



LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Cabinet

Tuesday, 24 July 2012

Minute 40 (2)	Page	Title		
12	1 - 25	LANCASTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) DRAFT PROPOSAL At the Cabinet meeting on 24 July 2012, it was agreed "that approval of Final BID Proposals and the issuing of instructions to proceed to ballot be delegated to the Chief Executive." (Minute 40 (2)). This action has been implemented as per attached Executive Decision Notice.		



Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

**EXECUTIVE DECISIONS TAKEN BY DELEGATED OFFICER
NOTICE OF DECISION**

Published in compliance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, Regulation 13(4)

TITLE OF DECISION:	
APPROVAL OF THE LANCASTER UNLIMITED STEERING GROUP'S FINAL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) PROPOSALS	
NAME OF DECISION TAKER:	MARK CULLINAN
POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITY HELD:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL
CONTACT OFFICER:	PAUL ROGERS
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Details of Decision:	
<p>The Chief Executive approves the Lancaster Unlimited Steering Group's Final Business Improvement District (BID) Proposals, subject to formal submission of the document. Following formal receipt the Chief Executive will issue instructions to Electoral Reform Services for the ballot to proceed</p>	
Reasons for the decision:	
<p>The final proposals for Lancaster Unlimited Steering Group's have been completed (attached for information). In Cabinet's approval of a draft version of the plan at 24th July Cabinet, officers had provided an overview of the draft proposal's compliance with BID Regulations 4 and Schedule 1. It provided details of some potential further information requirements or clarifications Lancaster Unlimited should provide or which may be required in the full proposal. These clarifications have been provided as follows:</p> <p><i>a summary of the consultation it has undertaken:</i> Briefly described in the proposals document but officers consider the consultation satisfactory.</p> <p><i>a summary of the proposed business plan:</i> Decision taken by Lancaster Unlimited that the BID Proposal document is brief and acts as a summary in itself. Officers consider this acceptable.</p> <p><i>a summary of the financial arrangements for the BID body.</i></p> <p><i>The existing baseline services:</i> Briefly described in the proposals document but officers consider the Chamber of Trade an appropriate accountable body for BID funds.</p> <p><i>Whether costs incurred in developing the BID proposals, holding the ballot, or implementing the BID are to be recovered through the levy:</i> costs for developing BID proposals and holding the ballot are already funded. The council's administration costs in collecting the levy and passing it to the accountable body will be recovered via the levy.</p> <p>In issuing the decision the Chief Executive is satisfied the proposals meet the prescribed conditions (under BID Regulations) of a billing authority's approval, namely that the final proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers the issues laid down in BID Regulation 4 and its associated Schedule 1 – the required information compliance. • The proposal does not conflict with the billing authority's formally published policies. 	
DATE DECISION TAKEN:	4.10.12
DATE DECISION PUBLISHED:	5.10.12
	REF NO. 1/12



Lancaster
Business Improvement District
Delivery Plan

April 2013 - March 2016



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Chairman of Bid Steering Group

“It took me until well into adulthood to truly appreciate the beautiful place that I have been brought up in; Lancaster, a city rich in culture, history and the arts. It has some stunning architecture, a great retail offering and superb eating and drinking establishments.

Going forward, The Duchy is seeking to make Lancaster Castle, which itself is one of the best, most complete Castles in Europe, one of the country’s top tourist attractions. On the opposite side of the city we have the prospect of the £100m redevelopment of the Canal Corridor North site. However, both these projects are five years away.

So, as we look to 'bridge' today and tomorrow, how do we keep Lancaster moving in the right direction through these tough economic times? The BID is the vehicle through which I believe we can build on the foundations that we already have.

The Lancaster BID Steering Group has carried out wide ranging consultation with businesses over the last 12 months and has worked hard to ensure that this Business Plan reflects the local issues and opportunities for your business, staff and visitors to Lancaster.

I believe that this is an opportunity for the business community to take some control of Lancaster's future. I am confident that the Lancaster BID will have a major impact not only on Lancaster city centre as a whole but also your business.

The postal ballot will take place between 1st and 29th November 2012 with the ballot result announced on the 30th November 2012. So don't miss out on such a unique opportunity and vote "YES" for the Lancaster BID."

Paul Cusimano Joseph + Co and Chairman of the Lancaster Unlimited Steering Group



What is the BID?

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are an arrangement where businesses identify projects or services that will add value to their operations and then agree on the level of funds - the BID levy - which they will pay to make it happen. This arrangement is then put to a vote. A majority of businesses (by number and rateable value) have to vote in favour of establishing a BID for it to go ahead.

Under the legislation put forward by the Government a successful ballot will have to meet two tests: more than 50% of votes cast must be in favour of the BID and the positive vote must represent more than 50% of the rateable value of the votes cast.

As a business ratepayer in the proposed BID area you will have the right to vote on whether you would like the BID to go ahead. You also have the right to become involved in the process from developing the BID offer, attending BID meetings, and to lobbying other businesses to vote (whether this is for or against the BID concept).

All ratepayers who will be liable to pay the additional BID levy will have a vote in the ballot. If the majority choose to support the BID through this vote, all will pay for it. All money raised will go into a separate pot and will only be spent on projects and services agreed by the contributing businesses. This activity will only be delivered in the BID area.

The BID's projects and services will be entirely additional to any services, statutory or otherwise, already delivered by Lancaster City Council, Lancashire County Council and Lancashire Constabulary. These benefits will only be delivered if you vote YES in the ballot.



“The number of successful BiD’s currently operating throughout the country prove time and again the levels of success that can be achieved by businesses taking charge of their own commercial districts and applying meaningful business plans to achieve a common goal”

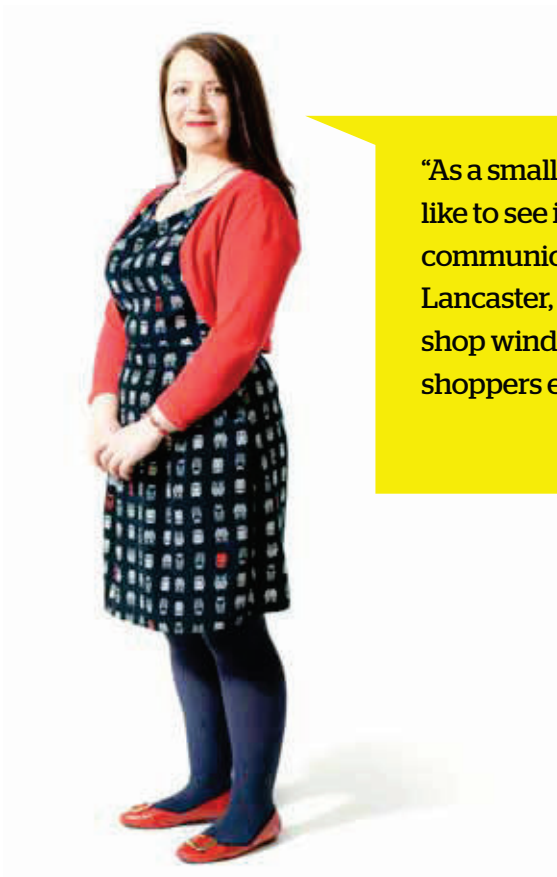
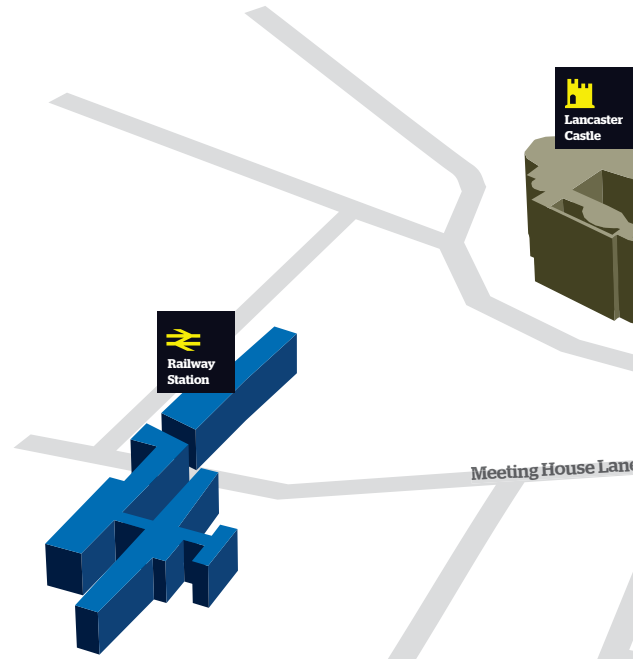
Jerry North Centre Manager, St Nicholas Arcades



The BID location?

The BID area (shaded yellow) comprises the following streets and business areas located within the boundary marked on the map opposite:

Anchor Lane, Ashton Walk, Bashful Alley, Brewery Arcade, Bridget Street, Brock Street, Cable Street, Chapel Street, Cheapside, China Street, Church Street, Common Garden Street, Corn Market, Dalton Square, Damside Street, Ffrances Passage, Fleet Square, Gage Street, George Street, Gillisons Lane, Great John Street, James Street, King Street, Lancaster Gate, Lower Church Street, Lucy Street, Market Hall, Market Street, Marketgate, Marton Street, Mary Street, Moor Lane, Moor Street, New Road, New Street, North Road, Penny Street, Perpignan Way, Pitt Street, Rendsburg Way, Rosemary Lane, Russell Street, St Georges Quay, St Leonardgate, St Nicholas Arcades, Sir Simons Arcade, Slip Inn Lane, Spring Garden Street, Stonewell, Sun Street, Thurnham Street, Victoria Place, Wood Street.



“As a small independent trader, we would like to see initiatives that help celebrate and communicate the diversity of retail choice in Lancaster, for example, using the space in empty shop windows as a marketing tool to direct shoppers effectively around the City centre”

Sharon Burns General Manager, Arteria



A business “mix” of the BID area (shaded yellow) is broken down approximately below:

Sector	%
Retail	55
Leisure / entertainment / food	20
Commercial / service	10
Public sector	5
Finance	5
Other	5

The BID voting process...

The postal ballot will take place between **1st and 29th November 2012** with the ballot result announced on the **30th November 2012**.

All defined business ratepayers in the BID area will be given the opportunity to vote to establish the BID during the formal ballot period. The ballot will be a confidential postal ballot managed by Electoral Reform Services, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London, N8 0NW.

All defined business ratepayers in the BID area will be entitled to one vote per hereditament. It will be possible to appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf and information on how to do so will be included with the ballot information sent to you.

The ballot must meet two tests for the BID to be approved:

- A simple majority of those voting in favour over those who do not, and
- Those voting in favour must represent a greater total rateable value than those voting against

In all cases the body or person liable to pay the non domestic business rate will be entitled to vote.

“We all know Lancaster is one of the finest historic cities in the country and, with the Duchy now making plans for the Castle, there’s a wonderful opportunity for millions of others to discover its treasures too.

We want those people to come not just once, but time and time again. What we as a city need to do is provide them with not just top rate heritage attractions but an unforgettable experience. That means first class shopping, great entertainment, food, attractions, accommodation, a warm welcome from all of us who live and work here, clean and bright streets.....

Now, more than ever before, everyone - be they big organisations such as the councils and the Duchy or the retailers, service providers and the arts - must seize this real opportunity for us all to work together to maximise this golden chance we are being given.

With other developments such as the M6 Link, Canal Corridor North, Luneside, City Park, Square Routes, Lancaster is truly at an exciting crossroads and we must all seize every opportunity we have to make our city one which will put us firmly on the map as a must-go-to destination.”

Gary F. Rycroft Solicitor & Partner, Joseph A. Jones & Co



How much will I have to invest?

The table below shows the level of your investment.

Rateable Value of Your Property	Annual BID Levy (1.5%)	Your Investment per Day
£10,000	£150	41p
£20,000	£300	82p
£50,000	£750	£2.05
£100,000	£1,500	£4.11
£250,000	£3,750	£10.27
£500,000	£7,500	£20.55

For around half of you (46%) this means an investment of £1 a day.

Please contact the BID team to find out the rateable value of your property. Alternatively you can log onto the Valuation Office's website www.voa.gov.uk/business_rates/index.htm

The current rating list is based on the 2010 valuation. Levy payments will be adjusted to take into account the 2015 valuation.



“As Centre Manager of a shopping centre in the heart of Lancaster, supporting the BID provides an excellent opportunity to work together to achieve a common goal and make a real difference in our city.”

Lynn Ison Centre Manager, Market Gate Shopping Centre



Our Projects

The idea of developing a BID for our city centre was launched at a briefing event in October 2011. The feedback from that event was used to develop the priorities for the BID and the type of activity that it would deliver.

The event was followed up by a questionnaire to all levy payers in the proposed BID area to help determine business views on our city centre and to develop some ideas for specific project ideas.

A number of consultation events were held with specific industry sectors and other stakeholders in the city centre. These were supported by detailed discussions with members of the Steering Group, the police and the City Council.

The results of all this activity have been used to identify a number of key activities that you would like the BID to deliver.

We want to use the BID to “set the scene” in terms of providing a vibrant series of events and great improvements to the existing streetscape in time for all those major new initiatives that are due to happen in our city.

We've put these activities into three main headings: “Promoting our City”, “Improving our City”, and “Special Projects”.

1. “Promoting our City”

The BID will bring together our unique artistic heritage, our retail sector, and our natural and historical assets to create a city centre that's alive with culture, expression, and vibrancy. A city centre where visitors, shoppers, and residents are never quite sure what they'll expect to see or hear. A city centre that's buzzing and animated and exciting. A city centre that has a sense of pride in what it does and what it delivers.

What will the BID deliver?

We will prepare and deliver a promotional strategy to raise awareness of our city centre and the businesses that operate within it.

We will work with arts organisations in our city to develop a creative programme for “grass roots” creative arts and other entertainment.

We'll put more money and support into developing a bigger and brighter Christmas campaign including the Christmas lights switch on event.

We will provide money to develop other seasonal marketing campaigns around Easter and Bank Holidays. We will work with the City Council marketing team and the Lancaster Events Forum to ensure that the annual BID events programme and all the other activity going on in our city is planned and coordinated in the most effective manner.

We will develop a campaign to bring the empty properties in our city centre back into life. We will provide marketing, business support and finance to develop imaginative approaches to deal with this blight in our city centre.

We will publish an annual events calendar and shopping guide to enable everyone to plan their promotions campaigns around our activity.

Our three year budget: £270,000

2. “Improving our City”

The BID will help create a more pleasant, cleaner and safer city centre for your customers, your visitors, and your employees.

What will the BID deliver?

We will create a budget to fund improvements to our city centre. This could include, for example, more street furniture, signage, and, if funding permits, CCTV cameras. All of this will be for you to decide but we'll make sure that it is done in consultation with the City Council to ensure that it supports and adds value to existing plans such as Square Roots, the castle, and the canal corridor.

We will coordinate an annual “Green up our City” campaign targeting “grot spots”, graffiti, and flyposting.

We will support all this activity by working with Lancaster City Council to extend the number of “free parking” days when our events are taking place. We will also look at implementing innovative ways of managing our city centre car parking to ensure that shoppers and visitors can stay longer without the need to return to their car.

Our three year budget: £150,000

3. "Special Projects"

We've got plenty of ideas for what we want to do. But we realise that you will also have ideas for projects that you want to see happen. And so our Special Projects fund will provide the support needed to bring your project ideas to life.

What will the BID deliver?

You may, for example, have an idea for an event or a marketing campaign but lack the funding to make it happen. Or you may simply want to replace some signage or litter bins. Whatever your idea, the Special Projects fund could be used to help make it a reality.

Our three year budget: £60,000

Dedicated BID Manager

We will employ a dedicated BID Manager to help make all these things happen.

What will the BID deliver?

We'll put in post a BID manager to work and act on your behalf and with the clout, responsibility, and above all, the budget to make the things that you want to see happen, happen.

The Manager will also act as a coordinator and catalyst to encourage greater cooperation between everyone who has a stake in the running and managing of our city centre.

Our three year budget: £105,000

"Lancaster is a City with so much to offer. It has a rich heritage and a vibrant cultural offering. We would welcome any progress towards enhancing the perception of the city as a definite destination of choice for visitors to the area"

Joe Sumsion Director at The Dukes

The BID Budget

	2013 / 2014	2014 / 2015	2015 / 2016	Total
Income				
Levy @1.5%	228,000	228,000	228,000	684,000
Expenditure				
Promoting	90,000	90,000	90,000	270,000
Improving	50,000	50,000	50,000	150,000
Special Projects	20,000	20,000	20,000	60,000
BID Manager	35,000	35,000	35,000	105,000
Contingency*	8,000	8,000	8,000	24,000
Administration**	15,000	15,000	15,000	45,000
Levy collection***	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
TOTAL	228,000	228,000	228,000	684,000

* includes allowance for bad debts, slippage, and re-balloting costs ** includes overheads, running costs, legal and audit fees

*** includes the charge for collecting the levy

Any underspend at the end of Years One and Two will be reallocated into mainstream BID budgets for the following year. Any underspend in Year Three will be carried forward to the new BID structure following the renewal ballot.

The BID will only become operational when sufficient funds have been collected. This may mean that some projects are phased in or deferred until subsequent years.



“Creating a Business Improvement District in Lancaster could be very beneficial. I’m in favour of any idea that helps to improve the look, feel and atmosphere of the city without relying entirely on the local and county councils. Money is needed to undertake extra work over and above the responsibilities of the Councils and it won’t come out of nowhere. I’m willing to contribute a small extra percentage of my business rates to make my home town a nicer place to live, work and visit - providing, that is, I also have a voice as to where the money is invested.”

James Mackie Managing Director and Owner of Mackies of Lancaster





How will we monitor our performance

The consultation process identified increased sales and customer opinions as the top two performance measures that you would use to determine the effectiveness of the BID.

We will monitor sales data using a representative sample of businesses willing to provide this information to us; undertake customer satisfaction surveys with all users of the BID area to find out how satisfied they are with what the BID is delivering; undertake levy payer surveys to determine the

percentage of businesses who believe that the BID area has improved as a place to do business; monitor empty property levels and inward investment levels; measure our social media marketing (Twitter feeds and Facebook) in terms of comments received.

Baseline services & agreements

The BID's projects and services will be entirely additional to any services, statutory or otherwise, already delivered by Lancaster City Council. Your money will not be used to pay for services that the Council has a statutory duty to provide.

What the BID will pay for are new initiatives that would not happen if the BID wasn't in place. In order to ensure that this happens we will establish baseline agreements with Lancaster City Council. The baseline services will relate to: marketing and promotion of the BID area, street cleaning (including litter and graffiti removal), signage and street scene.

We will monitor the Baseline Agreements on an on-going basis to ensure that Lancaster City Council maintains its agreed service delivery and does not use BID activity to replace what is already being delivered.

"A lively, vibrant town centre, will make everything better for everybody, including the people we support at CancerCare.

A better environment is known to improve people's health and that could mean we will eventually see fewer people. If there are good parking facilities and shops and the streets are safe, that also makes it easier for people using our city centre service."

Lynne Stafford Chief Executive CancerCare



Financing the BID

The costs incurred in developing the BID proposal, holding the BID ballot, and any other preparatory work undertaken before the BID ballot, has been funded by Lancaster City Council, Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce, and North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. No levy payments will be used to offset any of these costs.

Collection of the BID levy

We are proposing a BID levy of 1.5% of rateable value to be charged on all hereditaments with a value in excess of £10,000 listed in the local Non-Domestic Rating list. Only those properties which are located in the BID area will be liable to pay the BID levy.

The BID levy will be billed as a single payment in April each year and collected by Lancaster City Council. Each account will identify whether it is in respect of Non Domestic Rates or the BID Levy.

Lancaster City Council will also make it clear that the BID levy will be transferred to the BID Accountable Body. The transfer of the BID levy will be subject to a Service Level Agreement between the Council and the BID Accountable Body. Both organisations will meet on a regular basis to review the collection and billing arrangements of the BID levy.

The BID Accountable Body will provide all BID levy payers with an Annual Report detailing all income and expenditure relating to the BID. External auditors will oversee the production of annual accounts.

Period of the BID

Ballot papers will be sent out on Thursday 1st November 2012. The ballot will close at 5pm on Thursday 29th November 2012. The result of the ballot will be declared on Friday 30th November 2012 or as soon as possible after that date.

Subject to the BID ballot achieving a majority vote under the voting criteria (as detailed on page 9) the start of the BID will be 1st April 2013. It will end on the 31st March 2016.

The intervening period between the completion of the ballot and the start of the BID will be used to establish management and operational structures and prepare actions prior to the implementation of delivery.

During this period contracts and Service Level Agreements will be established with suppliers for the delivery of projects and with Lancaster City Council for the collection and dispersal of the BID levy.

Governance Arrangements

The BID proposer and Accountable Body is North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce working in conjunction with Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce. Both organisations are “not for profit” companies dedicated to making Lancaster a better place to live, work and invest.

Payment of the BID levy will be managed by a Service Level Agreement between Lancaster City Council and the Accountable Body.

The Management Group will take responsibility for the day to day management of the BID.



“None of us is as good as all of us.
The role of business is to make the world a better
place ... starting with our home - Lancaster.”

Kevin Roberts CEO Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide,
Author and Lancastrian



BID Levy Rules

- The BID levy is fixed at 1.5% of rateable value
- The first term of the BID will be for three years to run from 1st April 2013 until 31st March 2016
- There will be no VAT charged on the BID levy
- The BID levy will be applied to all business ratepayers of occupied or unoccupied property with a RV of £10,000 and above in the BID area at any time that the BID is in operation. No relief is to be given to any class of non-domestic ratepayer irrespective of what ever relief or exemption they may currently enjoy in respect of Non Domestic (or Business) Rates.
- The BID levy will only be used to fund the improvement Programmes detailed in this Delivery Plan and the management and administration of the BID.
- Businesses locating or leaving the BID area during the time that the BID is in operation will pay a proportion of the levy calculated on a pro rata basis.
- The BID Management Group will be able to alter the BID arrangements without an Alteration Ballot as long as any alterations do not alter the geographical area of the BID, alter the BID levy payable, conflict with the Local Government Act (2003) or The Business Improvement District Regulations (2004)
- The existing recovery procedures for the standard Business Rates bill will be utilised for any non-payment of the BID levy.
- The BID arrangements may be altered without an Alteration Ballot in the following instances:
 1. The streets and hereditaments to be included in the BID area may alter due to changes in the local ratings list. Hereditaments may be additionally included if their rateable value, at any time during the BID period, exceeds £10,000 or they are newly added to the local list and the rateable value threshold criteria (as set out in the above response to point 1 (1) (d) of schedule 1 of the BID regulations) is exceeded.
 2. Hereditaments may also be excluded from the BID area and BID levy charge in those cases where properties are removed from the local list or the rateable value alters to below £10,000. Where this occurs such amendments will be adjusted from the effective date notified by the Valuation Office.

How can I find out more?

If you require further information please contact the BID team c/o Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce on **01524 381331** or **www.lancaster-chamber.org.uk**

“Any improvements in the city centre and to the working environment should be welcomed, particularly in the current difficult economic climate. It should also be appreciated that improving the city centre will help to attract more people, they will be more inclined to spend time in the city centre to the benefit of all. An attractive environment will also help to increase the take-up of empty space, both retail and office, accordingly improving the vibrancy of the city and resulting in investment in the built environment.”

Richard P Taylor Chartered Surveyors





Lancaster
Unlimited

If you require further information please contact the BID team c/o
Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce on 01524 381331 or
www.lancaster-chamber.org.uk

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