

Report subject	<b>Bournemouth Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID)</b>
Meeting date	12 January 2022
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>Bournemouth Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) is preparing to undertake a renewal ballot for its third term from 2 March 2022 – 30 March 2022. The result of the ballot will be announced on 31 March 2022.</p> <p>If successful, the 5-year BID Term will run from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2027. This report seeks Cabinet approval for the Council to support Bournemouth Town Centre BID for the third term.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p><b>Cabinet agree BCP Council’s support of the Bournemouth Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID); and agree:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i) To endorse the BID proposal that will be submitted to BCP Council by the BID.</b></li> <li><b>ii) To authorise the Director of Economic Development to complete the ballot papers on behalf of the Council in favour of the BID proposal.</b></li> <li><b>iii) 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	<p>BCP Council is fully supportive of BIDs and the significant benefits and investment that they bring. The Bournemouth Town Centre BID proposal will help deliver the Council’s strategic aims and objectives including the Dynamic Places objective in the Corporate Plan. It has a strong track record of supporting businesses in the town centre and supporting innovative new projects. It is therefore recommended that BCP Council supports the Bournemouth Town Centre BID for its third 5-year term.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Philip Broadhead; Portfolio Holder for Development, Growth and Regeneration
Corporate Director	Adam Richens; Chief Finance Officer and Director of Finance
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Wards	Bournemouth Central; Westbourne & West Cliff;
Classification	For Decision

## Background

1. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) 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 majority (over 50%) of eligible businesses voting yes (each hereditament 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 the existing BIDs in the BCP region – Poole BID and the newly created Christchurch BID. It has supported Bournemouth Coastal and Town Centre BIDs in their first and second terms, both of which are undertaking the ballot process in the same timeframe, with the third term commencing on 1 July 2022 if successful.

## Bournemouth Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID)

4. The Bournemouth Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) was established in July 2012 following a successful ballot in April 2012. The second term ballot was held in May 2017 and was again successful. In the past 10 years the BID has continued to be a key player in supporting businesses in Bournemouth 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) designed to encourage spend within town centre businesses.
  - Improving safety and security (including the highly valued Town Centre Ranger team).

- Encouraging the growth and development of businesses through forums, seminars and training courses.
  - Providing additional cleaning with their town centre litter picking and cleansing operative, supply of additional bins.
  - Providing additional support to businesses through Covid-19 (including signposting to relevant grants, sanitisation stations, social distancing stickers and window vinyls).
5. The BID engages with its member businesses through regular newsletters, e-mails and meetings. All of the Company activities and projects are detailed on their website which has a dedicated Levy Payers Area [www.towncentrebid.co.uk](http://www.towncentrebid.co.uk)

### **BID Proposal**

6. The BID's second term will finish in June 2022. The BID is preparing for a renewal ballot on 30 March 2022 to seek a further 5-year term (up to 2027) which will start on 1 July 2022.
7. Key Dates:
- Ballot papers issued – Wednesday 2 March 2022
  - Ballot end - Wednesday 30 March 2022
  - Ballot Decision – Thursday 31 March 2022
  - New term – Friday 1 July 2022
8. The BID Area boundary follows the same geography as the previous two terms. It covers the vast majority of the town centre and shares a boundary in some places with Bournemouth Coastal BID (see Map at **Appendix 1**).
9. The rate of the levy is 1.5% of the business' rateable value (RV) for all eligible businesses and 1% for the office sector. This is the same level as the previous two terms.
10. There will be an exemption level of £12,000, meaning that businesses with a rateable value below this will not be included within the formal ballot and do not pay the levy. All Non-Domestic Ratepayers over £12,000 within the proposed boundary would be liable to pay the BID levy, with the exception of non-retail and non-commercial charities.
11. The number of eligible hereditaments in the defined area is 704. The sum expected to be raised from the levy is £651.2k per annum for a period of 5 years, totalling £3.26m of investment into the town centre over the full term. This figure does not include any additional sponsorship or match funding that the BID would inevitably secure.

## Delivery Arrangements

12. Bournemouth Town Centre BID will continue to operate with the same governance arrangements. It will be the body responsible for the delivery of the BID services and it will employ staff as appropriate to implement the BID Board's programme on a day-to-day basis. It will enter into an operating agreement with BCP Council covering the arrangements for the collection of the BID Levy and the operation of the BID Levy account.
13. The BID is run by Town Centre BID Ltd which is a private company limited by guarantee. It has a voluntary Board of Directors comprising of BID levy payers and other key stakeholders representing the BID area. It is governed by its Articles of Association and it publishes annual accounts and holds an Annual General Meeting.

## BID Process and Ballot Arrangements

14. The process and ballot arrangements will be held and conducted in accordance with The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 as amended. The ballot will be a postal ballot of all businesses in the BID area liable to pay the BID Levy. It will be conducted on behalf of the BID by Civica Electoral Reform Services Ltd.
15. The 28 day ballot period will run from 2 March 2022 to 30 March 2022. All eligible businesses in the BID area entitled to vote will be notified of the ballot arrangements and will be sent the ballot papers. Proxy voting can be arranged for those that require it.

## Business Plan

16. The BID has produced a draft Business Plan for 2022-2027 which outlines the areas that it will seek to address including:

Project Areas	Proposed activity
<b>Safe &amp; Secure</b>	Continuation of the team of Town Centre Rangers. This 7 day a week operation supports the work of the Police and Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) in helping to make the Town Centre an attractive place to live, work and visit.
	Creation of a new Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP), building on the good work already undertaken by the existing Bournemouth Business Reducing Crime (BBRC). This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Board consisting of representatives from Dorset Police, PCC, BCP, St Mungos, National and Local Retailers and the BID.</li><li>• Introduction of the DISC reporting system.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number and use of Shopwatch radio system.</li> <li>• Significantly improved reporting of crime improved partnership working with the aim of deterring retail crime and ASB activity in the area.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Appearance &amp; Environment</b></p>	<p>Working with the Night Time Economy group to bring together the two sections of the economy under the BCRP.</p> <p>Continuation of provision of Clean and Green operative to supplement the work of BCP operatives in litter picking, cleaning and detritus removal in the Town Centre.</p> <p>Creation of a rapid response Graffiti Removal team supporting commercial property owners and levy payers in the removal of graffiti from Town Centre businesses.</p> <p>The provision of floral hanging baskets throughout the BID area to enhance and improve the environment.</p> <p>Working with BCP and levy payers on improved window vinyls for empty shops to better the visual aspect of the town centre.</p> <p>Work in conjunction with BCP on the delivery of the Cleaner, Greener, Safer Strategy through street audits, joint deep cleaning projects and place improvement projects, for example Westover Road and Lansdowne.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Marketing &amp; Promotions</b></p>	<p>Improved signage within the Town Centre and Beach/Gardens to help raise awareness of retail and leisure offerings within the town centre.</p> <p>Working closely in support of the Purple Flag programme to help sustain Bournemouth Town Centre it's continuation of status.</p> <p>Continuation of the Town Centre Gift Card Scheme which locks real spend into Town Centre Businesses.</p> <p>Promotion of Bournemouth town centre as a leisure and shopping destination, primarily to people withing a 45 min drive time, thus enhancing the work of DMB and Coastal BID.</p> <p>Individual support to levy paying businesses through social media presence and campaigns across all the major social</p>

	networks driving awareness and specific offers.
	Use of local and regional media organisations to promote activity within the Town Centre.
<b>Events</b>	Continuation of support for Christmas Tree Wonderland.
	Improved offering for Christmas in areas of the Town Centre outside of The Square and Lower Gardens.
	Creation of trail events to drive impacts to levy paying businesses e.g. Coffee, Cocktail & Ale Trails.
	The creation and support of further major impact events in the areas of culture and art, food and fashion.
	Creating links with national events that bring benefit to the Town Centre e.g. Great British High Street and Small Business Saturday.
<b>Business Support</b>	Continuation of Peer to Peer and Customer Experience programmes to support businesses (particularly independents) on business improvement.
	Business Liaison Officer role to maintain flow of information and support to levy paying businesses.
	Monthly discussion forums to identify and ascertain key issues/opportunities.
	Working closely with BCP Council's Economic Development Team to jointly address issues raised.
	Supporting BCP Council's High Streets and District Centres Strategy.

17. The BID Business Plan will be launched on 13 January 2022. It will also be available on the BID website [www.towncentrebid.co.uk](http://www.towncentrebid.co.uk)

### Options Appraisal

18. Option 1:  
The Council fully supports the renewal of Bournemouth Town Centre BID. Combined with the existing BIDs, they bring significant benefits and investment to the BCP region.

19. Option 2:  
If support is not offered for the renewal of the Bournemouth Town Centre BID there could be reputational damage to the Council (whilst supporting the other BIDs). If the BID is not voted in for a third term there would be a loss of over £650,000 of investment into the Town Centre BID area per annum. This would be very harmful to the town centre, and would be contrary to the aims and objectives of BCP Council Strategy.

### **Summary of financial implications**

20. If successful for the third term, BCP Council Business Rates team will continue to 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 (£63,459 over the 5 year term) will be funded from the levy collection sum, invoiced to the BID company.
21. There is one financial implication for the Council. The Council are a landowner for 15 liable hereditaments in the BID boundary (see **Appendix 2**). As such, the Council are liable for £31,387.50 per year (£156,937.50 over 5 years) if the ballot is successful. In accordance with the current BID billing arrangements, the service units that own the liable hereditaments are responsible for paying their levy.
22. The ballot will run by CIVICA at a cost of £3,800. The cost of the ballot is paid for by the BID.

### **Summary of legal implications**

23. Bournemouth Town Centre BID as a company, is limited by guarantee.
24. Bournemouth Town Centre BID is run by a Board of Directors, all of whom represent businesses from the private sector or organisations paying the BID levy. Members of the BID elect their Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is responsible for the delivery of projects, ensuring that they are delivered on time, in budget and to the highest standards possible.
25. An Operating Agreement has been drafted by the BCP Council that outlines the terms of the relationship between the BID company and the billing authority.
26. Baseline Agreements have been drawn up with relevant Service Unit Heads covering: CCTV and CSAS; Civil Enforcement; Events; Highways Maintenance and Street Cleansing; Parking Management; Parks and Gardens; and Regulatory Services. 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**

24. There are no human resources implications.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

25. Bournemouth Town Centre 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.
26. A Decision Impact Assessment has been undertaken with no negative impacts identified.

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

27. There are no public health implications.

### **Summary of equality implications**

28. 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.
29. An Equalities Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken and is included at Appendix 3. It was positively reviewed by the EIA Panel and given a good Amber rating.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

30. The financial risks have been identified above. There would be a reputational risk if the Council do not support a third term for Bournemouth Town Centre BID renewal ballot (whilst supporting other BIDs).

### **Background papers**

Bournemouth Town Centre BID website – [www.towncentrebid.co.uk](http://www.towncentrebid.co.uk)

Draft Business Plan (Exempt under Category 3 personal information or business affairs due to press embargo until 13 January 2022)

### **Appendices**

**Appendix 1** – Bournemouth Town Centre BID Area

**Appendix 2** - Council owned sites

**Appendix 3** - Bournemouth Town Centre BID Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)