

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION

DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR DAVID PASLEY, THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HUMAN RESOURCES, ASSET MANAGEMENT, CAPITAL PROGRAMME, TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME.



WITH ADVICE FROM: THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT.

DECISION NO: 17/18 DE 254

SUBJECT: Clevedon Business Improvement District (BID)

KEY DECISION: NO

BACKGROUND:

A BID is a business-led and business funded body formed to improve a defined commercial Area there are approximately 290 Business Improvement Districts established around the Country. In North Somerset this includes Weston-super-Mare.

It is proposed that a ballot of local businesses will take place during April 2018 to vote for the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) for Clevedon Town Centre.

The Clevedon BID area includes approximately 240 businesses with an aggregated Rateable Value of c. £5.5m. The BID proposal is for 2% to be levied on the rateable value of each business premises located within a defined area, which would provide an annual fund of c. £110k.

If there is a yes vote then all businesses have to pay regardless of whether they voted no or didn't vote at all (unless specifically excluded). The legislation is designed this way to ensure that as all business in the area benefit from the BID so all should pay.

As the Billing Authority, in line with the BID regulations, it is the statutory responsibility of the Local Authority to conduct a ballot of local businesses and collect the BID levy from businesses in the BID area, if a ballot is positive. Costs associated with collection of the levy would be covered by the levy raised. The BID levy will be on 240 business premises and land (hereditaments) within the BID area to be paid across to the Clevedon BID which would oversee activity identified in the BID Business Plan.

If successful the BID would run for 5 years after which the business community would be consulted, a new BID Business plan would be written and a ballot would be held to determine if it is to continue.

DECISION:

1. In line with the BID regulations the Council will fund and organise the ballot on behalf of Clevedon BID Steering Group.
2. In line with the BID regulations, if a positive ballot, North Somerset Council will collect the additional business rate levy on behalf of the BID.
3. The Director of Development and Environment is authorised to approve the final form of the necessary Agreements.
4. Delegate authority to the Director of Development and Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Human Resources, Asset Management, Capital Programme, Transformation Programme, to cast the Council votes.

REASONS:

The BID scheme is covered by the legislation 'The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004', which prescribes the basic requirements which must be met in order for the BID to meet its statutory duty. These are being followed to enable a ballot in April 2018.

In addition the proposal for a BID supports the Council's Corporate Plan aims of Prosperity and Opportunity and for Quality Places:

- Ensuring that all our town centres are thriving.
- Driving growth in the North Somerset economy and local jobs.
- Build and sustain great places to live and visit - vibrant, accessible and safe.
- Empower people to contribute to their community, and communities to provide their own solutions.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

NA.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Ballot Costs

As the Billing Authority we are required by legislation to hold the BID ballot and to bear associated costs. The current quote by Electoral Reform Society is £1480 and there will be a small administrative charge from North Somerset Council Electoral Services which we do not expect to exceed £500.

BIDs must hold five-yearly ballots so future funding will be required if the Clevedon BID seeks to renew its BID in 2023.

Any costs would be met through existing revenue budgets.

Collection Costs

As the Billing Authority we are required to collect the additional BID levy. The collection costs during the 5 years the BID would operate, if the ballot is successful, would be covered by the levy at no cost to the council.

The levy collected would be passed to the Clevedon BID who would allocate funds according to priorities in the Business Plan.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations – to arrange the ballot and collect the levy.

CONSULTATION

The Clevedon BID Steering Group has carried out widespread consultation amongst the businesses that would be affected by the BID and this will be an ongoing matter as the ballot date approaches.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Managing the ballot is required by legislation and it is proposed to use the Electoral Reform Society to carry out the task, who have proven competency for this task.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No

This is an administrative task to deliver legislation and in this context groups should not be adversely affected by this decision.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Improving Town Centres is a key corporate objective and it is widely recognised that BIDs contribute positively in supporting their local economy.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Draft proposal and Business Plan 2018/2023
DCLG – Business Improvement Districts, Technical Guide for Local Authorities

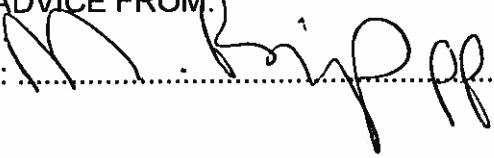
SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed:  Executive Member for Human Resources, Asset Management, Capital Programme, Transformation Programme

Date: 14/02/18

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed:  Director of Development & Environment

Date: 14/02/18