



Cabinet

13 October 2021

Report of: Councillor Joe Orson - Leader of the Council

Melton Mowbray Business Improvement District Renewal Ballot

Corporate Priority:	Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton
Relevant Ward Member(s):	Craven, Warwick, Newport, Egerton
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	27 August 2021
Exempt Information:	No
Key Decision:	Yes c) Has significant impact on two or more wards in the Borough and on communities living or working in those areas
Subject to call-in:	Yes

1 Summary

- 1.1 The Cabinet approved the Melton Mowbray Business Improvement District (BID) Ballot Renewal Report on 8th September meeting. The Cabinet deferred the decision in relation to the Council's votes in the upcoming ballot, pending receipt of the Final Business Plan.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the ballot process and seeks approval for participating in the voting process.

2 Recommendation

That Cabinet:

2.1. Notes the final business plan and authorises the Director of Growth and Regeneration to complete the ballot papers for all 17 hereditaments as identified in para 5.2 on behalf of the Council in favour of the BID Proposal.

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 Priority 6 of the Council's Corporate Strategy (2020-2024), connected with and led by our community, focuses on reviewing and reinvigorating partnership structures and frameworks.
- 3.2 The BID is a key partner for the Council in delivering services and enhancing the benefits for levy payers in the town centre. BID levy raises approximately £160,000 each year resulting in the total spend of over £800,000 in five years to deliver the projects in addition to the Council's services and initiatives. This adds value to the Council's efforts, ambitions and resources which is especially important in post-COVID times.

4 Background

- 4.1 Following Cabinet approval on 8th September, Civica were instructed by the Returning Officer to conduct the ballot in accordance with the regulations.
- 4.2 The ballot papers were posted out by Civica on 30 September 2021 and all participating organisations will have until 28 October 2021, 5pm to cast their postal ballot.

5 Main Considerations

- 5.1 The Council is a member of the BID area and liable to pay £8,064 in the BID levy per year. The table below identifies the hereditament owned by the Council within the current BID area that are liable for levy payments

5.2

	Property Address
1	60 Snow Hill
2	74 Snow Hill
3	70 Snow Hill
4	Burton Street Car Park
5	Burton Street Car Park-Annex
6	Chapel Street Car Park
7	Mill Street Car Park
8	Thorpe End Car Park
9	Regent Street Car Park
10	Wilton Road Car Park
11	Bus Station Wilton Road
12	Wilton Road Public Conveniences
13	Park Lane Public Conveniences
14	Parkside
15	Phoenix House partial (Ground Floor)
16	Phoenix House partial (Ground and 1 st floor)
17	St Marys Way Car Park & Public Conveniences
	Total Charge for Period December 2020 to November 2021 = £8,066

- 5.3 For the 17 hereditaments noted above, the Council will be issued 17 ballots to cast votes

- 5.4 Following the discussion at the Cabinet on 8th September 2021, the BID were made aware of the following comments from the members:
- The BID board takes into account fair and equal distribution of projects and activities across the BID area to ensure the benefits reach out to all levy payers.
 - The BID Board ensures that the membership of the Board reflects fair geographic and sectoral representation.
 - The BID promotional material and activities promote all businesses in levy area equally.
 - The business plan includes actions and governance to ensure that the BID is measurable and accountable to this fair and equal treatment.
 - Understand there are no changes suggested to the business plan because of the survey results, but 12% is a very small sample. The BID Board should review the business plan actions and sense check the priorities in the context of changes such as COVID-19, changing trends etc.
- 5.5 The BID were also informed of the following comments from the ward councillors:
- BID to actively work towards bringing more well-known retail outlets into the town and for that matter other individual traders as well.
 - Keen to see the new web site being launched.
 - Concerns about businesses North of Norman way feeling left out.
- 5.6 The Council has received feedback from its commercial tenants at Snowhill, Cattle Market and King Street who are also BID levy payers. Some tenants have raised questions about the validity of including them in the BID area while the focus of BID activities is on the high street. The tenants have also raised similar issues about the focus of BID activities and resources being on the areas south of Norman Way, and the levy payers north of this road not benefitting from being part of the BID.
- 5.7 The BID have acknowledged the comments and assured the Council that the final business plan refers to all participating businesses regardless of their geographic location within the BID area.
- 5.8 The marketing and promotional activities of the BID include events both to the north and south of Norman Way.
- 5.9 The list of projects and allocation of budgets will be reviewed on annual basis by the BID Board and there will be opportunity for the Board to react to the situations arising.
- 5.10 The details of the BID company structure and Board are included in the final version of the Business Plan along with the BID Ballot and Rules. Copies of the Melton Mowbray Business Improvement District Business Plan 2021-2026 have been sent out to all businesses on the 21st September.

6 Options Considered

6.1 Option 1: Voting in favour of BID proposal

To vote against could result in the BID failing in the renewal ballot and the result will be a loss of £800,000 investment in the town centre over five years. This would be contrary to the Corporate priorities and would not support the aspirations of the levy payers who

would vote in favour of the Plan. Considering the benefits the BID could bring to the town centre businesses, it is recommended to vote in favour of the proposal.

6.2 Option 2: Voting against the BID proposal

The Council has 17 votes in the ballot which could have a significant impact on the outcome of the ballot result. Taking into account the reasons highlighted in section 3, this option is not recommended.

6.3 Option 3: Abstaining from the vote

This option is not recommended for the reasons above.

7 Consultation

7.1 Views from ward councillors, rent payers and levy payers have been considered and discussed with the BID.

8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- Complete the ballot papers and cast the vote.
- For the Returning Officer to oversee the conclusion of the ballot and publication of results.
- Agree and sign the BID Operating Agreement.
- Support the BID in implementing the business plan and successful completion of the next term.

9 Financial Implications

9.1 The Council currently pays £8,066 in levy collection per year for the 17 hereditaments in BID area and this is included in the base budget.

9.2 If the ballot is successful, the Council will collect the BID levy as per the BID Operating Agreement. In case the ballot is unsuccessful, the Council will not incur the levy collection costs.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services

10 Legal and Governance Implications

10.1 The establishment, renewal and alteration of Business Improvement Districts are governed by is contained in Part 4 of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 (“The BID Regulations”).

10.2 For the BID to proceed to another term, more than 50% of those who vote must vote ‘Yes’. Of those positive votes, the total rateable value must be higher, when added together, than the rateable value of those who voted ‘No’. If a ‘Yes’ vote is secured, all businesses within the BID levy geographical area are legally obliged to pay the BID levy for the next five-year BID term.

10.3 Once the BID is in place neither the BID area nor the BID levy percentage can be altered during the BID Term, without an Alteration Ballot.

- 10.4 In the event that the result of the Ballot is negative, the BID will cease from 31st March 2022. A number of organisational and promotional functions would potentially cease or need to be re-allocated to other bodies and the proposed activities listed in the report will not be able to be delivered by the BID.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Natasha Taylor (Deputy Monitoring Officer) 08.10.21

11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 11.1 Comments from the Cabinet on fair and equal distribution of benefits have been considered by the BID.

12 Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 The BID has supported CCTV cameras, pubwatch and SMART radio schemes in the past

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 13.1 The BID Business Plan includes enhancing the street scene and environment of the town centre as a key priority.

14 Other Implications (where significant)

- 14.1 None

15 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	The ballot is unsuccessful and the services outlined in the business plan are not delivered	Low	Critical	Medium Risk
2	The business plan that the levy payers vote for is not delivered	Low	Critical	Medium Risk

Impact / Consequences

		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High				
	4 Significant				
	3 Low			1,2	
	2 Very Low				
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	The Council has ensured that the business plan aligns with the Council priorities and is informed by the comments received from the levy payers.
2	The Council will work with the BID company by attendance at the BID Board in monitoring the delivery of the plan.

16 Background Papers

- 16.1 Cabinet report September 2021 - <https://democracy.melton.gov.uk/documents/s14954/Item%207%20-%20Melton%20Mowbray%20BID%20Renewal%20Ballot.pdf>

17 Appendices

- 17.1 Appendix 1- Melton Mowbray Business Improvement District Business Plan 2021-2026

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