



Subject:	BID 2 Update
Date:	11 October 2017
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development (Ext. 3470)
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) in the Linen Quarter and to make a recommendation as to how the Council might vote in the Belfast Two BID Ballot, which closes at the end of October 2017.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Note the update on BID 2- Agree to a yes vote in the Belfast Two BID ballot, with the votes to be cast by the Director of Finance and Resources on behalf of the Council.

3.0	Main report
	<p data-bbox="290 257 448 286"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="164 309 1471 640">3.1 At the 9 December 2015 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, Members supported the recommendation to provide Belfast City Centre Management with £30,000 towards the cost of a dedicated member of staff to develop a BID in the Linen Quarter District. This project has now progressed through initiation, consultation, development and campaigning stages and is now at ballot stage. The ballot is open for 42 days ending 26 October 2017 with a declaration of result on 27 October 2017. See map in Appendix 1 of the boundary area. The BID area has been named ‘Belfast Two.’</p> <p data-bbox="164 712 1471 992">3.2 Members are reminded that a BID is a business-led initiative in a defined area where businesses decide what additional improvements they want to deliver in that area. The businesses agree on the level of funding required to deliver the projects and services that are additional to those already provided by Council or other statutory partners. They agree to fund these services, set out in a business plan, through a levy which all businesses in the area are required to pay.</p> <p data-bbox="164 1064 1471 1395">3.3 The draft business plan was published on 13 September 2017 for the Belfast Two BID and has been issued to all businesses in the area. It sets out the broad priorities for action agreed to date by the BID Task Team (comprising rate payers in the area). Three areas have been proposed; Safe and Secure District, Cleaner and Brighter District and Promoted and Vibrant District. The final business plan cannot be agreed until the BID is operational. At this point, it becomes a legally binding document which the BID company commits to deliver. If the ballot is successful, the BID will become operational from 1 February 2018.</p> <p data-bbox="164 1467 1471 1648">3.4 There are 431 properties within the Belfast Two BID area, with a combined rateable value of approximately £31.2 million. The Belfast Two BID is proposing a levy of 1.5% of the rateable value. This should produce a total annual income of around £455,000 in year one and is projected to rise to £510,000 in year 5 (owing to redevelopment in the area).</p> <p data-bbox="164 1720 1471 1951">3.5 The BID levy rate will be fixed for the full term of the BID (five years) and will not be subject to inflation or alterations. It will be applied to all businesses within the defined area with a rateable value of or exceeding £4,500, provided they are listed on the Non-Domestic rates list as provided by LPS. The following will be exempt from paying the levy; organisations with a rateable value below £4,500, religious organisations, voluntary-staffed local</p>

	<p>community services, non-profit and charities with an entirely subscription and volunteer-based set up. All of the above organisations will be able to opt-in to the BID by paying the 1.5% levy on their business rates although this will be capped at £450 per annum for all.</p>
3.6	<p>Belfast City Council will be liable for a levy payment on seven properties within the Belfast Two Boundary. This will total approximately £33,601 per annum. Payment of the Council levy will be made by those departments with a responsibility for the seven properties including Property and Projects, City and Neighbourhood Services and Development. The Council will have seven votes in the BID ballot. There are additional resource costs for Council in terms of collecting the BID levy. However, these will be recouped from the BID Company as per previous BIDs.</p>
3.7	<p>The Belfast Two Task Team is confident of a yes vote in the ballot. In order to secure a yes vote, the BID ballot must attract a 25% turnout of eligible businesses by number and rateable value, as well as a 50% yes vote by both property number and rateable value.</p>
3.8	<p>It is proposed that the Council uses its votes to support the BID. This recommendation is based on a number of factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Department for Communities (DfC) is supporting the development of BIDs in Northern Ireland as a key component of its commitment to help strengthen the competitiveness of towns and cities across the region.- The Belfast Chamber has also confirmed that it is supportive of the BID – albeit that each of the Chamber members based in the BID area will be able to take their own decision about how they want to vote in the ballot.- Visit Belfast is supportive of the BID as there are a sizable number of hospitality businesses in the area.- The BID is a mandatory levy. By agreeing to pay it, businesses are taking responsibility for their area and making a commitment to improvements of the business environment. The Council has always been keen to promote a collective approach to city regeneration: this represents a commitment by the private sector to invest their resources not only in their own business but in the wider city centre area. The draft business plan is in line with our plans to support additional investment in the area through the City Centre Regeneration Strategy- The BID provides a strong engagement mechanism for the Council with businesses in the area: by making a financial commitment, this will encourage businesses to take greater ownership of and interest in city centre development activities. There is an

