievements, survey results, baseline and operating agreements were all submitted. These have not changed.

6.2 The BID's current business plan includes a few significant changes from the previous business plan shown in point 5.2.

6.3 The financial breakdown provided has also changed; the differences can be seen here in Appendix 4.

6.4 The BID area has decreased from 314 properties to 296. The overall rateable value has reduced from £8,707,700 to £8,238,000.

6.5 The council's properties in the area (appendix 5) have decreased from 18 to 8 properties. The cost to the council would be £3,434.00 per annum for the BID Levy on the 8 hereditaments.

6.6 The council and all other businesses in the BID area are being asked to vote yes or no for the new proposal shown in the business plan. This vote is undertaken by postal vote, opening 29 August 2019 and closing the 26 September 2019.

The outcome will be announced on the 27 September 2019.

- 6.7 The BID has also submitted a letter to the council following consultations with its officers, clarifying aspects of the BID, (appendix 6).
- 6.8 The BID has sent through updated survey results from June which is included as appendix 7.
- 6.9 The Wellingborough Chamber of Commerce and the Wellingborough Town Centre Partnership have submitted a letter of support for the BID to the council and this has been included as appendix 8.
- 6.10 Referring to the new business plan submitted, the pros and cons have been identified below for voting yes or no to the BID.
- 6.11 Vote **yes** for the BID

Pros	Cons
Continued support for approximately 300 local town centre businesses.	Some business support activities could be delivered directly by the council.
The income from the BID levy is identified as £890,000 over 5 years for Town Centre investment.	The BID may not achieve what it sets out to achieve, and/or provide clarity on what the outputs are from the £890,000 investment.
Some of the town centre events will continue, this is estimated as bringing in over 50,000 visitors.	Some of the events the BID have budgeted for/ plan to run again, may not be run by them
Continued promotion and marketing of Wellingborough town centre.	Some promotion could be delivered directly by the council.
Possible joint working initiatives in the future.	A number of other partners could contribute to joint working initiatives and funding bids, whether or not the BID is elected.

- 6.12 Vote **No** for the BID

Pros	Cons
The new vision for the town centre could be developed with other partners.	There is no alternative organisation that could deliver the additional services that the BID is providing.
Some of the £3,434 levy can be used by the council for business support initiatives.	Loss of potential investment and visitors to our town. Wellingborough could be seen as taking a step back as BID's are popular and growing elsewhere, creating a positive impact.
Some of the £3,434 could be used on events such as the Beach which the council ran in 2018 and 2019.	The business support provided by the BID would cease.
There could be more scope to deliver projects that the BID may have not	Wellingborough could lose a potential connection to town centre businesses

supported due to their key objectives.	and key influencers.
Businesses would not have to pay the levy and could use their money to invest in their business/ other initiatives they desired.	There could be an expectation that the council would provide all of the BID services. However with no additional funding and lack of resource, this would not be possible.

- 6.13 The council is currently working on identifying timescales for the development of a town centre vision which be influenced by key partners and stakeholders.
- 6.14 Since the previous committee meeting, Unitary has been confirmed with the split of North Northants and West Northants. Currently in North Northants, Wellingborough is the only town with a BID, which could be considered.
- 6.15 Another consideration could be that since the previous committee meeting is more plans and work has been done in regard to the Wellingborough Town Council as a recent open event was done, and the town council will be holding elections next May.
- 6.16 The committee is asked to decide whether to cast a yes or a no vote, and to give clear direction to the Assistant Director (corporate landlord) as to how to cast the votes in respect of the 8 properties on the council's behalf.

7 Legal powers

- 7.1 Part 4 of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Business Improvements Districts (England) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/2443)

8 Financial and value for money implications

- 8.1 Based on latest figures, with 8 properties in the BID area, the council would pay a levy of £3,434 per annum, as the BID Levy is 2% of the total rateable value of our properties, which is £171,700.

9 Risk analysis

Nature of risk	Consequences if realised	Likelihood of occurrence	Control measures
The BID is not voted in and does not continue.	Services provided by the BID would not continue or others would have to fund and deliver them.	Med/High	Review the services that could be viable if provided by the council or other partners
The BID is not voted in so there is reduced town centre management.	Wellingborough could have a less attractive town centre and be less able to compete	Med/High	Focus on the 10 point strategy and the town centre vision, ensuring that management is a major factor.

The BID is voted in, but outputs are not quantified or fully delivered.	Projects may not deliver to their full potential if not co-ordinated with work of partners	Med/High	The BID to set up a steering/ monitoring group or have agreements in place to progress plans jointly with partners
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10 Implications for resources

- 10.1 If the BID is voted in, there is an opportunity for them to work with the council, NCC officers and other key partners/ influencers in the Borough, to assist with each other's activities.
- 10.2 If the BID is not voted in, the council and other partners will have limited resources to deliver services currently provided by them.

11 Implications for stronger and safer communities

- 11.1 The BID if voted in will have benefits for stronger and safer communities as one of the outcomes for the BID will be to increase the attractiveness of the town centre and promoting safety will be part of this.

12 Implications for equalities

- 12.1 The BID is a company in its own right, run by a board therefore it will have its own policy and processes to ensure that equalities are integrated into services and activities.

13 Author and contact officer

James Murray, Economic Development and Delivery Officer.

14 Consultees

Liz Elliott, Managing Director
Julie Thomas, Director
Shaun Darcy, Director
Adrian Piper, Assistant Director (Corporate Landlord)
Victoria Phillipson, Principal Property and Projects Manager
Caroline Conway-Hook, Service Accountant.

15 Background papers

Agenda, Report and Minutes of the development committee - 18 March 2019
http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1094/development_committee

