

**LANCASTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
DELIVERY PLAN
(April 2013 – March 2016)**

WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT?

Business Improvement Districts (BID) 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.

PRINCIPLES

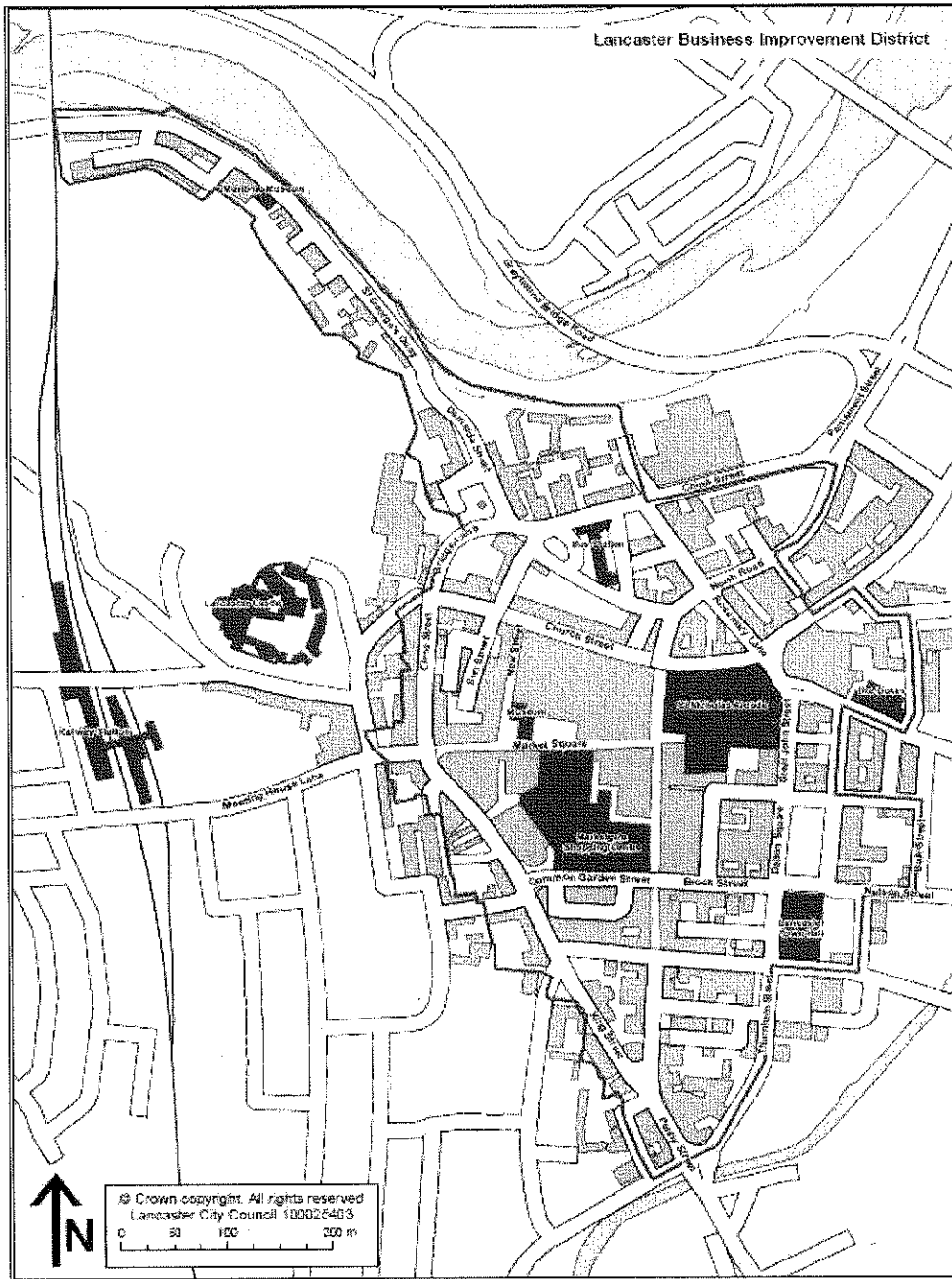
The BID will be:

- Dedicated to improving the interests of business ratepayers in the BID area.
- Providing projects and services that are in addition to activity delivered by Lancaster City Council, Lancashire County Council, and Lancashire Constabulary.
- Representative of business ratepayers in the BID area.

- Accountable by publishing annual accounts and holding annual general meetings.

THE BID LOCATION

The BID area comprises the following streets and business areas: Anchor Lane, Ashton Walk, Brewery Arcade, Brock Street, Chapel Street, Cheapside, Church Street, Common Garden Street, Corn Market, Dalton Square, Damside Street, Frances Passage, Gage Street, George Street, Great John Street, James Street, King Street, Lancaster Gate, Lower Church Street, Lucy Street, Market Hall, Market Street, Market Gate, Marton Street, Moor Lane (part), New Road, New Street, Penny Street, Rendsburg Way, Rosemary Lane, St Simons Arcade, St Georges Quay, St Leonardsgate, St Nicholas Arcades, Sun Street, Thurnham Street, Wood Street.



The business “mix” of the BID area is broken down approximately as follows:

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

HOW WILL THE BID BENEFIT MY BUSINESS?

The feedback from the BID launch event, focus groups, other consultation events, questionnaires, and talking to visitors and businesses alike identified a number of key activities that you would like the BID to deliver.

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

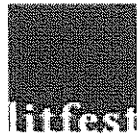
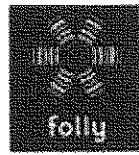
We want Lancaster to tell a better story. Lancaster is unique in the Northwest for its rich and varied arts and cultural community. Our city’s theatre, dance, music, literature, visual arts, and galleries are recognised nationally and internationally for their excellence and innovation.

We want to build on this uniqueness. We want our city to become a “go to” destination for more people for more of the time. But we want to do this in a way that differentiates us from our competition.

A successful BID will help us achieve this vision.

“Promoting our City” will use our unique artistic heritage 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.

the
Dukes



SIDREY GALLERY

We will work with the Lancashire Arts Partnership to develop a creative programme that provides a vibrant backdrop to our street markets, open spaces, and side streets.

We will put money into developing a platform for “grass roots” creative arts to run alongside and add value to existing activity.

But we won't forget the more traditional entertainment. And so we 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 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 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 provide marketing, business support, and finance to develop imaginative approaches to bring empty properties back to life.

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

We will employ a BID manager to help make all these things happen. The BID manager will be your manager, working and acting on your behalf, and with the clout and responsibility to make the things that you want to see happen, happen.

The BID manager will also act as a coordinator and catalyst to encourage greater cooperation between key stakeholders, users and service providers.

“Improving our City” will help create a more pleasant, cleaner, and safer city centre for your customers and, visitors.

We will employ two BID branded Street Ambassadors who will provide a “meet and greet” service and information resource for visitors and shoppers, provide general assistance and stewarding at events and other activity in the BID area, and report on and help deal with flyposting, graffiti, stickers, and illegal signs.

The Ambassadors will work alongside the PCSOs who already operate in our city centre. Their powers and responsibilities (including potential statutory powers) will increase over the lifetime of the BID.

We will provide funding for additional street furniture, information points, floral displays, and street washing. All this activity will be done in consultation with the City Council to ensure that it supports and adds value to existing plans for the city.

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

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.

Our **“Special Projects”** fund will provide the support needed to bring your project ideas to life. 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.

Applications to the “Special Projects” fund can be made by any levy payer in the BID area. The fund will only be used to help cover the costs of new and additional activity. What it won’t do is fund projects that fall outside the BID area or be used to replace existing funding streams.

HOW WILL WE MONITOR OUR PERFORMANCE

You 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, therefore, introduce the following performance indicators and report these to you on an annual basis:

- 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. We will use constructive feedback to help develop future activity.

HOW MUCH WILL I HAVE TO PAY?

The table below shows how much you will have to pay.

RATEABLE VALUE OF YOUR PROPERTY	ANNUAL BID LEVY (1.5%)	COST PER DAY
£10,000	£150	41p
£20,000	£300	82p
£50,000	£750	£2.05
£100,000	£1500	£4.11
£250,000	£3750	£10.27
£500,000	£7500	£20.55

Please contact the BID team to find out the rateable value of your property. Alternatively you can log onto the Valuation Office's website http://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.

BASELINE SERVICES AND 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.

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.

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

The BID ballot will open on 19th November 2012 and close at 5pm on Thursday 13th December 2012. The result of the ballot will be declared on Friday 14th December 2012.

Subject to the BID ballot achieving a majority vote under the voting criteria (as detailed above) the start of the BID will be 1st April 2013.

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 Accountable Body is North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce / Lancaster and District Chamber of Commerce.

The Accountable Body will take responsibility for the legal and financial management of the BID levy, employing BID staff, and providing secretarial support to the Management Group.

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.

Full details of roles and responsibilities can be found in Appendices I and II.

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. Where this happens all amendments will be adjusted from the effective date notified by the Valuation Office
- 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.

THE BID VOTING PROCESS

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
- 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.

THE BID BUDGET

INCOME	2013 / 2014	2014 / 2015	2015 / 2016	TOTAL
Levy @1.5%	218,000	218,000	218,000	654,000
EXPENDITURE				
Promoting	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
Improving	50,000	50,000	50,000	150,000
Special Projects	20,000	20,000	20,000	60,000
Management*	30,000	30,000	30,000	90,000
Levy collection	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
Slippage and contingency**	8,000	8,000	8,000	24,000

*includes overheads, management costs, accommodation, legal and audit fees

**includes allowance for bad debts, slippage, contingency, and re-balloting costs

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.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

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

APPENDIX ONE ROLE OF ACCOUNTABLE BODY

1. Name

The Accountable Body will be North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce / Lancaster and District Chamber of Commerce.

2. Role

The Accountable Body will take responsibility for the legal and financial management of the BID levy as well as providing secretarial support to the Management Group.

3. Financial management

The management of the BID account will include the following:

- A dedicated BID bank account.
- An audit trail spreadsheet that will record all items of income and expenditure against separate budget codes and cost centres.
- Overseeing contract management with suppliers
- Ensuring that the project has sufficient cashflow
- Preparation of bi-monthly management accounts illustrating expenditure against budget headings, forward projections, and balances available.
- Presenting the management accounts at all meetings of the BID Management Group.
- Checking all invoices for eligibility and accuracy.
- Ensuring compliance with all statutory and audit requirements
- Preparing an Annual Financial report

4. Employee management

The BID will support up to three new BID funded posts: a full time Manager and two Street Ambassadors.

All three posts will be placed on the Accountable Body's payroll.

These three posts will be offered on fixed term contracts covering the lifetime of the BID. All employment costs (salary, NI, pension, travel and expenses) will be covered by the BID.

5. Other legal issues

The Accountable Body will represent the BID in any court matters relating to non-payment of the BID levy.

APPENDIX TWO ROLE OF MANAGEMENT GROUP

1. Name

The Group will be known as the Lancaster Business Improvement District Management Group, hereinafter referred to as 'the Management Group'.

2. Membership

2.1 Membership of the Management Group is proposed as follows:

Chair	1 seat
Retail sector – national	2 seats
Retail sector – independent	2 seats
Leisure sector	1 seat
Licensed sector	1 seat
Commercial	1 seat
Police	1 seat
Lancaster City Council	1 seat
Accountable Body	1 seat
Chamber of Commerce	1 seat
Charity / voluntary sector	1 seat
Total	13 seats

2.2 At its first meeting the Management Group shall elect from amongst themselves a Chair and Vice Chair.

2.3 For a meeting of the Management Group to be quorate at least six members must be present.

2.4 The Secretariat for the Management Group will be provided by the Accountable Body.

2.5 If casual vacancies occur among the members of the Management Group, it shall have the powers to fill these from among eligible business ratepayers in the BID area (providing that the industry sector balance in 4.1 is maintained).

2.6 Any member may resign from his/her appointment as a member of the Management Group by giving the Chairperson written notice to that effect.

2.7 The Management Group will be non-party in Politics and non-sectarian in Religion.

2.8 The Management Group will meet at least six times year.

3. Powers

Powers of the Management Group are limited but include:

- Approving new projects for inclusion in the annual delivery plan.
- Providing advice and guidance in the delivery of project activity.
- Approving the annual BID budget.
- Signing of cheques. Cheques to the value of £1000 will be signed by the Chair of the Management Group. Cheques for a higher value will be signed by two authorised signatories determined by the Management Group.
- Monitoring key performance indicators, income and expenditure.
- Representing the views of the business ratepayers in the BID area.
- Redistribution of funds amongst projects providing that full approval of Management Group is given.
- Altering 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, or conflict with the Local Government Act (2003) or The Business Improvement District Regulations (2004)

4. Geographical area of responsibility

The Management Group's key objectives will focus on businesses and properties located within the BID area defined as including the following streets:

Anchor Lane, Ashton Walk, Brewery Arcade, Brock Street, Chapel Street, Cheapside, Church Street, Common Garden Street, Corn Market, Dalton Square, Damside Street, Frances Passage, Gage Street, George Street, Great John Street, James Street, King Street, Lancaster Gate, Lower Church Street, Lucy Street, Market Hall, Market Street, Market Gate, Marton Street, Moor Lane (part), New Road, New Street, Penny Street, Rendsburg Way, Rosemary Lane, St Simons Arcade, St Georges Quay, St Leonardsgate, St Nicholas Arcades, Sun Street, Thurnham Street, Wood Street.

5. Inclusion and equality

The Management Group will seek to undertake its activities in an inclusive manner, and will encourage participation from all areas of society irrespective of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality or Political or religious or other opinion.

6. Affiliations

The Management Group may join, support or affiliate to other initiatives when it is deemed necessary in the realisation of its objectives subject to a majority vote of all members of the Group.

7. Voting

Any question arising at a meeting of the Management Group or one of its committees shall be decided by a simple majority of those business members present and voting. Voting shall be undertaken through a show of hands.

The Chair will have the casting vote.

Each member of the Management Group present shall have one vote in any given ballot, regardless of the number of representatives present from any one business at the meeting and regardless of the number of hereditaments they may represent.

8. Minutes

Minutes shall be kept of the Management Group meetings. Accuracy of minutes shall be the responsibility of the meeting Chair. Minutes shall remain draft until formally approved by the relevant meeting Chair. Any queries arising from the minutes shall be raised at the subsequent meeting. The Accountable Body will have responsibility for ensuring that accurate minutes are kept for all meetings.

9. Declaration of interest

Members must declare interest where Management Group decisions will impact on stated interest.

10. Records

The proposal for the Business Improvement District for Lancaster city centre, minutes of meetings and the annual delivery plan will be available by email or hard copy.

11. PR and media protocol

Press and media enquiries shall be referred to Chair before any official statement is made by individual members of the Management Group or working groups.

APPENDIX THREE: JOB OUTLINES

BID Manager (three year fixed term contract)

Accountable to: **Management Group**
Accountable for: **BID Street Ambassadors**

Salary	£30000
NI / Pension	£5000
Other costs	£1700
TOTAL	£36700

Purpose

To maintain and improve the quality and viability of the city centre for all users by acting as a coordinator and catalyst and encouraging cooperation between key stakeholders, users and service providers.

Job Description

- Prepare, deliver and monitor the Business Improvement District (BID) Business Plan and its resources with the BID Accountable Body and BID Steering Group.
- Develop the BID partnership structure, the arrangements and protocols to ensure is 'fit for purpose' moving forward with the intention of it becoming a widely recognised and respected Town Centre Partnership.
- Work with key stakeholders and local businesses to attract investment additional investment and trade to the town centre
- Coordinate the efforts, resources and interests of all stakeholders to enhance the
- Marketing, attractiveness and security of the town centre
- Improve communication between providers and users of town centre services
- Organise events and marketing initiatives to increase the foot-fall and retail sales in the town centre
- Secure private and public sector resources to achieve the agreed BID Business Plan
- Advise all users and stakeholders how to access relevant council services and the
- services of other appropriate agencies and act as a link between users and providers

- Advise stakeholder service managers on areas where service standards can be enhanced for the benefit of the town centre and utilise funds to deliver this.
- To report as required to the board of the BID Partnership and Town Centre Management employing group.
- To carry out any other duties required by the BID Board of directors, which are consistent with those listed above and appropriate to the title and grade of the post and the terms of reference set out by the Town Centre Management employing group.
- Secure sponsorship and other commercial income
- Monitor and record levels of service delivery against Baseline Service Level agreements
- Manage the BID budget in accordance with the Accountable Body's financial management procedures
- Manage the BID Street Ambassadors

Street Ambassador x 2 (three year fixed term contract)

Accountable to: BID Manager
Accountable for: N/a

Salary	£16000
NI / Pension	£2500
Uniform / radio	£750
Other costs / training	£750
TOTAL	£20,000

Principle duties:

1. Providing a "meet and greet" service and information resource for visitors and shoppers
2. Work alongside city centre PCSOs to provide assistance to deal with the removal of flyposting, graffiti, stickers, and illegal signs
3. Providing assistance to deal with street begging, illegal street trading, on-street drinking, littering, touting, and other anti-social activities

4. Identifying potential improvements in the environment, appearance, safety, security, and efficient operation of the BID area and reporting them to the relevant agency or organisation.
5. Undertaking satisfaction surveys in relation to BID activities
6. Mounting of promotional displays in empty shop premises
7. Providing general assistance and stewarding at events and other activity in the BID area
8. Reporting and recording incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour
9. Gathering and recording information relating to footfall, sales performance, crime reduction, and other activity to help monitor the impact of the BID.
9. Maintaining day to day contact with businesses in the BID area

