



Okehampton Business Improvement District
(BID)
Feasibility Report (Draft)

October 2022

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1) Executive Summary

The Locus team has been asked by West Devon Borough Council and Okehampton Town Council to undertake an initial feasibility study into the potential for Business Improvement District (BID) development in Okehampton. A summary of findings is as follows:

- BIDs are well established in the region, the county and across the country; there is a high degree of success of BIDs at ballot and, generally, businesses support Proposals.
- The Council's policies are consistent with improvement of the town centre and do not conflict with the development of BID Proposals (a requirement of the BID Regulations).
- Subject to further consultation with businesses, any area should develop around a relatively representative and logical BID zone.
- An indicative threshold (the level above which businesses engage in any ballot and may be liable for a levy) of rateable value (RV) £3,999 results in 291 hereditaments which might be included.
- Any next stages of research should include more detailed discussions with the smaller hereditaments (by RV). Those larger hereditaments already contacted should also be kept informed as these occupiers will carry more weight in any future BID ballot.
- The research revealed a high level of engagement amongst the top 25 ratepayers (by RV), a willingness to participate in discussions around further improvements and an interest in developing the BID concept further.
- Using regional comparisons, any headline levy rate is likely to range between 1.25% and 2% of RV. Likely final levy income is between £60,000 and £130,000 a year, subject to final modelling.
- Consideration should be taken to reduce the impact of everyday running costs on any eventual BID, allowing for the maximisation of levy monies.
- There is a risk that the number of independent smaller businesses in Okehampton (arguably more affected by covid, cost of operating etc) might produce a reluctance to develop at this time. Larger businesses tend

to take longer term views and adopt corporate policies. The benefits of any BID need to take into account current and changing business concerns and priorities and the timing of any ballot and commencement should remain flexible.

- Based on the data it is likely that any BID Proposal could be taken to ballot in Q3 to Q4 2023 earliest, with a start date for delivery of, say, Q1 to early Q2 2024.
- From the evidence obtained, both in discussions with the top 25 ratepayers and through desktop research it is likely that, those larger businesses could be encouraged to support the principles of a BID and that any BID Proposal could be made appealing to a majority of all businesses in the area.

2) Business Improvement Districts

A BID is a defined geographical area in which business occupiers (ratepayers or property owners if in possession) fund a range of improvements through an additional tax or levy.

They emerged first in Canada in the early 1970s as a reaction against combined suburbanisation (people moving out from the centre of places) and decentralisation (business investment following). The model quickly moved to the United States where, today, it is dominant form of privatised urban governance arrangement. For example, New York has over 75 BIDs and Washington has 11. The US model is funded by property owners.

Following transfer of the policy to other nationalities, the UK government introduced legislation in 2003 to 2004 to permit the creation of BIDs in England (since which the other devolved administrations have followed). Today, the UK has over 300 BIDs, the majority of which are in town or city centres. In the proximity of the study area are BIDs such as Falmouth, Tavistock, St Austell, and Minehead. Whilst each BID is different, both in terms of identity and output, they share the following aspects:

1. They provide significant additional funding to improve the places in which they operate (the total UK additional revenue exceeds £130 million).
2. Outside Central London, each BID is funded by business ratepayers as occupiers (as opposed to property owners). Most BIDs engage property owners informally as part of their operations.
3. Created first through a ballot, the maximum term for any BID is 5-years, after which they may seek the agreement of businesses to renew for a further term via a new ballot.
4. When successful, BIDs can create an enduring partnership between private occupiers and public sector partners.

To develop a BID ballot, the Proposal must seek the support from local ratepaying businesses in a ballot. Its business plan requires a majority on a 'dual key' basis:

- More than 50%+ of the total votes cast
- More than 50%+ of the aggregate rateable value of each hereditament in respect of votes cast

3) Policy and Strategic Overview

A BID should develop its aims and objectives alongside the work of change agents, including local authorities and any other local groups that are playing a key role in the growth of an area. The most effective BIDs are ones which work together with organisations that are implementing the priorities of local businesses.

Plymouth & South-West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034

In March 2019, South Hams District Council, Plymouth City Council and West Devon Borough Council adopted a Joint Local Plan that formed part of the Development Plan for the surrounding towns and villages. Although the Local Plan is responsible for developing multiple different areas, there are several references regarding Okehampton and planned investment.

There are policies within the Plan that would facilitate and complement the operation of a BID in Okehampton. According to Policy TTV1 'Prioritising growth through a hierarchy of sustainable settlements', Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to distribute growth and development through homes and jobs in accordance with the hierarchy of settlements:

- The Main Towns: which will be prioritised for growth to enable them to continue to thrive, achieve strong levels of self-containment, and provide a broad range of services for the wider area
- Hierarchy also includes - smaller towns and key villages; sustainable villages; smaller villages

Okehampton is one of the six 'Main Towns' outlined in the Local Plan – regarding a BID, the town receives significant levels of investment and support to help sustain the town's high level of services and amenities. In tandem with a BID, financial resources can be directed towards other areas that receive less funding, helping to better strengthen overall economic productivity, growth across the whole area and business participation in overall growth plans.

In addition, Policy SPT1 'Delivering sustainable development' is another example of a policy that could complement the delivery of a BID. The Local Plan aims to deliver sustainable development across three main areas:

- **Sustainable economy** – opportunities for business growth are both encouraged and supported; environmentally conscious business development takes place; low carbon economy is promoted
- **Sustainable society** – Neighbourhoods and communities have a mix of local services and community assets; accessible greenspace; sustainable transport that are available to access local education, services, and jobs; important cultural and heritage assets are protected
- **Sustainable environment** – Local distinctiveness and sense of place is respected, maintained, and strengthened through high standards of design; pollution and adverse environmental impacts of development are minimised

These might be useful in defining any BID Proposals, ensuring that they are consistent with already adopted local policies.

The goal of delivering sustainable development might also be easier to achieve if delivered alongside a BID, through which business engagement and investment could be enrolled. There are numerous examples across the UK where a BID has increased the level of sustainability in an area: policies that focus on educating business owners and introducing environmentally friendly displays are currently being delivered by BIDs nation-wide and are working to reduce the carbon footprint of an area. Regarding Okehampton, a BID could be used to help deliver a sustainable economy, society, and environment.

Furthermore, there is also a dedicated section within the Local Plan that focuses specifically on the development of Okehampton. In the section 'Spatial Priority SP4', several priorities for Okehampton are outlined that would complement the delivery of a BID:

- Helping to increase employment opportunities to support the long-term resilience of the town
- Fully recognising the strategic location of Okehampton for employment growth – maximising the potential of the A30 and identifying opportunities to invest in rail and bus connections to Exeter
- Enhancing the historic character and vitality of the town as well as maintaining the strong physical and visual connections between the town and the surrounding countryside

- Working with relevant authorities to look for appropriate solutions to manage traffic flow in and around the town

As before, any BID Proposal should be mindful of these themes.

Improving the economic opportunities of the town as well as investing in rail and bus connectivity of the Okehampton area would facilitate any potential BID. The policies within the Local Plan will increase the footfall in Okehampton and it is likely that a BID could invest in events and marketing that would also increase dwell time. The Local Plan contains several policies aimed at improving infrastructure links, stimulating economic activity, and preserving the positive qualities of Okehampton: a potential BID could help to support in delivering these aspects.

Okehampton Town Council Strategic Plan 2019–2023

Developed by Okehampton Town Council, their current strategic plan sets out the Council’s aims and objectives and provides the policy framework used by the elected Members to support the economic and social well-being of the town.

The document outlines the main areas that the Council is prioritising in terms of improving Okehampton. The ability to deliver these targets could be aided by the existence of a BID, for example:

i. Climate Change and Biodiversity

- The council will work with town residents, businesses, and visitors to reduce Okehampton’s production of carbon emissions
- The council will work towards building better infrastructure, public services, and communities that can adapt to the negative impacts of climate change

ii. Community

- The council will work with the Borough and County Councils and other representative bodies, partners, and public authorities to promote a vibrant and healthy community
- The council will maintain a Grants Scheme to support eligible organisations providing benefits to the residents of Okehampton town
- The council will seek to deliver events marking significant occasions whether on an annual or occasional basis

iii. Economy

- The council will seek to support and/or deliver initiatives to promote, develop and maintain a healthy local economy and commercial sector
- The council will work with representative bodies, partners, and public authorities to promote a vibrant local economy
- The council will work to provide value for money services which are relevant, efficient, and effective

Each target proposed in the Plan might be easier to achieve if the BID's targets were consistent. The nature of a BID means that it brings together business interests in an area and celebrates the success and uniqueness of the businesses that trade within it.

The Council has been using methods that BIDs also undertake, such as delivering events and working to reduce carbon emissions in an area. It is therefore possible that a potential BID could either support the Council in delivering these methods or it could direct its resources towards other projects where investment may be more limited.

Devon County Council Plan 2021 – 2025

The County Council's current plan for Devon seeks to provide high levels of investment to support businesses, people, and the community as they continue to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Although it focuses on the whole county, there are several policies within the Plan that are relevant to a potential BID in Okehampton. For example, the Plan focuses heavily on supporting economic recovery and growth by investing in and alongside local businesses. Relevant policies include:

- Work with at risk sectors to widen skills and support business development
- Develop the Skills Hub – to promote information and support around careers, employability, upskilling and reskilling
- Secure investment in transport infrastructure – to stimulate economic growth, improve accessibility, increase travel choices, and improve road safety
- Deliver £500 million through the Council capital investment programme over the five years in sectors such as tourism, retail, construction, agriculture, food and drink

Extra investment from a BID can assist businesses as they recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and tackle increased operational costs and current economic uncertainty.

Okehampton Town and Hamlets Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2034

There is a draft version of an Okehampton Town and Hamlets Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2034. At present the Plan is at an informal consultation stage and is receiving feedback. As the Plan will not become effective until 2026 the details that are mentioned in the document will not be examined in this report.

Policy Implications

The Council has a commitment to improving all of its town centres and has developed a close and productive working relationship with businesses. There is no local policy known to us that might create a reason for the Council to veto any ballot outcome on policy terms (a requirement of the BID Regulations).

4) Feasibility Objectives

Locus has been instructed to conduct a BID Feasibility Study of the Okehampton area. As part of this Study, Locus undertook to provide:

1. Identification of a likely study area for future BID development work.
2. Analysis of the ratings information for the study area to establish likely voting intentions and levy rules that may be applied.
3. Using desktop research, cross-checking likely BID delivery streams against existing priorities contained within local plans, reports, and documentation.
4. Identification of the number and type of business premises that may be included.
5. Conduct a consultation of the top 25 businesses (by RV) to gauge the level of potential support for a BID and their priorities for the next 5 years.
6. Financial modelling (likely BID levy vs required expenditure).
7. An assessment of the local capacity for partnership and joint working.
8. A mapping exercise to compare likely BID structure, levy rules etc with comparable locations and other BIDs in the area.
9. The corporate structure and governance arrangements that should be applied to the BID Proposer and the BID Body.
10. The likely timing for ballot, including such notifications and notices, as required by the Regulations.
11. Developing a mechanism by which the local authority can control the quality of the development process, protect the location from any competing BID developer emerging and recoup some of the development costs through the eventual BID Body and the Operating Agreement.
12. Indicative costings for future stages of development, identifying potential for economies of scale.
13. An analysis of risks.

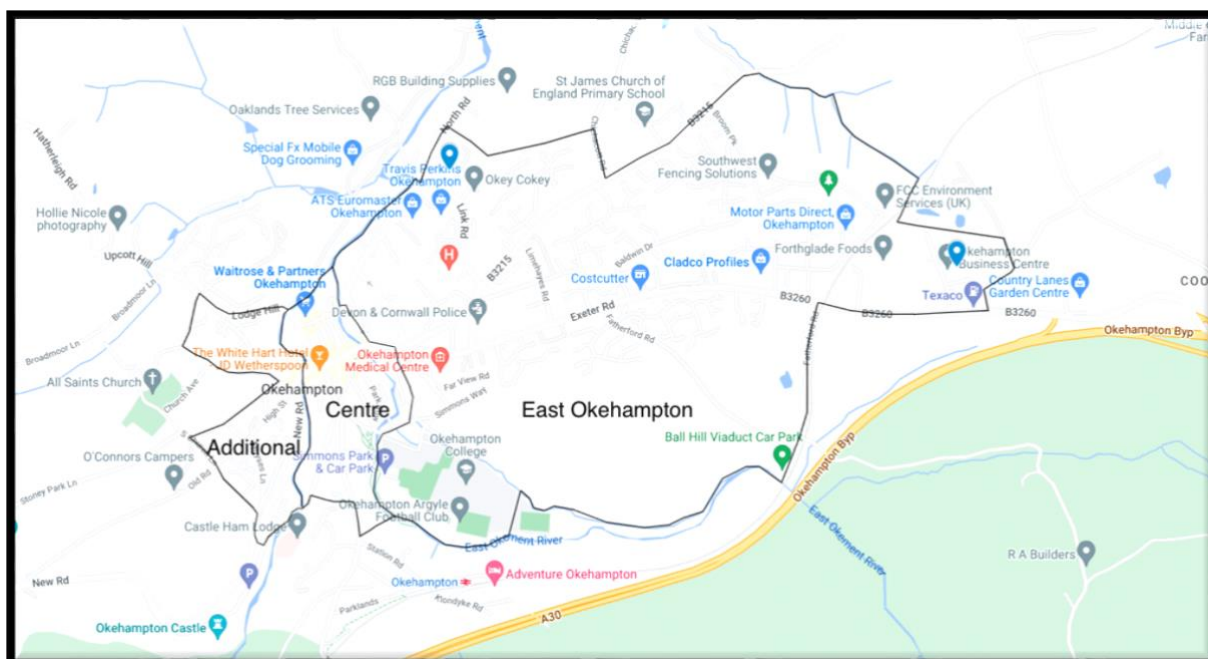
5) Sectors and Areas

5.1 Study areas

The proposed study area was agreed with the West Devon Borough Council. The image below reflects the indicative BID boundary; the study area may alter as development progresses, and this is usual in this type of work.

As requested, the image also includes an area labelled as 'Additional'. The viability of including this section within the proposed study area has been examined: the increased value of the additional area is limited as only three extra hereditaments might be included (assuming a RV threshold of £3,999) with an increased levy income of circa £648 (assuming a maximum suggested levy rate of 2%) per year.

However, levy income should not be the only focus when finalising BID boundaries; they should follow the natural geography of the area and include areas that contribute to the identity of a location and within which businesses have common interests.



5.2 Overall sector breakdown

The figures within this section are based on an indicative RV threshold of £3,999. There are a total of 291 hereditaments in the study area of Okehampton (see breakdown below) with an additional 135 properties with RV's of below the threshold. The sector breakdown identifies the types of businesses that currently trade within the overall study area and might therefore contribute to the levy income.

The rationale for a threshold is:

- Most BIDs adopt a RV threshold beneath which businesses are not eligible for a levy charge (note: they would also not vote in any BID ballot).
- Thresholds achieve two outcomes (1) consecutive reductions in threshold (say, by £1,000 increments) will add numbers of businesses to a BID without achieving additional proportionate income; and (2) achieving a successful ballot result is made more challenging if the numbers of businesses become unwieldy and, in the future, unmanageable.

It should be emphasised that this working threshold might change during any further development work. A breakdown of the sectors assuming a RV threshold of £3,999 follows:

Sector	Businesses	Percentage
Retail	159	43.14%
Hospitality	15	4.46%
Leisure	13	5.26%
Services	40	14.64%
Office	33	5.16%
Industrial	28	19.85%
Education	3	7.50%
Total	291	100%

5.3 Overall breakdown by ballot rules

In any BID ballot, a Proposal must receive majority support in both of the 'dual key' measurements:

- More than 50%+ of the total votes cast
- More than 50%+ of the aggregate rateable value of each hereditament in respect of votes cast

Within the study area and applying a threshold RV of £3,999, the total number of eligible hereditaments in Okehampton is 291 and their total RV is £5,990,450

Assuming a turnout at ballot of 50% (in line with the UK average of 48% on all ballots), the minimum requirement for success at ballot for a Proposal that encompassed Okehampton would be:

- By number of votes cast in the ballot:

291 votes issued = 146 returned (50%)

Majority required = 74 (50% + 1)

- By RV:

£5,990,450 RV total = £2,995,225 returned (50%)

Majority required = £1,497,614 (50% + £1)

It is important to note that RV is not spread equally amongst all hereditaments. Therefore, to maximise the chances of satisfying the second condition (majority by RV), any BID will need to gain more support amongst those businesses with the highest RV's, most notably the top 25.

6) Top 25 by RV

In the Okehampton study area the top 25 ratepayers (as listed below) make up circa 9% of total businesses by number, but circa 52% of the total RV available.

Number	Liable Party	RV
1	Waitrose	£525,000
2	Okehampton Community College	£367,500
3	Co-op	£218,000
4	Devonshire Desserts	£196,000
5	Parkland Leisure Centre	£194,000
6	Lidl	£183,000
7	Forthglade	£152,000
8	Mole Avon	£128,000
9	B Thompson and Sons Transport	£118,000
10	Community Hospital	£113,000
11	Devonshire Desserts	£109,000
12	White Heart Hotel	£104,000
13	Cladco	£87,000
14	Cladco	£68,500
15	Wardhayes	£63,000
16	National Bee Supplies	£62,500
17	Skyspares	£62,000
18	H E services	£59,000
19	Jewson	£58,000
20	Elemental Micro-Analysis	£49,000
21	Okehampton Medical Centre	£47,000
22	Peacocks	£46,750
23	Police Station	£46,500
24	McColls	£44,750
25	Barkwell	£44,000
	Total	£3,145,500

6.1 Approach

Because of their importance, particularly to the 'majority by RV' side of the dual-key majority required, Locus was asked to widen the normal consultation at this early stage to ensure inclusion of at least 15 responses from this larger business group.

Businesses were approached with 6 suggested project areas which BID's typically deliver and, based upon informal visits to the location, may be applicable:

- Safe and Welcoming (e.g., CCTV)
- Events (e.g., seasonal events, markets)
- Marketing (e.g., website, social media)
- Wayfinding (e.g., signage, trails)
- Public Realm (e.g., street cleansing, planting, vacant unit vinyl's)
- Connectivity and Community (e.g., forum for businesses, networking, night-time economy support)

They were asked about the potential of a BID model, after which they were asked 3 questions:

- describe the location in 3 separate words
- rate the project areas by importance to them as a business
- to elaborate on their opinions or thoughts regarding projects or priorities for the areas in question.

These questions were used in an informal manner as more of a conversational piece, with answers deduced from more natural flowing discussion.

Question 1 was designed to better understand how businesses viewed their town and whether they were negative or positive about its current situation. Question 2's aim was to determine exactly what businesses wanted moving forward at a strategic project level, and the final question's purpose was to gather any additional feedback or thoughts businesses might have at that time.

6.2 Findings

Overall Sector split:

- 159 Retail (43%), 15 Hospitality (4%), 13 Leisure (5%), 40 Services (15%), 33 Office (5%), 28 Industrial (20%), 3 Education (8%)

Top 25 Sector split:

- 8 Retail (32%), 4 Services (16%), 1 Office (4%), 8 Industrial (32%), 1 Hospitality (4%), 1 Leisure (4%), 2 Education (8%)

The total response rate from the top 25 was 15/25 (60%). The respondent sector split was:

- 6 retail (40%), 0 office (0%), 4 services (27%), 1 hospitality (7%), 1 leisure (7%), 0 education (0%), 3 industrial (20%)

The opening conversation with each respondent entailed a detailed discussion on the BID model. Most businesses expressed an interest in involvement with improvements generally, in engaging with further development and in the potential for any BID.

The overall findings from the 3 questions are listed out below.

Q1: In three separate words describe your high street?

The most common words that businesses used to describe the locations were as follows:

- *Growing, Clean, Quiet*

Q2: Listed below are potential projects. Please rate them by importance to your business.

The 4 priority projects were:

- *Public Realm (e.g. street cleansing, planting, vacant unit vinyl's)*
- *Wayfinding (e.g. signage, trails)*
- *Marketing (e.g. website, social media)*
- *Safe and Welcoming (e.g. CCTV)*

Q3: Is there anything that has not been mentioned above that can further improve your village or town and/or support your business?

Most commented on:

- *Make more of Okehampton's position near Dartmoor*
- *Joint working and community support*

- Support events and provide better marketing
- Infrastructure improvements were mentioned but not often

7) Potential BID Income

Potential BID income will be affected by the cost of the projects to be delivered, the final BID area, the levy rate applied, any exclusions/discounts/thresholds assumed, and fluctuations in RV's (particularly with a national revaluation planned for 2023).

7.1. Geographical comparisons

In considering the range of levy rate and threshold, some consideration has been given to existing BIDs currently operating around the study areas. These are compared by number of hereditaments, levy rate and levy income. All of these BIDs have been able to maintain the support of local businesses throughout their first term (i.e., no BID has had its Arrangements terminated) and every BID that has sought a renewed term has been successful:

BID	Number of hereditaments	Levy on RV	Levy Income	Term	Threshold	Population Size
English Riviera BID	325	1.95%	£532,000	Second (Ends 2027)	£3,000	119,077
Falmouth BID	409	1.25%	£159,000	Second (Ends 2024)	£7,500	22,300
Tavistock BID	300	1.75%	£82,650	Third (Ends 2023)	£3,000	13,028
St Austell	156	2%	£89,877	Second (Ends 2023)	£5,000	27,400
Minehead BID	245	1.5%	£107,000	First (Ends 2023)	£3,000	12,000
St Ives BID	318	1.5%	£125,000	Second (Ends 2024)	£7,500	17,300

7.2 Okehampton Levy income (potential)

From the surrounding comparable list, a range of between 1.25% and 2% of RV as a headline levy rate can be identified. By way of further comparison, a range of thresholds (up to RV £9,999) is also applied.

	Levy Rate (%)				
Threshold	1.25%	1.5%	1.75%	2%	Levy Payers
£3,999	£76,393	£91,672	£106,951	£122,229	291
£5,999	£71,484	£85,780	£100,077	£114,374	215
£7,999	£67,130	£80,556	£93,982	£107,408	166
£9,999	£63,668	£76,401	£89,135	£101,868	136

On average, BIDs across the whole of England tend to generate circa £350,000 from circa 350 levy payers. However, there many examples of very successful smaller BIDs.

8) Governance

At some point before further development is completed, a decision needs to be taken on the final form of any BID. The Business Improvement Districts Regulations (England) 2004 apply.

Regulation 3 requires there to be a BID Proposer who develops BID Proposals and requests the ballot holder to hold a ballot(s). The Proposer can be:

- (i) a non-domestic ratepayer(s)
- (ii) a person or organisation with an interest in land
- (iii) a local authority
- (iv) a body (corporate or non-corporate) one of whose purposes is developing BID Proposals

In this instance it is most likely that either the local authority or a body (corporate or non-corporate) is the proposer. It would need to (a) develop, approve, and then submit a BID Proposal (which it is likely that a consultant would do on its behalf), (b) notify the Secretary of State of its intentions, (c) formally request the Ballot Holder to hold a ballot, and (d) prepare a business plan for distribution to those who would be subject to any levy.

If the choice is taken to proceed with a corporate or non-corporate body the local authority's legal advisors should ensure that they are satisfied that the body's purposes is developing BID Proposals, before it could accept a request to hold a ballot from it.

Schedule 1 (1) (a) of the Regulations states that the BID Proposal must include:

“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)”

To clarify, the BID Body may or may not be the same person(s) or entity as the BID proposer. A decision will need to be made as to who or what the BID Body will be. A new, special purpose company is often registered if the local authority is not to act as the Body.

In any event the Regulations require the local billing authority to invoice, collect and make available the BID levy for which it can opt to make a charge

Consideration should be taken to reducing overhead costs incurred by any potential BID (e.g., sharing of office space with the Town Council, part time staffing etc.).

The final financial and governance arrangements will be contained with the BID Proposal and business plan and, in addition, are most likely to be included within an Operating Agreement which would set out the relationship between the local authority and the BID Body.

9) Overall findings

In discussions with a small sample of the larger businesses (by RV) in a study area for a potential Okehampton BID, there would appear to be appetite for greater and active involvement in improvements. There was some degree of understanding as to what a BID would mean and a willingness to pursue it further.

The specific survey responses are also encouraging if the project is to proceed:

- The research indicates that overall, the top 25 have positive opinions about Okehampton (Q1). Words such as 'clean' and 'growing' appeared most frequently during conversation, and the three most chosen words were all positive.
- There is clear interest in further project delivery and each respondent either agreed or identified similar areas of improvement that were established through visiting and comparing against the basket locations (Q2).
- The projects were seen by respondents to be natural areas of improvement which any eventual BID could deliver.
- However, many are worried about high street trading and the competition presented by other centres such as Tavistock, with the need for support within the business community punctuating conversation.

The study area has the feel of a potential BID area and includes some businesses that are used to operating within BIDs.

However, there are several factors that need to be considered most notably that a BID Proposal has previously failed at ballot and that any resultant BID is likely to be relatively small by comparison with UK averages.

However, small, well-managed BIDs (including some in relatively close proximity) can achieve far more than either their number of levy payers or their levy income might suggest. The value of a BID to businesses lies not just in its ability to spend money and deliver projects, but in its ability to bring disparate businesses together, engage with other stakeholders and to use funds wisely (often by utilising them to either match-fund or bring in additional monies via grants, sponsorship etc.).

This initial Feasibility Study finds no barriers to progressing to further stages of development. There are some harder to reach sectors (e.g., office occupiers) that will need to be engaged to ensure success by a majority by number, and a strength of support will need to be gained amongst enough of the larger ratepayers to ensure success by a majority by RV. However, this is almost always the case at this stage.

10) Future Stages

9.1 Risks

Further development work contains some manageable risks, primarily:

1. Raising business expectations when there is no certainty that the BID will proceed
2. The reputational risks of losing a ballot (particularly since BID development has been tried once before)
3. Further costs which will increase as a ballot is neared and collateral such as a business plan will be required

Over 90% of well-developed BIDs succeed at ballot and serve their full term. Those that reach a ballot and fail find that poor methodological approaches combined with insufficient consultation were the main causes. A staged approach throughout development allows for reflection without fully committing to a ballot.

In addition, whilst it is those that might pay a levy that will decide the ballot outcome, it is important to widen consultation and engagement with other stakeholders (e.g., local authorities, town councils, chambers of trade, businesses either outside the area or under the threshold etc.).

Further lessons should be learned from the previous failed attempt (2013). This was unusual in that, of the 73 businesses that voted (a similar number to the modelling within this report at a 50% turnout), 76% voted against by number and 61% voted against by rateable value. This is highly unusual and suggests that the ballot was held ahead of enough consultation leading to insufficient support.

There is also a risk of not progressing, namely that other locations with BIDs continue to be able to invest more and engage with businesses better.

9.2 Timeline to any ballot

The following timetable is indicative and uses statutory dates within the BID Arrangements (2004) as a framework. There is no limit on the length of time to be taken:

Stage 1:

Commencement of further BID development February 2023

End of business consultations April 2023, with a mid-way review included

Report on findings and recommendations (by) end of May 2023, leading to either proceeding to the next stage or suspending work

Stage 2:

Notification to the Secretary of State (say) July 2023

Final BID Proposal, business plan, request for ballot and notice of ballot (say) September 2023

Ballot (28 days, minimum) October to November 2023

9.3 Indicative Budget Requirements

By engaging an external advisor to manage the whole project, the likely costs to ballot (including post-ballot advice – e.g., if the declaration is challenged, set-up etc) would be circa £20,000 to £30,000. The costs of a business plan (if required) will likely be in addition and are best delivered by a local supplier subject to locally determined specifications. To ensure that a potential ballot is de-risked, we would recommend that future development contains set targets, milestones, and phases (as outlined above). Priorities will be:

- a) engagement amongst businesses of circa 50% is targeted (the higher range of likely turnout),
- b) businesses define the exact project deliverables of any BID,
- c) levy rules are applied that maximise chances of success at ballot.

An indicative split of costs, assuming a total budget of (say) £25,000 might be:

Stage 1 costs: £10,000 plus vat (50% at the mid-way stage and 50% at the end if consultation progresses)

Stage 2 costs: £10,000 plus vat (plus business plan design and print)

Stage 3 costs: £5,000 plus vat (only payable upon successful completion of a ballot and at the start of the BID)

An alternative, should there be sufficient capacity locally to manage the consultation and engagement, would be to split a development commission. This might entail funding local work together with engaging expert technical advice relating to the Regulations and their implications. This model has been successfully adopted elsewhere.

Upon a successful ballot, the Regulations permit all (or a proportion of) such 'set-up costs' (including this Feasibility Study) to be recouped from the BID via the levy.

THE LOCUS PROJECT TEAM



Terry Baxter

CHAIR

Terry has been Chair of the Ipswich Central BID since 2013 and has been a leading voice for BIDs in the UK. He was also a founding member of the Ipswich Vision, the town's strategic board, and has a wealth of experience in developing visionary urban strategies.

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Paul Clement

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

One of the UK's leading figures in place-shaping and town centre strategy for over 20 years. Paul's expertise covers local governance, BID regulations and BID policy; having developed numerous BIDs, DMOs and partnerships across the UK including London.

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Sophie Alexander-Parker

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

With over a decade of experience within place management, Sophie is one of the BID industry's most experienced individuals, having worked with many towns and cities across the UK. She is an expert in project management and quality control.

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Chris Barnard

HEAD OF PLACE

Chris oversees all place operations across our partners and projects, working with the internal and external teams to manage developments and relationships. Chris has over a decade's worth of experience in BIDs and place management, including training and personnel.

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Trish Summers

HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

Trish has over 20 years of experience in finance, corporate governance, and human resources; she has developed a unique knowledge of financial controls and procedures with the BID and DMO industries.

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Luke Winter

PROJECT ANALYST

Luke oversees all project aspects, carrying out research and data analysis, providing the required outcomes to the highest standard and building strong client relationships.

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Jack Cripps

MARKETING & COMMS MANAGER

Managing business communications, consumer campaigns and place-marketing projects across our portfolio, Jack is an expert in brand development and social media management.


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A small team with big ideas

Experts in place

Specialism in developing BIDs, DMOs and local partnerships

A track-record of transforming towns, cities, and destinations across the UK.





LOCUS MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

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