

Report subject	<b>Poole Business Improvement District (BID)</b>
Meeting date	14 April 2021
Status	Public
Executive summary	Poole Business Improvement District's (BID) initial 5-year term will finish in June 2021. The BID is currently preparing for re-ballot on 20 May 2021 for a second 5-year term. This report seeks Cabinet approval to continue the Council's support for Poole BID for the second term.
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p><b>Cabinet agree to continue BCP Council's support of the Poole Business Improvement District (BID); and agree:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i) To endorse the BID proposal submitted by the Poole Business Improvement District.</b></li> <li><b>ii) To note that the re-ballot will be run by CIVICA at a cost of £3,000. It was agreed with the BID that this one-off cost would be paid for by the BCP Council Economic Development team through existing budgets.</b></li> <li><b>iii) To note that if the re-ballot is successful, the Council will pay any BID levy due in relation to the Council's properties within the BID area (currently totalling £18,887 per annum) for 5 years. The service units that own the liable premises will pay the levy for their site(s).</b></li> <li><b>iv) To authorise the Director - Development to complete the ballot papers on behalf of the Council in favour of the BID proposal.</b></li> <li><b>v) To authorise the Head of Legal Services to complete any necessary legal agreements required for the operation of the BID Levy, Ballot and service arrangements and any other necessary matters for the proposed BID in consultation with the appropriate officers.</b></li> </ul>

Reason for recommendations	BCP Council is fully supportive of BIDs and the significant benefits and investment that they bring. The Poole BID helps deliver the Council's strategic aims and objectives including the 'Rejuvenating Poole' project in the Council's 'Big Plan'. It is therefore recommended that BCP Council supports the Poole BID re-ballot for a further 5-year term.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Philip Broadhead
Corporate Director	Adam Richens, Chief Finance Officer and Director of Finance
Report Authors	Adrian Trevett, Head of Economic Development Matthew Robson, Senior Economic Development Officer Hannah Porter, Town Centre Operations and Marketing Manager
Wards	Poole Town;
Classification	For Decision

## Background

1. Business Improvement Districts (BID) are business led partnerships, created through a ballot process to deliver additional improvements and services for local businesses. BIDs have a defined geographical area in which a levy is charged on all business rate payers in addition to their business rates bill. The funding is ringfenced to provide additional improvements and services identified by the businesses. BIDs are typically run as not for profit companies and are controlled by the businesses that fund them.
2. For a BID to be successful it needs to meet the two criteria of achieving a simple majority (over 50%) of eligible businesses voting yes (each business has one vote, irrespective of size), and also for all of those voting in favour to represent a majority of the total rateable value of all businesses voting. If these two criteria are met, then the levy becomes mandatory across all eligible businesses in the area.
3. BCP Council fully supports 3 existing BIDs in the BCP region – Bournemouth BID, Bournemouth Coastal BID and Poole BID. Christchurch are currently progressing with a BID and their ballot is expected in Autumn 2021.

## Poole Business Improvement District (BID) and re-ballot

4. Poole Business Improvement District (BID) was established in July 2016 following a successful ballot in April 2016. In the past 5-years the BID has become a key player in supporting businesses in Poole town centre. The BID team has worked on delivering key BID objectives to make improvements to the town centre and drive footfall to support town centre businesses. Examples include – delivering key events (including Christmas and seasonal events); improving safety and security (including part-funding CSAS officers); providing additional cleaning; providing additional

planting; and, supporting businesses through Covid-19 (including signposting to relevant grants).

5. The BID's first term will finish in June 2021. The BID is now preparing for re-ballot on 20 May 2021 to seek a further 5-year term (up to 2026) which will start on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.
6. Key Dates:
  - Ballot papers issued - Tuesday 20 April
  - Ballot end - Thursday 20 May
  - Ballot Decision - Friday 21 May
  - New term – Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July
7. The re-ballot follows the same geography as the first term. It stretches from the Lighthouse to the Quay to connect the waterfront to the busy Dolphin Shopping Centre. The area is focused on the core area of the town, the Quay, The High Street, Dolphin Shopping Centre, the Bus Station and Lighthouse Arts Centre. This area deliberately connects the waterside frontage to the Dolphin Shopping Centre. It is small enough that it can have a real impact on those businesses within the area but sufficiently large to generate enough investment to make a real difference.
8. The rate of the levy being proposed for the re-ballot is 1.5% of a businesses' rateable value (RV) – this is the same level as the first term. As before, an exemption level of £5,000 is being proposed, meaning that businesses with a rateable value below this will not be included within the formal ballot and do not pay the levy. The number of eligible businesses (hereditaments) in the defined area is 470. The sum expected to be raised from the levy is £265k per annum for a period of 5 years, totalling **£1.325m** of investment into the town centre. This figure does not include any additional sponsorship or match funding that the BID would inevitably secure.
9. The BID has produced a draft Business Plan for 2021-2026 which outlines the areas that it will seek to address including:
  - Promoting Place – including events and promotion
  - Enhancement – including safety and security and streetscene improvements
  - Partnership working and support – including networking and lobbying
10. One of the 5 projects in the Council's 'Big Plan' is to rejuvenate Poole, bringing a vibrant, attractive and sustainable mix of residency, business, hospitality, retail, culture and green spaces to the heart of Poole, the Quay and the area between the two bridges, complementing the internationally-renowned Sandbanks and the beauty of the second-largest natural harbour in the world. Poole BID and the proposed Business Plan will help the Council deliver this commitment.

### Options Appraisal

11. BCP Council fully supports 3 existing BIDs in the BCP region as they bring significant benefits and investment to the BCP region. If support is not offered for the Poole BID at re-ballot there would be reputational damage to the Council. Furthermore, as a voter and levy payer, a negative vote from the Council could result in the BID failing at re-ballot with the resulting loss of over £1.3m of investment into Poole Town Centre.

This would be very harmful to the town centre and would be contrary to the aims and objectives of the Big Plan to 'Rejuvenate Poole'.

### **Summary of financial implications**

12. On behalf of BCP Council, the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) Revenue and Benefits service will undertake the task of billing the levy to all businesses, and then pass the funding across to the BID Company. This is at no cost to the Council as the costs of undertaking this role (£7.5k per annum) will be funded from the levy collection sum. The payment will be taken prior to passing on the remainder of collected funds across to the BID company.
13. There are however two financial implications for the Council:
  - The Council are a landowner for 16 liable premises in the BID boundary (see appendix). As such, the Council are liable for £18,887 per year (£94,436 over 5 years) if the re-ballot is successful. The service units that own the liable premises will pay the levy for their site(s) as they will benefit from the BID. This is the same system that is currently used to pay the levy.
  - The re-ballot will run by CIVICA at a cost of £3,000. It was agreed with the BID that this one-off cost would be paid for by BCP Council Economic Development team through existing budgets. This is to support the BID through the current financial difficulties as a result of Covid-19.

### **Summary of legal implications**

14. Poole BID is an established independent body which take full legal and financial responsibility for the BID during its lifetime and is a company limited by guarantee.
15. An Operations Agreement has been drafted by the Stour Valley and Poole Partnership (SVPP) Revenues and Benefits Service that outlines the terms of the relationship between the BID company and the billing authority.
16. Baseline Agreements have been drawn up with relevant Service Unit Heads covering: Regulatory Services; Grounds Maintenance; Cleansing; Car Parking; CCTV; Borough Operations Centre; Tourism and Events and CSAS. The Baseline Agreements determine the current commitments of the Council in the BID area to ensure that there is no duplication of activities from the BID funds. Legislation states that BID activity is not to replace services provided by the local authority.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

17. There are no human resources implications.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

18. Poole BID supports businesses and employment in the town centre. A thriving and vibrant town centre has sustainability benefits as the town centre is well served by public transport (train and bus station).

### **Summary of public health implications**

19. There are no public health implications.

### **Summary of equality implications**

20. The continued operation of the BID would make a positive contribution to the town centre. It would continue to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre thereby creating (and retaining) employment opportunities. It would also fund safety measures to make the town centre a safer and more welcoming environment.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

21. The financial risks have been identified above. There would be a reputational risk if the Council do not support the Poole BID re-ballot (whilst supporting other BIDs).

### **Background papers**

None. Link to Poole BID - <https://poolebid.com/>

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Council owned sites

## Appendix 1

### Council owned sites

R/O 58-64 HIGH STREET	POOLE
WATERFRONT MUSEUM	4 HIGH STREET
TOWN MARKET	HIGH STREET
PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	DOLPHIN CENTRE
POOLE CENTRAL LIBRARY	DOLPHIN CENTRE
CAR PARK	KINGLAND ROAD
CAR PARK ADJ DOLPHIN POOL	14-16 KINGLAND ROAD
CAR PARK	SELDOWN BRIDGE
PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	ADJ BRIDGE HOUSE
THE GUILDHALL	MARKET STREET
CAR PARK	CHAPEL LANE
18 HILL STREET	POOLE
CAR PARK	HILL STREET
SCAPLENS COURT MUSEUM	SARUM STREET
CAR PARK	DEAR HAY LANE
OLD ORCHARD CAR PARK	CASTLE STREET