

LONDON BIDs HANDBOOK

ABC approach to setting up and running a Business Improvement District in London

The means

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

LONDON
ENTERPRISE PANEL

Summary

HOW DO BIDS WORK?

- Businesses identify the area and the issues
- A BID Proposal is drawn up
- The proposed programme of services should clearly be additional to those set out in a Baseline Services Agreement
- Non-domestic ratepayers vote on the BID Proposal in a postal ballot conducted by the local authority
- The vote must meet two tests – the ‘dual key majority’
- After a yes ballot the levy is mandatory on all defined ratepayers
- After five years a BID holds a renewal ballot based on a further proposal

DEVELOPING A BID

- BID proposer consulting with stakeholders including businesses and the local authority to assess and secure support and to agree local needs and priorities
- Establishing governance, control and leadership arrangements
- Scoping the area, assessing feasibility, defining the levy payers and how the levy will be calculated
- Developing a prospectus and business plan and canvassing support
- Balloting potential levy payers
- Delivering the programme, reviewing and developing the BID

TOWARDS THE BID BALLOT

- Identify and mobilise likely ‘yes’ voters during the ballot period
- Seek one-to-one meetings with voters where possible
- Split businesses between ‘BID account managers’ ensuring that they are adequately trained
- Record the outcomes of meetings in detail on the CRM database

BUILDING ON A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME

- Establishing the BID company and forming the board and incorporation
- Finalising the billing arrangements
- Communicating the result – the early phases of the communication strategy
- Mobilising for quick wins – projects and services
- Establishing financial and administrative policies and systems
- Assembling the team
- Understanding the area
- Keeping track of performance
- Developing marketing
- Keep asking questions

IMAGES

- 1 Canvey Street, Bankside
- 2 The Old Vic, Waterloo
- 3 Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens

- 4 Somerset House
- 5 55 Baker Street
- 6 Streatham High Road



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IMAGE
Bankside



Introduction

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a business-led organisation in a defined geographical area where local businesses have voted to invest collectively to improve their environment.

BIDs are funded by a mandatory levy on all eligible businesses following a successful ballot. These member businesses then help set the spending priorities for the organisation, providing additional or improved services in the BID area such as extra safety, cleaning, the environment and promotion.

London BIDs Handbook is a guide for businesses and local authorities that are considering, or have decided, to set up a Business Improvement District. It should be read in conjunction with the UK BID regulations (Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 and The Business Improvement Districts (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013) and aims to illustrate how the regulations work in practice by setting out a practical step-by-step guide to each stage, from scoping and feasibility to writing the Proposal and campaigning for a successful ballot.

The handbook brings a degree of certainty to the process of developing a BID, which can take up to two years and requires a range of skills and resources at different stages. It has been informed by experience of BIDs across London and the rest of the country, while ultimately each BID must be a response to local needs and priorities.

The ways in which BIDs develop and the breadth and sophistication of what they offer is constantly evolving. It is our intention to review the content bi-annually and update where necessary. We would greatly welcome feedback from users on suggestions for improvement, reports of good practice that could be captured and highlighting areas where further guidance or clarification would have been helpful. Please send any comments to me at the address below.

Finally I would like to thank those at the Welsh Government, who originally commissioned a BIDs Handbook, and those at GLA who were involved with us in its modification, for their support and encouragement.



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SECTION ONE

What are Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)?

A Business Improvement District is a legally and geographically defined partnership for area improvement and service delivery, funded by the levy-paying businesses within an agreed boundary. It is managed and operated by a BID Company – usually a non-profit company run by and for its members.



IMAGES

1 More London, London Bridge

2 Camden Town

3 Victoria



1.1
What are the business benefits of BIDs?
An ABC ...

An accountable, proactive and flexible approach

Businesses set priorities for local investment to be used only in the place where they do business

Bringing broader regeneration benefits

BIDs can bring regeneration benefits locally for the whole community and regionally for the wider economy by attracting additional funding – such as public realm and infrastructure improvements – and increasing footfall and staff retention through place promotion and economic development

Complementary benefits of partnership

Partnership working can bring benefits like saving businesses money by joint procurement, reducing crime, building local networks and supporting local supply chains, and giving businesses a stronger voice with their local council, Transport for London and the Police

1.2
How do BIDs work?
The process in a nutshell:

Identifying the area and the issues

Businesses – usually with the help of consultants or local authority officers – identify the area and the issues

BID Proposal

A BID Proposal is drawn up that includes delivery guarantees, performance indicators and management structure

Baseline Services Agreement

The proposed programme of services should clearly be additional to those provided by the local authority and not used to replace existing public sector services. This will be set out in a Baseline Services Agreement

Postal Ballot

Non-domestic ratepayers (who will be paying the BID levy), vote on the BID Proposal in a postal ballot conducted by the local authority

Dual Key Majority

To be successful the vote must meet two tests, known as a 'dual key majority': more than 50% of votes cast must be in favour of the BID and the 'yes' vote must represent more than 50% of the aggregate rateable value of votes cast

Mandatory Levy

Following a successful ballot the levy becomes mandatory on all defined ratepayers. Any necessary enforcement of payment is undertaken in the same way as it is for business rates

Renewal Ballot

A BID's mandate is for a maximum of five years: a BID wishing to continue beyond that must reaffirm its mandate through a renewal ballot, based on a further proposal.

1.3 How are BIDs paid for?

Some funding definitions:

Hereditament

the business unit on which non-domestic rates are calculated – there may be more than one business in a building, and vice versa

BID levy

income collected from the qualifying hereditaments ('levy payers')

BID levy multiplier

the levy is calculated by applying a percentage multiplier, usually set between about 1% and 2% of rateable value. Most BIDs have a provision that allows an increase in the levy each year in line with inflation

BID threshold

a level of rateable value below which hereditaments do not qualify to pay the levy. This avoids very small businesses being required to pay small sums of money that do not cover the cost of collection

Upper threshold or cap

introducing an upper limit on payment can help ensure the support of large occupiers who would, if the full proportion of rateable value were charged, face much higher levy bills than they would be prepared to support at ballot

Levy discounts

Some UK BIDs give discounts on the levy to members including charities and shopping centre tenants

Voluntary contributions

some landlords and larger local companies choose to make direct voluntary contributions to the BID. Additional income can also come from indirect funding such as sponsorship, public realm and infrastructure improvements.

Billing authority

the local authority is responsible for collecting the BID Levy and administering the BID Revenue Account that funds the operation of the BID

Collection charge

BID Regulations allow for a reasonable charge to be made by local authorities for collecting the BID levy and this should be set out in an operating agreement. However, up to a third of local authorities do not charge for collection and see the service as part of their contribution to the BID

Core costs

these will be scrutinised carefully by levy payers: guidelines recommend that these are below 17%, with 2-4% provision for contingencies

Following a successful ballot, BIDs are entitled to collect a levy from commercial occupiers within the defined BID area.

The levy sum for each business is based on the non-domestic (business) rates payable for each business based on its rateable premises, or 'hereditament'. In the UK it is the business ratepayer that pays the levy – that is the occupier of the property, not the property owner.

Payment of the levy is mandatory and legally enforceable. The money raised may be used to leverage other funds, in addition to the levy total, but the BID levy usually remains the primary revenue source that funds BID activities.

A realistic expectation on timescale

From first discussions to getting to ballot may take 18 months to two years – depending on the level of funding, support and staff resource; however, a pre-existing partnership already working with the local authority could mean that 14-18 months will be enough.

In this handbook the stages leading to a ballot are laid out sequentially, but in reality several steps can be undertaken simultaneously.

Some businesses may ask how paying more in a time of austerity can help.

Most businesses recognise that there are a number of factors affecting their trade over which they would normally have no control. These might include:

- Customer perceptions of the area
- Parking policy
- Street management
- Vacant units
- A lack of promotional opportunities

BIDs can help provide that certainty and provide a financial mechanism to enable the business community to act effectively.

The BID charge will only be levied on businesses over an agreed rateable value and usually certain categories of business will be exempt.

IMAGE

Better Bankside visioning event



1.4 Where are BIDs working?

The introduction of BIDs in legislation

Business Improvement Districts began in Canada, the United States and South Africa and were introduced to the UK in the Local Government Act 2003. This was followed in September 2004 by the publication of BIDs Regulations for England and in May 2005 for Wales. In Scotland, BIDs came into force in April 2007 following legislation the previous year. In Northern Ireland BIDs legislation is underway with pilot BIDs selected in 2014.

i. Early experience across England

2014 marks the first 10 years of BIDs in Britain. The first official BID in England was Kingston First, which went to ballot in December 2004 and went live on 1 January 2005 – the earliest date allowed by the legislation – and since then the take-up nationally has been impressive. There were more than 130 BIDs in operation by May 2013, with 32 established in 2012 alone. In a clear sign of their success more and more BIDs have now passed a renewal ballot for a second term. As BIDs are established in the more ‘obvious’ town and city centre locations, BIDs in England are also now appearing in secondary retail locations, in business parks and in industrial estates.

A growing success story

So far in the UK most BIDs that have sought a second term at re-ballot have been successful – with an increase in both turn out and ‘yes’ votes. And those few already seeking a third term have seen even higher support – see Section Three.

ii. BIDs in London

Recent research for the GLA shows that BID areas in London raise a total annual levy for local investment of £20 million, contain 11% of London’s employees, contain almost 8% of London’s firms and generate 8% of London’s business turnover. The Mayor set a target of 50 BIDs for the capital by 2016 and in 2013 the GLA New Business Improvement Districts Programme launched grant

funding to support high streets, industrial estates and city centre localities that want to set up a new BID and are no further than 12 months away from a ballot.

Although Kingstonfirst was the earliest BID there had been an earlier pilot project in central London. From 2001 the Circle Initiative programme led by Central London Partnership (CLP) was funded through the Single Regeneration Budget from the London Development Agency (LDA) to support five pilot BIDs in London with the aim of raising standards of management and maintenance of the public realm, reducing crime, improving public transport, building commercial activity and local jobs. The five partnerships of Better Bankside, Waterloo Quarter, inmidtown, Paddington BID and Heart of London were funded over a five-year period from 2001.

London ranging alphabetically from Angel to Wimbledon, in size from the UK’s smallest to the largest, and size from the UK’s smallest to the largest, and in focus from commercial BIDs in inner London to industrial parks in the outer boroughs.

As well as the country’s first BID, London has some of the newest, with Northbank, inStreatham, Brixton and Twickenham among the most recent. Although this variety of experiences makes it difficult to generalise about BIDs across the capital, three distinctive types of BID are particularly prevalent in London – commercial, retail or industrial –together with others that could become more important in future.

Whatever their primary focus, many of the services delivered are common to most BIDs, including safety and security, area marketing and promotion, business support and cleanliness. Activities and services that BIDs are increasingly moving into include networking, visioning, providing business intelligence such as footfall data and corporate social responsibility.

IMAGE
Oxford Street



Business improvement districts in London (April 2014)

Source: Greater London Authority

BIDs	Established	Websites
Angel	2007	www.angelaim.org
Argall Avenue	2008	www.argallbid.co.uk
Baker Street Quarter	2013	www.bakerstreetquarter.co.uk
Better Bankside	2005	www.betterbankside.co.uk
Bayswater BID	2010	www.bayswater-village.com
Brixton BID	2014	www.brixtonbid.co.uk
Camden Town Unlimited	2006	www.camdentownunlimited.com
Croydon BID	2007	www.croydonbid.com
E11	2008	www.e11bid.co.uk
Ealing Broadway	2006	www.ealingshoplocal.co.uk
Garratt Business Park	2009	www.arrattbusinesspark.com
Hainault Business Park	2006	www.hainaultbusinesspark.com
Hammersmith London	2006	www.hammersmithlondon.co.uk
Harrow Town Centre	2014	www.ha1bid.co.uk
Heart of London Business Alliance	2005	www.heartoflondonbid.co.uk
Ilford	2009	www.inilford.com
inmidtown (previously inholborn)	2005	www.inmidtown.org
inStreatham	2013	www.instreatham.com
Kimpton Industrial Estate	2009	www.kippabidltd.co.uk
Kingston First	2005	www.kingstonfirst.co.uk
London Riverside	2007	www.londonriversidebid.co.uk
New Addington	2013	www.cpbpbid.co.uk
New West End Company	2005	www.newwestend.com
Northbank	2014	www.thenorthbank.org
Orpington 1st	2013	www.orpington1st.co.uk
Paddington	2005	www.paddingtonbid.co.uk
Streatham BID	2013	www.instreatham.com
Successful Sutton	2012	www.successfulsutton.co.uk
Team London Bridge	2006	www.teamlondonbridge.co.uk
The Fitzrovia Partnership	2012	www.fitzroviaw1.com
Twickenham	2014	www.timefortwickenham.co.uk
Vauxhall One	2012	www.vauxhallone.co.uk
Victoria	2009	www.victoriabid.co.uk
Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance	2006	www.waterlooquarter.org
West Ealing	2014	www.westealingbid.co.uk
Willow Lane	2009	www.willowlane.org.uk
Wimbledon	2012	www.lovwimbledon.org

1.5 Different types of BIDs

i. Commercial focus – inner London

BIDs in central London are usually more commercial – though this can include retail – in character. Typically their programmes will also include activities of interest to their commercial members, such as business networking, training and joint purchasing arrangements, but also participation in substantial partnerships with external agencies that leverage significant additional income and give them an important advocacy role through programmes such as urban greening, cultural activities and regeneration. BID levy income will on average be higher than elsewhere, and they will typically have more board representatives from larger companies than from SMEs.

ii. Retail focus – outer London

These ‘high street’ focused BIDs are typically found in lower density areas of outer London although they vary in size both in terms of area and levy income. Focused as they are primarily upon retail activity, their programmes deliver services that support this, from cleaning and security to business promotion and collective purchasing.

iii. Industrial Bids

All London’s industrial estates BIDs are located in outer London and tend to be smaller and more focused than most, reflected in some very high approval ratings, especially at rebalot.

iv. Tourism BIDs or TBIDs

TBIDs were pioneered in the USA in the 1990s to support tourism at a specific destination rather than all of the businesses in that area, with programmes focusing on increasing visitor numbers, visitor spend, length of stay and enhancing visitor experience, as well as capital investment on infrastructure projects. They differ from conventional BIDs as the levy is determined (e.g. on footfall or sales) and the way levy payers are defined (e.g. only those providing certain services, or involved in tourism) and in practice this can be more difficult than the more transparent definition by geographical boundary. There is also a potential loss of benefit to the wider neighbourhood as the BID focuses on promoting these businesses without the wider sense of community that is fundamental to many successful BIDs.

v. Property owner BIDs

In 2013 DCLG consulted on Government proposals to formalise the role in BIDs of property owners who are not ratepayers. As this relies on a Business Rates Supplement being levied, which only happens in London, it is more relevant to London than the rest of the country. At present the Government considers that proposers of property owner Business Improvement Districts should determine locally who should be liable for the levy, allowing local discretion and flexibility in the creation of property owner Business Improvement Districts. Further guidance on this will accompany any future legislation.

1.5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF BIDS

Inner and Outer London BIDs



One of two BIDs on the riverside in Southwark, Team London Bridge BID is centred on a rapidly transforming business and transport hub with some major commercial and healthcare occupiers as well as smaller businesses in the narrower streets to the south of the Shard and London Bridge Station.

The redevelopment of the station is one of the main focuses for the BID's work on place branding and supporting opportunities for small, creative businesses alongside the internationally-known companies based there. At the time of writing, the BID has 406 hereditaments, a levy of 1.05% and a levy income of £820,000. As well as a Green Business Network the BID has recently set up a Creative Network that brings an opportunity for business members to meet with some of the many cultural organisations in the area. The BID also has well-developed CSR, urban greening and design initiatives alongside well-established and popular services such as a regular audit and action taken on local environmental problems.



The Ealing Broadway BID evolved from a long-established town centre initiative, Ealing Centre Partnership was one of the 22 areas in the ATCM National BID pilot.

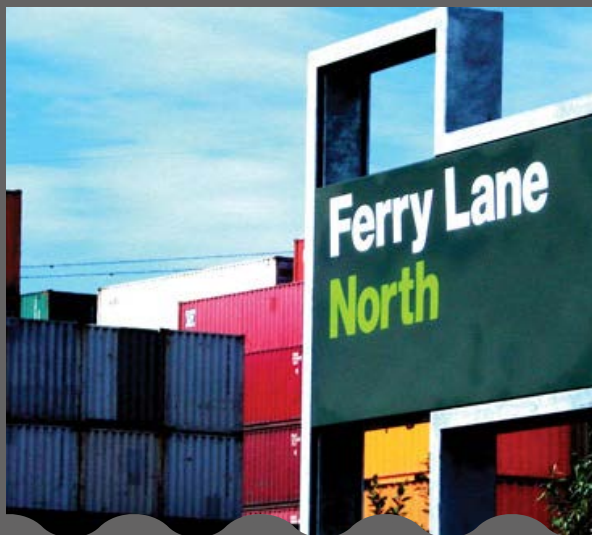
The BID has 450 hereditaments, a levy rate of 1.07% and a levy income of £310,000. There was a turnout of 40% at its first renewal ballot in 2011 of which 68% voted yes by number, representing 60% by rateable value. There is an overall focus on marketing, business cost reduction and networking: the BID's Business Made Simple website directs local businesses to core services including recycling, pest control, Storenet/Nitenet radio and Pubwatch, while the Ealing Shop Local website promotes marketing, events and a new local loyalty card, Make it Ealing.

IMAGES

- 1 Creative Network
- 2 Oak Road, Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre

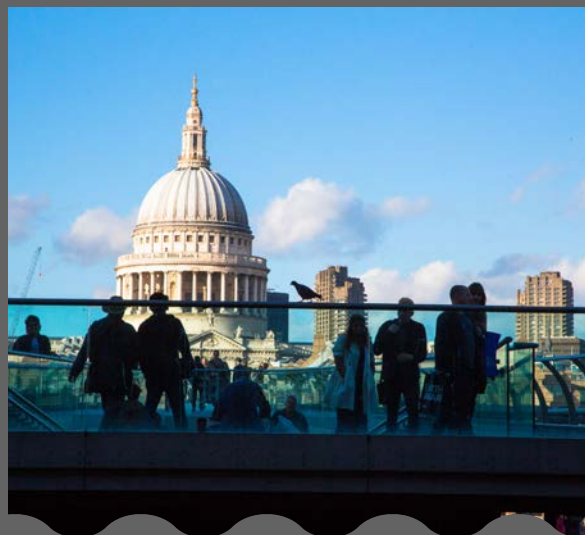
1.5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF BIDS

Industrial and Tourism BIDs



London Riverside BID at Rainham in London Borough of Havering is the third largest industrial BID nationwide with 300 member businesses and a levy income of £140,000.

It was set up in 2007 as a not-for-profit company by a group of local businesses previously working together as FLAG (Ferry Lane Action Group) and in March 2012 the BID successfully passed its first renewal ballot with a turnout of 46%, 72% voting in favour by number and 85% by rateable value. London Riverside has a levy rate of 1% and focuses on priorities of safe clean and secure, focusing on security, public realm improvements and promoting businesses in the BID area with an online Business Directory. The installation and monitoring of CCTV and ANPR cameras by the BID has seen a dramatic decline in crime and fly tipping in the area.



Although not TBIDS, many central London BIDs include a significant element of cultural and area promotion in their wider programmes.

Examples include Better Bankside's Visit Bankside website and What's On newsletter; Team London Bridge's Discover London Bridge map guide and place identity initiative and Vauxhall One's Vauxhall Village brand. Each BID also promotes a local shopping card (Buzz, Deal card and Perk card respectively) and – together with South Bank Employers Group – they have developed the Riverside London App.

IMAGES

- 1 Ferry Lane North
- 2 Millennium Bridge, Bankside

1.6 How do BID's evolve?

Each BID Proposal will of course be grounded in priorities for local spending, but even at the outset it can be inspiring to have an understanding of how longer-established BID's are developing across London, to help to build a longer-term vision of possibilities for the future.

i. Developing the programme

In the UK most BID's begin by focusing on delivering core services that will improve the local trading environment such as the 'safe and clean' priorities that many businesses want to focus on at the beginning. Evidence from across London and the UK shows that there is usually a progressive extension in the role of the BID from this initial 'janitorial' focus and getting operational aspects working effectively, towards a more strategic, ambitious approach in the second and third terms.

The nature of developments in the programme will depend on the nature of the area, and a better understanding of the needs of its membership. For places that have a largely retail focus the main priority of driving footfall and trade will always remain important, whereas more commercially mixed areas may find their board keen to develop a broader programme, with services that reflect their own corporate objectives of staff satisfaction and retention.

The predictable and sustainable nature of the BID levy income will also help to give confidence to potential partners and funders and it will also become apparent where the BID itself can best add value and what is better left to partners and other stakeholders to deliver.

As BID's mature, member businesses will often expect them to articulate an ambitious vision for the area and renewing BID's in particular are increasingly developing a focus on place marketing and place management. Many of the themes and programmes delivered by BID's are building on the growing lessons of marketing a place based on building on a sense of place and capitalizing on local distinctiveness, and are making the most of new technology for e-marketing, apps and social media.

BID's are in a good position to be able to innovate and be creative due to their independence. The level of risk taking will depend on the Board and local circumstances.

Many BID's are now delivering comprehensive programmes, often with other partners, to:

- improve the public realm
- tackle congestion and air quality
- make the best of development opportunities
- increase the profile of their town and city centres
- and improve the quality of life for the people who use the place

ii. Extending the area

The renewal ballot is also an opportunity to consider adjustments to the BID boundary, and several London BID's have extended into new streets. This is explored more fully in the section Redrawing the BID boundaries on page X.

1.6 HOW DO BIDS EVOLVE?

Evolving BIDs

A BID's purpose is to make an area better for doing business, but this is not its only role. The challenges towns and cities face are complex and changing. In response, BIDs are developing multi-faceted programmes.

As well as developing its original programme of services including a team of community wardens, pubwatch, greening and recycling, Better Bankside, in operation since 2005, has also developed support for a number of more strategic partnership initiatives including a public realm partnership that helps coordinate the spending of S106 monies called Bankside Urban Forest; working with an independent production company to deliver MERGE, an annual arts festival; jointly establishing a construction Logistics Group with a communications strategy, dbrief, to keep local businesses and residents updated on new developments in the area; working extensively with non-member businesses through its Business Club and getting involved in neighbourhood planning. Several of these have involved a positive working relationship with the local authority, Southwark Council.

Although Camden Town Unlimited might be seen primarily as a retail or High Street focused BID, it is delivering innovative commercial-focused initiatives, particularly support for business startups through its hub space, Collective. As well as providing attractive and affordable space for new businesses, the BID also supports delivery of targeted training, for example on computer programming or coding.

IMAGES

- 1 Flat Iron Square, Bankside
- 2 159 Camden High Street



SECTION TWO

Developing a BID

The development of any BID will follow the same broad stages:

- 1 **BID proposer consulting with stakeholders including businesses and the local authority to assess and secure support and to agree local needs and priorities**
- 2 **Establishing governance, control and leadership arrangements**
- 3 **Scoping the area, assessing feasibility, defining the levy payers and how the levy will be calculated**
- 4 **Developing a prospectus and business plan and canvassing support**
- 5 **Balloting potential levy payers**
- 6 **Delivering the programme, reviewing and developing the BID**



2.1 Who starts the process?

The BID proposer can be any non-domestic ratepayer, property owner, local authority or other key stakeholder with an interest in the BID area, but in reality the idea for a BID will usually come from an existing partnership or group of businesses such as a Town Centre Management group, Chamber of Commerce or business forum, or a Destination Management Organisation In the case of a TBID. Having an established partnership with a track record of delivery and a common purpose can certainly help when developing and promoting a BID.

Even though the ballot may seem a long way off, the team needs to be on a campaign footing from the outset – always working towards the objective of a ‘yes’ vote.

To help track progress, performance measurement needs to be fully considered from the start and prospective BIDs need to establish their baseline from day one.

IMAGE
Visioning event, Vauxhall One

2.2 The role of the local authority

The local authority may well be involved from the earliest stages, with an officer from regeneration or economic development sitting on the steering group, and there are benefits to this.

As well as being a source of support and funding and a statutory consultee for consultation, the local authority is a key partner at several specific stages in developing the BID:

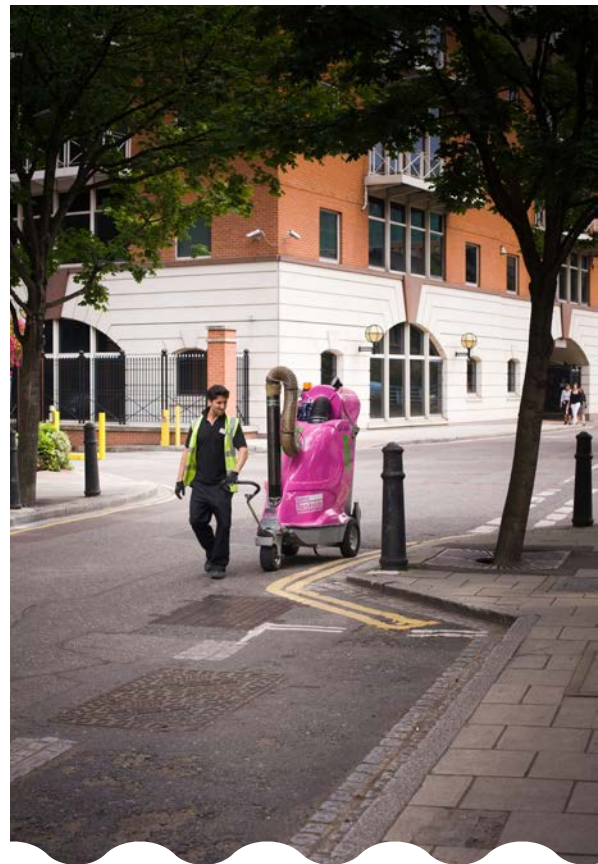
- Arranging and paying for the ballot
- Collecting the levy
- Providing many of the services in the baseline agreement
- Ensuring the BID proposal is aligned with local authority policies and that officers are aware of the level of support expected from them

The relationship between the local authority, existing town and city centre management and a new BID therefore needs to be carefully thought through and preferably stated in a document such as a memorandum of understanding. This should be reviewed regularly as the process develops. It is important to ensure the support of local ward councillors as well as a commitment at senior officer level.

Most local authorities will appreciate the degree of flexibility that the BID can bring and recognise that the BID and council acting in consort can be a powerful combination. Ideally councils will see the BID as the natural conduit through which to engage business providing the BID board encompasses the range of levels and interests that make up local businesses. Equally, businesses should consider the BID to be their major channel of communication with the council.

IMAGE

The Glutton, Better Bankside



2.3 Convening an effective steering group

Developing good corporate governance is crucial to the successful development of the BID. The key is to engage the right blend of talent, local understanding and representation from different sectors and also from different parts of the area.

Engaging early with ‘anchor’ organisations is also critical both to be members of the BID steering group and to offer mentoring support. The make-up of the steering group should reflect the range of businesses in the BID area to ensure a representative body from the outset and is likely to include large and small businesses, as well as residents, elected Council member and representatives of significant local organisations and strategic agencies.

Building the partnership is an on-going activity – you need to ensure that the steering group’s capacity develops as the BID progresses, as well as engaging with new businesses beyond those who are easier to convince.



Governance checklist

- develop a set of policies governing decision-making, financial management and procurement
- sub-groups and working parties allow a high proportion of the BID’s member businesses to participate in the governance process

Everyone in the governance structure, outside the staff team, is usually unpaid. There is an expectation that directors commit themselves to the process and if they are unable to do so should stand down. While there may be a mixture of motivations for serving on the board, they usually include a keen interest in the place and a recognition of the opportunity BID resources provide to get things done. Other members of the steering group could include:

i. Local residents

In many places the growing numbers of residents living in urban centres can be a key consideration – and a valuable asset. There is nothing to preclude resident involvement in the governance structure and indeed everything to recommend it, although it wouldn’t be appropriate for a resident to chair the board.

ii. Landowners and developers

Landowners, developers and property owners can also be valuable members of a board. Although there was a commitment made in 2004 to explore legislation regarding BID membership by property owners, there has been little progress so far in drafting any statutory involvement. There are already many BIDs in which they have a voluntary involvement. Where physical regeneration and development are likely, they would be particularly important voices on the board.

iii. Third sector and other stakeholders

Police in particular are a key partner for many BIDs and should be involved from the outset. Third sector organisations can bring a breadth and depth of skills, as well as local knowledge and networks to the BID partnership. Engaging with the third sector can help to inform the delivery of a range of services that the BID board might identify including local employment, volunteering opportunities for employees and helping to support active, engaged communities. They are also invaluable in helping to reach disadvantaged or excluded groups, including young people, older people, disabled people and black and minority ethnic groups.

2.4 Accessing and analysing the ratings data

Once the decision has made to explore feasibility, the BID proposer is entitled to see ratings data from the Local Authority for all hereditaments.

✓ Ratings checklist:

- Secure up-to-date ratings data (2010 list) and undertake a comprehensive data analysis exercise to ensure that the list of eligible properties from the business rates team is as accurate as possible. This will involve a walk through and physical check
- If possible work with the local authority's GIS mapping team to check possible BID areas are reviewed and mapped into the Council's systems
- Compile a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database based on the ratings list so that local contacts can be added later – this should also be capable of recording all contact with each business (see following section on CRM). This would entail complying with the legislation that relates to data protection.
- The business rates list includes information on mandatory and discretionary discounts, as well as empty properties, as the BID may choose to offer different levy rates in these instances.

IMAGE
Waitrose, West Ealing branch

2.5 Scoping: Consultation with local business

The need for a BID rather than any other form of partnership needs to be established early on.

Once the ratings data has shown the likely financial prospect for a BID, assess how much value a BID will have over other forms of place management – such as a development trust or town centre management partnership – considering the process involved in establishing it.

This scoping period is an essential opportunity to establish the extent of a real business need, commitment and enthusiasm for a BID. As more BIDs are set up the level of knowledge about them is rising across London, especially among multiple retailers and groups. However, much work will still be needed to engage with smaller businesses and with the local managers of multiples.

In reality, the scale of this stage of scoping consultation will depend on the resources available: time and budget will determine the number of people that can be spoken to.



Scoping and Consultation

✓ Scoping checklist

- Is there a critical mass of private sector support and leadership for the idea?
- Are the businesses involved representative, both in terms of the size and types of businesses?
- Is there wider engagement with the Council and other stakeholders, especially at leadership level?
- What are the major issues?
- How would a BID add value?
- What is the likelihood of positive ballot result?

✓ Consultation checklist

- Set up a contacts database from the NNDR lists with all businesses in the target area. Include any additional relevant information, e.g. from existing Town Centre Management
- Identify the list of 'target' businesses for the survey; try to include
 - those who would be likely to pay more than say £1,000 in annual levy if the rate was set at 1% of rateable value
 - some of the smallest businesses
 - businesses from each sub-area
 - businesses across the spread of key sectors
 - landowners – although they will not pay the levy (unless their properties are empty) they may sit on a future BID board and make voluntary contributions for specific projects
- Design the survey to be used in the business consultation – a mix of structured questions (for analysis) plus wider discussion
 - Set up an online survey and publicise the link through council and other mailing lists
 - Identify local 'talent' to target for core group
 - Set up core group to test viability and act as local advocates
 - Focus on a few local businesses to gauge support and identify the major issues
 - Think about identifying the possible levels of any threshold
 - Ensure that all businesses consulted receive feedback from the consultation
 - Ensure interviewees are senior enough to give a reliable view on behalf of their companies
 - Ensure adequate representation from all sectors, including night time economy operators
 - Consider other forms of partnerships, perhaps relying on voluntary funding contributions

IMAGES

- 1 Property developer
- 2 Community Support Officer
- 3 Branch manager

- 4 Small business
- 5 Job Centre
- 6 Resident



2.6 Assessing Feasibility – determining the BID area boundary

There are several considerations to make in designating the BID boundary.

As well as questions of geography – such as whether existing political, physical or infrastructure boundaries need to be taken into account – the most important question for the BID is to determine the feasibility of a BID area. This means finding the right balance between:

- Achieving financial sustainability
- Winning the ballot
- Delivering an effective programme of improvements

Redrawing the BID boundaries: Re-ballot provides an opportunity to rethink both the programme and area and most BIDs have investigated extending their boundaries, in which case the same analysis of the proposed zones should take place.

Several London BIDs have extended their area, though none has reduced its size. Inmidtown significantly increased its size at re-ballot. At Heart of London the decision was taken to form the extension area into a separate BID, with the services being managed and delivered by the same management company.

2.7 Billing decisions

Lump sum or phased?

It is up to the BID Proposers to determine how the levy is to be paid. The levy may be paid in a lump sum, at the beginning of each year of the BID or at certain agreed time intervals. In most cases the levy will be a fairly small amount of money and it will be more practical and cost effective to have the money paid in a lump sum. Where payment is phased, the possible impact on revenue streams and project funding should be taken into account.

The levy is collected by the local authority and then paid in full to the BID partnership. The administration cost of this is for discussion. If the local authority covers all or part of the costs as an in kind contribution to the BID this should be included as match funding in the business plan.

All of the top 10 highest unit costs are in London (all £60 per unit or above) and only three London BIDs quote no collection charge. Four of the five highest collection charges are in Westminster City Council and one is in the London Borough of Lambeth.

- Victoria £112 per unit
- Vauxhall One (Lambeth) £99 per unit
- Heart of London Piccadilly & St James £91 per unit
- New West End Company £90 per unit
- Heart of London Leicester Square to Piccadilly Circus £90 per unit

Figures from British BIDs Nationwide BID Survey 2013. Detailed guidance on the BID revenue account is given in Schedule 3 and on administration, collection and recovery of the BID levy is given in Schedule 4 of the BID Regulations.

BID Boundary

There are no limitations on how large or small a BID can be. Already the scope in the UK is vast, based both on number of hereditaments and the levy income. However it is not just a matter of the scale of the place itself – some city centres are covered by one large BID (e.g. Dublin, Edinburgh), while others are covered by a number of different BIDs (e.g. Birmingham and of course London).

London has some of the smallest BIDs by number of hereditaments as well as the largest by rateable value.

In 2013 the 10 UK BIDs with 200 or fewer hereditaments included Baker Street and New Addington, the smallest at 66, which also has the smallest annual BID levy at £22,400.

In 2013 five of the seven BIDs with annual levy incomes over £1,000,000 were in London:

- £2, 814,00 New West End Company
- £2,185,000 inmidtown
- £1.214,102 Victoria
- £1,118,000 Better Bankside
- £1,005,000 Croydon

In addition the two central London BIDs managed by Heart of London had an aggregate income of £1,548,000. Total incomes can be substantially more. Figures from British BIDs Nationwide BID Survey 2013

IMAGES

- 1 Baker Street
- 2 Centrale, Croydon



2.8 Developing the Programme

The list of projects and services that could potentially be included in a BID programme is very long but the key consideration in getting the right mix of projects and services is understanding the nature of challenges confronting the centre and the priorities that the businesses affected give to them. There may be a wide spread of issues and views.

✓ Programme Checklist

- Develop a programme that is responsive to the needs of the BID's membership
- Evidence clear value for money in the BID proposition

Successful BIDs are continually innovating – trialling new products and services and reviewing the longer running ones to ensure that the desired impact is being achieved and they continue to win the approval of BID members.

✓ Visioning event checklist

- Prepare a database of businesses and plan an inclusive consultation event
- Arrange for the event to be hosted in a comfortable, well-known local venue
- Participants should reflect on the key themes of the proposed BID business plan in small groups to see if aspects need refining

2.9 Calculating the budget and writing the business plan

BID levy income is not a grant or a donation; it is a payment for services set out in the BID Proposal. Businesses make a commercial decision about whether they wish to access those services and hence support the Proposal. As long as those services remain in demand, meeting the needs of the businesses involved, the levy will continue.

Collecting the levy

The usual way for BIDs across the UK to collect the BID levy is through the local authority's Business Rates collection mechanism. While some councils treat the cost of collection as a contribution to the BID and don't make a charge, most do, with an average of £35 per business. The BID levy is compulsory and enforcement is undertaken in the same way as it would be for NNDR. Collection rates are therefore high – as high as 90% or more.

Factoring in Inflation

Some BIDs make provision within their arrangements for an annual inflation factor to be added to their BID levy multiplier – otherwise the total collected is only adjusted by properties coming in or going out of rating. This multiplier can be linked to Retail Price Index, Consumer Price Index or the increase in the annual 'multiplier' by which business rates are calculated. Its implementation should be the subject of an annual board debate.



The need for the BID should be clearly demonstrated through vigorous research and consultation, both at head office and local business level. Fundamentally most businesses will only vote for a BID if it has a positive impact on their bottom line. As BIDs evolve, expectations in the commercial sector are growing. Businesses are looking for a measurable improvement in the performance of their firm or location. National multiples are setting policies for BID support and carefully assessing BID proposals and organisations like the British Retail Consortium (BRC) have published their own criteria for supporting a BID.

Nationally

- 88% of levy rates are 2% or less
- Typical number of hereditaments is between 300 and 600
- 49% of BIDs do not provide a charity discount
- Levy incomes range from £22,400 to £2, 814, 000 (both London)
- 38% of BIDs report no collection charge; 35% are charged more than the acceptable industry criteria of £35 per unit.

London BIDs in numbers

- 100% of London BID levy rates are 2% or less
- 81% of London levy rates are 1.5% or below
- Average number of hereditaments is 360
- Levy incomes range from £20,000 to £3,410,000 (both London)
- Average turnout for ballot is 47.9%
- Average vote in favour of London BIDs is 77.9%

The average levy income across London's BIDs is £638,000 per annum. Two London BIDs, Hammersmith and Inmidtown, have a levy rate of less than 1%. Both are second term BIDs that reduced their levy rate at ballot. Figures from The Means UK Average BID model 2013

IMAGE

Lyric Square, Hammersmith

2.10 Making the decision to proceed to ballot

This is the critical 'go ahead' point – the point at which the BID Proposer takes stock of what has been achieved so far and the steering group takes the decision on whether to proceed to ballot, based on the level of support. This decision triggers a number of actions for the BID Proposer.

✓ Ballot decision checklist

- Notify the Government of the intention of holding a BID ballot
- Make arrangements with the Council's electoral services officers (see 'Agreeing Arrangements for the poll', below)
- Agree and finalise the BID Proposal
- Seek approval for the BID Proposal from the local authority
- Publish the BID Proposal

To give more substance ahead of the ballot, the steering group could at this stage further formalise its structure – e.g. be able to elect its own officers and have a form of membership. It is essential now to start to create a stronger identity – a brand that is recognisably the BID's and robust enough to underpin the campaign to the ballot.

IMAGE

South Bank BID proposal launch event



2.11 The BID Proposal

The BID Proposal is both a manifesto and a legal document. The BID Regulations require that it is made up of the following elements:

- a statement of the works or services to be provided, the name of who will provide them (the name of the BID body or local authority BID body) and the type of body the provider is (whether a local authority, a company under the control of the authority, a limited company or a partnership);
- a statement of the existing baseline services (if any) provided by the relevant billing authority or other public authority; [This would typically comprise a draft of the baseline agreement with the billing authority.]
- a description of the geographical area (including a map showing that area) in which the proposed BID arrangements are to have effect;
- a statement of whether all non-domestic ratepayers in the geographical area or a specified class of them are to be liable to the BID levy, an explanation of how the amount of the BID levy to be levied is to be calculated and an explanation of whether any of the costs incurred in developing the BID proposals, holding of the ballot or implementing the BID are to be recovered through the BID levy;
- a statement of the specified class of non-domestic rate payer (if any) for which and the level at which any relief from the BID levy is to apply; [This would typically specify whether any types of property will be excluded from the BID levy, whether any threshold will apply to the BID levy, whether the BID levy will reflect mandatory – 80% - and discretionary rate relief and whether the BID levy will be capped. The BID regulations do not require the BIDs to offer any exemptions.]

- a statement of whether the BID arrangements may be altered without an alteration ballot and, if so, which aspects of the BID arrangements may be altered in this way;
- a statement of the duration of the BID arrangements (also indicating the start date of the BID)
- a statement of the commencement date of the BID arrangements.

A BID may typically include the draft Operating Agreement with its BID Proposal, and also the Articles of Association of the Company that may take the BID forward in the event of a successful ballot. The Local Authority may veto the BID Proposal on two grounds only:

- If it conflicts with a policy formally adopted by and contained in a document published by the authority (whether or not the authority is under a statutory duty to prepare such document)
- If the BID levy imposes a significantly disproportionate financial burden on any person or class of persons and that burden is caused by the manipulation of the geographical area of the BID or by the structure of the BID levy.

In the interests of clarity, some BID Proposers choose to publish their Proposal in two parts – a short summary marketing document, typically of 12-16 pages, and a more comprehensive technical document.

While the first will be published in hard copy and distributed to all BID-eligible businesses, the second may remain on the BID website.

2.12 Formal approval

The Proposal documents must be sent to the local authority for approval before they can be published. The submission to the authority must also include:

- a summary of the consultation it has undertaken with those who are liable for the proposed BID levy
- the proposed business plan (including the estimated cash flow, an estimate of the predicted revenue to be generated and the predicted expenditure, the predicted budget over the duration of the BID arrangements and the contingency margin included in the budget)
- the financial management arrangements for the BID body, and the arrangements for periodically providing the relevant billing authority with information on the finances of the BID body [this may take the form of a draft Operating Agreement with the authority]
- a notice in writing requesting the relevant billing authority to instruct the ballot holder to hold a BID ballot in relation to the BID proposals
- information to show that the BID proposer has sufficient funds to meet the costs of the BID ballot

Ideally the Proposal should be designed and ready to be published immediately after approval by the Council.

2.13 Agreeing arrangements for the Ballot

The Local Authority's returning officer (with their Electoral Services team) is the BID ballot holder and administers the process.



Technical preparations for ballot checklist

- Agree timings
- Prepare the documents
- Agree the ballot process
- Identify any potential problems

Officers from the local authority will probably also find it useful to seek advice from colleagues at other councils who have already gone through the process.

The ballot runs for around a month, but can be longer. Turnouts for BID ballots usually compare favourably with those for local elections, with a current national average of 42% by number.

The Operating and Baseline Agreements

Operating Agreement

- Establishes the procedure for setting the BID Levy
- Confirms the basis upon which the Council or its agents will be responsible for collecting the BID Levy
- Sets out the enforcement mechanisms available for collection of the BID Levy
- Sets out the procedures for accounting and transference of the BID Levy
- Provides for the monitoring and review of the collection of the BID Levy
- Confirms the manner in which the Council's expenses incurred in collecting the BID Levy shall be paid

Baseline Agreement

To ensure that none of the BID levy is spent on subsidising or replacing existing expenditure by the statutory agencies within the BID area, a memorandum of understanding should be drawn up between the BID partnership and the local authority on the provision of baseline services in the BID area.

One of the key issues for businesses in deciding whether to support the BID or not is being assured that the council and other agencies will not reduce or remove the existing services.

Establishing the service baseline – which sets out the existing level of service provision from the local authority, police and other public agencies – allows the developing BID to ensure their proposals really do add value. The baseline makes clear to stakeholders that the BID will deliver added value by showing what they are already getting and what they will be getting in addition. This dialogue needs to start early as it can take a long time to gather and agree all the relevant information and baselines.

Key topics will include cleaning and waste management services, police and other security services.

At some stage in the future the local authority may need to change service provision and a strategy should be agreed for how the BID area will be treated when changes are being considered.

SECTION THREE

Towards the ballot, delivering the campaign

The object of the campaign is to identify and mobilise likely 'yes' voters during the ballot period. In this intensive period all businesses eligible for the ballot should be offered an interview and their voting intentions assessed.

The objectives here are to:

- Seek one-to-one meetings with voters where possible
- Split businesses between 'BID account managers' ensuring that they are adequately trained
- Record the outcomes of meetings in detail on the CRM database

Once the BID Proposal is in place and the local authority has approved it, the ballot campaign can start in earnest.

The outcomes of BID ballots are by no means foregone conclusions. The situation constantly changes but at the time of writing there have been a total of 272 BID ballots (including renewal ballots and re-ballots) throughout the UK since the introduction of the BID Regulations. The overall ballot success rate is 84%, with 91% success for renewal ballots.



It would seem that when BIDs are campaigning on their actual performance over their first term, they are twice as likely to be successful as when campaigning on a promise of what they will deliver. It should also be noted that although approval percentages show an increase, the percentage turnout often decreases for second and third ballots.

Three recent third-term ballots in London show exactly this pattern with lower turnouts but higher approval ratings:

- Heart of London
75% turnout, 92% by number and 93% by RV
- New West End Company
47% turnout, 85% by number and 89% by RV
- Paddington
51% turnout, 83% by number and 85% by RV

Figures from British BIDs Nationwide BID Survey 2013

An Away Day can be an effective way to put the team on a campaign footing – marking the start of this stage and developing a supportive yet 'competitive' environment within the team.

IMAGE

AGM, Team London Bridge

3.1 Establishing an independent identity

Getting the message across

When a BID develops from a pre-existing town or city centre partnership it is important to make clear to local businesses that the BID is not an arm of the local authority. In establishing its independence the BID should clearly show that what is being provided is additional to what businesses could expect from existing levels of service. Evidencing additionality to members is key – both that a service or project is needed to enhance the centre’s performance and that it will be the BID that develops and delivers it.

Identity checklist

- A compelling brand, including a distinctive domain name and logo, link to the Town Centre Partnership website
- Promotional leaflet as ‘start-up’ collateral; include the aspiration for the BID, the area map and outline of the programme.
- A clear website, including:
 - who we are (key contacts, BID proposer, steering group)
 - progress to date (scoping report, area map)
 - what we want to do (key programme headings and services)
 - what is a BID (explaining the mechanism)
 - how to get involved (upcoming dates for meetings and events and a link to the online consultation questionnaire)

The core of any successful campaign is personal meetings with the proprietors of as many of the voting businesses in the BID area as possible.

This can be challenging given that a BID will generally not be a high priority for most businesses. However it is essential to achieve interviews with at least 50% of the voters, and preferably up to 75%. It is important to bear the following in mind:

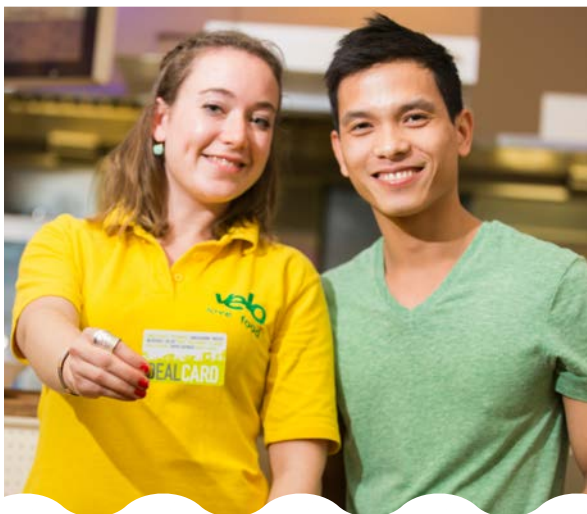
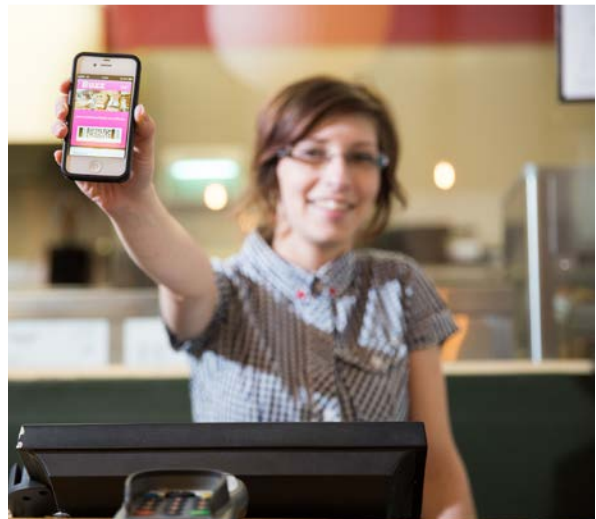
- Email is not particularly effective in BID campaigns, other than to distribute digital newsletters and event invitations – telephone calls or, in retail areas personal visits, are more successful. However it may take many calls or visits before securing the all-important interview.
- The ratings list rarely contains useful contact details for a potential local voter – except where smaller, independent businesses are concerned. The BID team will need to try to track down the key individual in each case.
- It is essential to engage with the most senior person available at any given business – ideally the person who will vote in the BID ballot and sign the cheque for the BID levy. In the retail environment, particularly with nationals/multiples, there is every chance that the local manager will neither vote nor pay the levy, and will defer to an area manager or a head office, with whom the would-be BID must engage. Trying to track down a voter within a head office can be a thankless business. British BIDs has a database of voter contacts within nationals, but there are still plenty of gaps.

IMAGES

- 1 Hanging Basket
- 2 Ambassador, Baker Street
- 3 Deal Card



- 4 Ambassador, Victoria
- 5 Digital Buzz Card
- 6 Ealing Broadway Reward Card



3.2 Consultation Materials

Developing the right material for the campaign period is essential. The key piece of collateral is of course the marketing version of the BID Proposal but other materials are useful:



Consultation materials checklist

- A succinct and attractive version that can be left after an interview
- A generic presentation
- Larger-scale promotional materials, such as posters and banners
- The published BID Proposal to be circulated to businesses
- A 'voter registration' phase would begin, seeking to identify the named voter for each eligible property
- The BID team would seek meetings with at least 50% of the BID constituency, securing indications of support in the ballot
- Where necessary escalate the conversation to a regional or national level within retail chains
- In the meantime there would be continual liaison with the Council's Electoral Services department, with a view to ensuring the efficient implementation of the ballot

3.3 Voter Registration

The BID Regulations leave considerable leeway for interpretation with respect to the 'list of persons entitled to vote'. Increasingly authorities take the view that the use of the ratings list as a voter list is likely to lead to a poor turnout in the ballot.

They are usually willing to work with the BID Proposer to conduct a canvassing exercise aimed at producing a list that is more fit-for-purpose. Where this has been permitted, the authority will typically require that the voter registration exercise concludes one to two weeks before the Notice of Ballot, at which point the voting list is closed.

Typically an authority will write to all the BID-eligible addresses on the ratings list and request details of the individual that should vote on behalf of each hereditament. A 30% response to such an exercise would be considered good.

3.4 Account management

A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database is a key tool for the BID campaign. As well as providing a valuable record of who to work on later in the campaign, it can also be useful for audit purposes after the ballot.

✓ Database checklist

The CRM needs to be shared by all involved in the BID campaign.

- Storing a variety of data including details of contact (calls, emails, letters, attendance at events)
- Mapping the stages through which each 'prospect' is taken
- Assigning an estimate of voting intention to each account – e.g. 'soft yes', 'hard yes', 'soft no', 'hard no', 'undecided', 'likely to abstain' and 'not known'.

In the BID ballot establishing a personal relationship is very important. Keeping a note of comments and nuances is less easy to record electronically, but may prove crucial later.

3.5 The approach to voters

It is preferable to spread the burden of seeking and undertaking interviews between several people, with experienced negotiators allocated the most important accounts. The database will identify which individual is assigned to each business, and this should apply for the duration of the BID campaign.

✓ Voter checklist

- Be professional, send a letter in advance and maximize the benefit of one-to-one interviews
- Do background research to gain an informed understanding of what they do and what the issues are that affect them
- Listen to what they say, as it might not be what you are expecting

Local champions can be very helpful in helping to open doors and make introductions. With multiple retailers, targeting the right person within the company is crucial. However although the voting decision may be made away from a local branch, it is essential to try to get a local representative on side.

IMAGES

1 Pink Chairs, Bankside

2 Christmas Lights Switch-On, Paddington

3 Women in Business, Bankside

4 Lighting project, Vauxhall One

5 Packed Lunch, Waterloo Quarter

6 Employ SE1



3.6 Demonstration projects

If the BID has funding to undertake demonstration projects, they should be evaluated and the outcomes fed back to businesses on how they addressed the initial problem identified, and if further action could be undertaken through a BID.

Vauxhall One demonstrated its commitment to its BID programme by funding the installation of a light sculpture in one of the walk-through arches in its BID area. As well as being an attractive and newsworthy addition to the area, the sculpture made the arch less intimidating and more inviting.

3.7 Notice of Ballot – 42-90 days before ballot day

The billing authority will write to all BID-eligible hereditaments notifying them of the arrangements for the forthcoming BID ballot. Some authorities are willing to include marketing collateral from the would-be BID. At this point of the process the voting list is closed, meaning that – if a new business opens in the BID area – it will not get to vote in the BID ballot. ✓

Given that the Notice of Ballot is typically a bald and deliberately non-partisan document, it is always advisable for the BID proposer to make contact with the eligible businesses before its arrival.

3.8 Canvassing during the ballot period

i. Maximising the turnout

This period would involve intensive liaison with the ballot holder to ensure effective delivery of the ballot. It would also involve intensive lobbying of those businesses that have expressed an intention to vote 'yes'.

Projections of voting intentions are particularly important in terms of having data available to determine likely voting outcomes and coordinating the ballot process such as ensuring the right person has the voting slip.

Use of social media

As electronic newsletters proliferate and are ignored, social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook have risen in popularity. A healthy number of Twitter followers or Facebook 'likes' is a sign of a healthy BID campaign.

✓ Voting procedure checklist

- Identify which supporters have received ballot papers
- Agree measures to help those in need of replacement papers
- Confirm whether the local authority will share information on who has voted during the process to the BID:
 - if it is known who has not voted, check if ballot papers have been received and united with the person casting the vote
 - if not, and ballot papers remain unopened until the final day of voting no information will be available. Proxy voting – the reissue of lost ballots will be more difficult. In a BID ballot proxy papers can be issued from the moment the notice of ballot is sent to eligible businesses (up to 90 days before ballot date) until 10 days before the close of ballot.

The BID Ballot period is a minimum of 28 days in duration. BID ballots are conducted by post with one vote per hereditament. A voter will typically receive a ballot paper, together with an explanation of the ballot and a reply-paid envelope. The package will often be in a bright colour so that it stands out from the rest of the post. The materials usually bear the authority's insignia and do not include BID logos.

The BID regulations require that the ballot paper carries the following wording:

Are you in favour of the Business Improvement District proposals for:

[insert a list of the names of the streets in the geographical area covered by the BID proposals]?

Place a cross (X) in the box of your choice.
YES NO

This vote is in respect of -
[insert address of the hereditament of the person entitled to vote]

I confirm that I am entitled to vote in respect of this hereditament

Signed

Name (in block capitals)

Position

(NB where the person entitled to vote is a company or partnership, please state the position held by the person signing)

Note: for your vote to be valid this ballot paper must be signed and returned to the ballot holder at [insert address for return of ballot papers] by 5pm on [insert the day of the ballot]

This means that, in effect, the paper is 'self certifying', somewhat undermining the need for the appointment of proxy voters.

Each paper typically has a number, allowing the authority to record the return of ballot papers as the ballot progresses.

Most authorities are willing to let the BID Proposer know which papers have been returned, enabling the BID team to concentrate its efforts on those businesses that have not voted.

The BID Regulations set out the rules for such matters as proxy votes, lost ballot papers and spoilt ballot papers, together with timescales in the ballot process.

3.9 The count and the result

The ballot typically ends at 5pm and the count takes place the following morning. In announcing the result, the ballot holder certifies the turnout – both by total number and aggregate rateable value, and the total number and aggregate rateable value of the votes cast in favour. The result is typically published on the authority's website and also posted in a public location.

Detailed guidance on Rules for BID ballots and renewal ballots is given in the BID Regulations Schedule 2

SECTION FOUR

Building on a successful outcome

Following a successful ballot the BID faces the exciting challenge of delivering on the pledges and the programme's themes. There are distinct phases to these initial months, each with its own objectives and associated costs.



Success requires establishing a firm footing – essential tasks around governance, strategic planning, financial management, levy collection and communication and secondly, a robust programme and an immediate impact.

In the event of a negative ballot result the BID steering group would need to convene and discuss its future strategy. Different places have reached different conclusions depending on the nature of the result. While a loss by a narrow margin in one of the two tests would be quite different from a comprehensive defeat in both, the decision of the electorate should always be respected: the BID Proposal should be reviewed and a reasonable time elapsed to communicate that revised position to voters.

Some BIDs in the UK have now entered their third term. The appropriateness of having a BID needs to be constantly reviewed – it is quite conceivable that in some places the BID will have achieved its objectives within one or two terms, whereas elsewhere as long as businesses support them they can and should continue to provide services.

IMAGE

Pancake Day Charity Race, Better Bankside

IMAGE
Gibbon's Rent



4.1 Establishing the BID company and forming the board and incorporation

- Prepare Articles of Association and complete incorporation of the new BID company (if it hasn't been done earlier) – to be signed by subscribers and submitted to Companies House as part of Company registration
- The Chair writes to all members inviting them to become members of the BID company
- Negotiate and sign Operating and Baseline Agreements with Council
- Formalise agreement with Council on staff support and possible premises
- Procure appropriate insurances
- Develop a BID management structure
- Make decisions and put plan in place for first AGM
 - Find appropriate venue and agree a date
 - Draft agenda, presentation and resolutions
 - Prepare supporting documents
 - Produce AGM package
 - Hold AGM
- Plan dates and venues for regular (possibly six-weekly) steering group/board meetings
- Introduce effective customer relationship procedures

4.2 Finalising the billing arrangements

- Agree rules and procedure for levy collection and monitoring with Council confirming
 - Which properties are to be included
 - Any special conditions (discounts, charities, shopping centres, new businesses, voids, part payment, changes in RV)
- Prepare leaflet/letter for inclusion with first levy bill
- Levy bills to be dispatched by Council
- Plan for responding to levy payers who query their bill
- Manage enquiries during levy collection
- Monitor levy collection regarding non-payment

IMAGES

- 1 Urban Orchard
- 2 Logistics Group
- 3 Easter Egg Hunt



- 4 Green Network
- 5 Employee Volunteering
- 6 Lighting



4.3 Communicating the result – the early phases of the communication strategy

- Chair writes to all voters/payers announcing result and next stages (local businesses and head offices outside BID area)
- Engage with levy payers before and during levy collection period
- Set up contacts database
- Prepare first e-bulletin to stakeholders
- Procure local marketing services
- Upgrade BID website

4.4 Mobilising for quick wins – projects and services

- Early wins can include recycling service: issue invitation to tender; interview suppliers and make appointment; sign-up to service begins; service starts
- Timetable for all BID meetings in next 12 months
- Each theme group meets, e.g. area promotion, retail, clean & green
- Develop 1st year business plan and 5-year delivery plan
- Discuss 'quick win' possibilities and agree budget
- Implement quick win projects
- Procure key services e.g. recycling, cleaning, maintenance

Theme groups

As well as the general direction of the programme being set by the board, a lot of the BID's work will be done through the individual theme groups, which become extremely important once the BID is established. Local business representatives sit on each group, usually facilitated by BID company team member, and help to set the priorities and monitor the service delivery for each theme. Unlike the board, it may be more convenient for theme groups to meet during working hours.

4.5 Establishing financial and administrative policies and systems

- Bank account - Open bank account
- Management accounts - Produce document on BID financial management
- Develop lifetime budget
- Membership data base
- Insurances

4.6 Assembling the team

- Complete job descriptions for key roles – e.g. Operations Director, Marketing and Events Manager and Administrator
- Advertise posts
- Interview and appoint positions
- Identify office base
- Procure IT, telecoms and other services
- Move into new office

4.7 Understanding the area

Establishing your BID as a central point of information for matters relating to your centre can be valuable in attracting investment and influencing spending decisions. However, gathering such information has resource implications and much of the existing membership will be more focused on benefiting from current services than collecting and disseminating data on the wider area.

AFTER THE INITIAL PHASES

Monitoring and evaluation are essential to show the contribution the BID is making to the local area.

At first the focus will be on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that demonstrate progress against agreed targets and show a positive direction of travel. As the BID programme evolves so will the KPIs and 'external' indicators become more important, assessing the BID's impact on the wider environment and neighbourhood. Disaggregating the impact of the BID from other factors on indicators such as reducing crime or increasing visitor numbers, however, will be more challenging.

Developing marketing

Once the BID is established, newsletters and social media play an important role in reaching members and the wider community alike. With enough content, separate e-newsletters can focus on the activities of the BID, volunteering and CSR opportunities and updates on local development and construction in the area.

Use of twitter and Facebook are new ways to reach a wide audience quickly and informally. Loyalty card schemes have proved a popular and effective tool for BIDs to help promote and increase the sales of members businesses and the use of free apps is a good way to drive consumers towards those shops, restaurants and services taking part.

Keep asking questions

To really understand the way the BID is seen, an independently run awareness survey will give an objective picture of which projects and services are known and valued by employees, residents and business members.

IMAGES

1 Christmas event, Victoria BID

2 Lower Marsh Saturday Market, Waterloo Quarter



Whether they are in central or outer London, our local centres are facing unprecedented levels of challenge that call for new tools, mechanisms and ways of partnership working. BIDs are proving they have much to offer on many levels:

- 1 Insight and expertise – from effective engagement with many more business interests than has been the case thus far**
- 2 New resources for investment –both from the BID levy itself, and from the efficient use of this funding through leveraging in matching sums from elsewhere**
- 3 A better basis for collaboration – between the different sectors on operational and strategic issues**
- 4 Tailored programmes – suited to fit the interests of a particular centre**
- 5 Meaningful lines of accountability – to those most concerned with the centre’s future well being through BID governance structures and the ballot mechanism.**

Therefore, as the outlook for the capacity of public authorities to invest sufficiently in their commercial centres shows them to be under increasing pressure, the list of compelling reasons for considering a BID as part of a response to re-enlivening our high streets, town and city centres, industrial estates and business parks is growing all the time.

As businesses exhibit a bigger appetite to get involved, the growth in the number of BIDs has confounded expectations. The delivery of those BIDs is also becoming more sophisticated, with professional and dynamic organisations leading major change programmes in places as diverse as Oxford Street in London and suburban industrial parks.

The track record of the established London BIDs, particularly those that have achieved successful second and third re-ballots, shows that businesses here are prepared to support these kinds of interventions.

BIDs are a flexible mechanism. Some will remain focussed on janitorial (housekeeping) and/or ambassadorial (meeting and greeting) duties. Others will take an increasingly informed interest in developing strategy for the long-term sustainability and improvement of their centres. Whilst BIDs should and must learn from good practice elsewhere, the key consideration for success is that they develop organisationally and programmatically in ways which are fit for the unique set of circumstances that apply in the centre in which they operate.

Investing time and effort in setting this course is essential, as is the continuing task of monitoring performance. For BIDs to survive and flourish into the long term they must have excellent performance management systems and be able to illustrate clearly to their membership and other stakeholders the benefits that they bring.

IMAGES

1 Guinness World Records Attempt, Northbank BID

2 Paddington Games, Paddington BID

3 Outdoor Cinema, Ealing BID

4 Melior Street Dinner, Team London Bridge

5 World Cafe, Vauxhall One

6 Upside-down house, Merge Festival Bankside



APPENDIX
Timetable for a Typical BID Ballot

Action	Regulation Requirement	Regulation Reference	Date
BID Start Date			1st January
Publication of notice of result	As soon as is reasonably practicable after the result is certified	Sch 2.17(2)	16th November
Counting of votes	As soon as practicable after the ballot day	Sch 2.14(1)	16th November
Ballot Day		See Sch 2.2 for requirements Sch 2.3(ii)	15th Nov
Last day to cancel proxies	5 days before ballot day	Sch 2.5(10)	By 5pm on Friday 9th November
Last date for re-issue of spoilt ballot papers	3 (working) days before ballot day	Sch 2.11(2)	Friday 9th November
Day from which application for re-issue or lost ballot papers can be made	4 (working) days before ballot day	Sch 2.12(1)	Thursday 8th November
Last day to appoint proxy	10 days before ballot day	Sch 2.5(5)	Monday 5th November
Dispatch of ballot papers	Latest day: 28 days before ballot day	Sch 2.2(1)(b)	Thursday 18th October
Publication by BALLOT HOLDER of Notice of Ballot and Statement of arrangement of ballot. Copy notice of ballot to Secretary of State	Latest day: 42 days before ballot day Earliest day: 90 days before ballot day	Sch 2.3 Sch 2.2(c)	Thursday 4th October
Management committee meeting			Tuesday 4th September
BID Proposal Published/BID event			Thursday 16th August
Management committee meeting			Tuesday 7th August
Notice from Billing Authority to Ballot Holder to hold BID Ballot		Reg 5	Tuesday 7th August

Action	Regulation Requirement	Regulation Reference	Date
BID proposals to be approved by Billing Authority		See Reg 4 Sufficient funds No conflict with existing policy See Reg 5 Compliance with Reg 4(1) and (2) See also reg 12 veto of BID proposals	Tuesday 7th August
BID Proposer sends to Billing Authority BID proposals & Notice to instruct ballot-holder to hold BID Ballot (including financial info)*			Tuesday 24th July
Management committee meeting BID Business Plan signed off BID Development Budget signed off BID Brand signed off			Thursday 28th June
Management committee meeting			Thursday 24th May
BID Launch Event			Tuesday 15th May
Introductory BID leaflet published and website upgraded			Friday 11th May
BID Proposer send Notice of Intention to request ballot of BID proposals to i Billing Authority and ii Secretary of State	At least 84 days (12 weeks) before notice from BID Proposer to Billing Authority to instruct ballot-holder to hold BID Ballot (see * above)	Reg 3(2) (unless Reg 3(3) applies)	Monday 30th April
BID branding commissioned/ designed			Monday 30th April
Management committee meeting to make decision to progress with BID			Thursday 19th April

LONDON BIDs
HANDBOOK

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