

Lichfield

Business Improvement District

Lichfield BID Steering Group Meeting

Meeting 6

1st December 2014 – The George Hotel, Lichfield

BID Steering Group

Attendees

- Adam Burns Mace (ABM) - Tudor Row, The Tudor of Lichfield
- Brian Carruthers (BC) – Tempest Ford
- Cllr Ian Pritchard (IP) - Lichfield District Council
- Lisa Prokopiou (LP) – Three Spires Shopping Centre
- Marie Johnson (MJ) - Rieve
- Michael Mullarkey (MM) – Michaels Menswear
- Michelle Baker (MB) – Lichfield BID
- Paul Maddox BID Chairman (PM) - Three Spires Coffee Shop & The Scales
- Richard Lewis (RL) - Lichfield Chamber
- Sam Zeen (SZ) – Debenhams
- Simon Lumb (SL) - Friary Shoes (BID Vice Chairman)

Apologies

- Adrian Dorber - (AD) – Lichfield Cathedral
- Angela Burns - (AB) - The George Hotel
- Anna Riley – (AR) - Cure
- Cllr David Smedley –(DS) - Lichfield District Council
- Dan Ralley – St Johns House
- Elizabeth Thatcher – (ET) - Lichfield District Council
- Guy Gibson – Staffordshire University
- Judith Lundie – (JL) - Room to Inspire
- Karen Wharton – (KW) - Obsession Salon & Spa
- Lizzie Braine– (LB) - The Kitchen Shop
- Mark Bodley – HCB Solicitors
- Matt Burnell -The Smile Centre
- Peter Young - Lichfield City Council
- Peter Young – Lichfield City Council
- Shaun Craven – Le Reve

1. Introductions and Apologies

PM thanked and welcomed all to the meeting, giving apologies for those not present.

2. Notes of Last Meeting

PM asked the group if the minutes of the last BID Steering Group meeting were accepted and agreed as an accurate account of the last meeting. MB said the notes of the last meeting had only been sent to a few and would be sent to all.

3. Minimum Levy Threshold

MB told the Steering Group that it is common practice for BIDs across the UK to set a minimum threshold; 80% of the 200 BIDs in the UK have thresholds. This means that all businesses whose rateable value is below the amount are not entitled to vote nor would be subject to BID levy.

Examples of other, local BIDs that have imposed minimum thresholds are:

- Sutton Coldfield BID – have set a min threshold of £7,500 RV & above
- Rugby BID – have set a min threshold of £7,299 RV & above
- Worcester BID - have set a min threshold of £7,500 RV & above

Currently there are 614 hereditaments within the proposed BID boundary in Lichfield.

It is not practical / feasible / realistic to engage with and win the support of all 614 hereditaments nor financially feasible for the cost of administering and collecting the BID levy from the Council's perspective.

We must be mindful that we want to exclude advertising hoardings, phone masts and the smaller businesses that do not wish to engage or support a BID. For example EE / Orange have a policy of voting to support BIDs for their stores but against BIDs for their phone masts as they would not get any value from a BID for a phone mast / advertising hoarding and consider it bad business practice.

MB explained that as an example, 'The Food Room' on Minster Pool Walk is considered a micro business and if there was a minimum rateable value threshold of £5,000 and above they would still be included within the BID so it would be businesses smaller than them. None of the names that would be excluded have been actively involved with the Town Team / BID.

BIDs tend to offer all businesses that are smaller and not within the threshold the option of paying a voluntary BID membership of £100 per annum so they can be a part of the BID and benefit from the projects.

It is good business sense for the Lichfield BID to set a minimum threshold and if a minimum threshold of £5,000 RV was set this would still be one of the lowest thresholds in the UK so the BID would still be inclusive rather than exclusive but would make sound business sense to expect businesses over a certain RV to support a future BID and support the BID business plan at ballot. It is incredibly difficult to engage with and win the support of every single business.

- If the BID Steering Group set a minimum threshold of £5,000 RV
- It would reduce the annual BID budget by £3,527.01
- This would exempt 75 hereditaments from the ballot and the levy

There would then be 536 hereditaments / 451 businesses within the BID area.

This is a realistic number to actively engage with, for the BID Business Plan to appeal to and to provide with real added value

BID levy would then be:

- 1.5% of RV charged as BID levy throughout BID area
- 1% RV charged as BID levy for Three Spires Shopping Centre (as a managed shopping centre)
- 1.25% RV charged as BID levy for City Arcade and Tudor Row (as serviced areas)
- Annual BID Levy capped at £5,000 (this only applies to Tesco / Morrisons / Waitrose)
- £5,000 RV minimum threshold so all businesses £5,000 RV+ subject to BID vote & levy

The annual BID levy generated per annum would be = **£242,080.04**

BID levy raised over the five year BID term (2015 – 2020) = **£1,210,400.20**

PM asked Steering Group Members to vote and all present voted in favour of a minimum threshold being set.

BC asked why Mcdonalds and Virgin Active in Lichfield South were not within the BID boundary. BC also asked why Tippers and Arthur Price were not within the BID boundary. MB said that BIDs have to draw a clearly defined boundary. Boundaries should not be drawn to include businesses for the sake of charging them levy and especially those that would not necessarily benefit from the projects contained within the BID Business Plan (free radio / free WIFI / taxi marshals / debit card machines on parking meters / events etc).

LP said that the BID would have to demonstrate added-value to all members / stakeholders and that by extending the area this may dilute the BIDs effectiveness and as BIDs are accountable to their stakeholders it could be an issue if the boundary was extended further.

Cllr Pritchard said perhaps the BID should be called the Lichfield City Centre BID then to prevent any confusion. Due to the logo / website / window stickers stating 'Lichfield BID' it is too late to change the name of the BID. A few other businesses on the BID periphery also did not see their businesses as 'in the city centre'.

MB said that there are 14 BIDs in Birmingham alone, BIDs tend to concentrate on a focused area and address the needs / concerns / issues of those businesses within that area. Greenhough Road was originally in the BID boundary but as those businesses are industrial units they were not supportive of the BID as they have different issues that affect their business.

MB said that £30,000 annual contributions in voluntary BID membership had been included within the draft BID Business Plan budget and that Tippers and Arthur Price could be two of many businesses approached to support the BID in this way.

BC and MM asked MB to speak with Tippers and Arthur Price and see whether they would support the BID financially.

4. Storennet Radios

Theme 3 of the BID Business Plan is Safe & Secure.

One project that would be supported by the nationals and the evening economy is receiving a 'Free Storennet radio for years 1-5 of the BID'. This is a project many BIDs provide and is a tangible way of providing added value to businesses.

RL explained that

- The radio could be made available to all pubs and retailers as a part of their BID levy
- These businesses would receive a 'Free Radio' for years 1-5 of the BID
- Up to a maximum of 100 radios across the BID area could be purchased

- 100 radios
- Radios purchased opposed to current set up of renting (they are currently rented)
- Digital radios opposed to current analogue radios
- Antenna installed to enable coverage to extend coverage to Waitrose / Saxon Penny
- Townsafe membership
- Business Crime Manager
- Regular briefings
- Exclusion orders distributed
- Aerial for Waitrose / Saxon Penny as they are out of the current coverage

Cost

— Radios	£20,000	one off cost
— Antenna	£2,500	one off cost
— Licence for radios	£75	per annum
— Townsafe / Pubwatch		
Membership & Business Crime Manager	£17,500	per annum

Costs

£22,500 one off cost in year 1

£17,575 thereafter annual cost in years 1-5

The Steering Group asked where the figure of 100 radios had come from. RL said there are 56 radios in use at the moment and by extending this to 100 it would ensure that all pubs and relevant businesses have a radio.

SZ said to be mindful that businesses may want a radio if they feel are entitled to one as part of their BID levy.

MJ said as a lone worker the radio may be useful for her.

LP said that the radios would be useful for missing children alerts / terrorism threats etc.

LP asked if MRS was the most competitive quote and were they the best provider. PM said that they are tied in to MRS for another two years but that he will also get other quotes.

LP said MRS are not known for their training and this should be written into any future contract. LP said that MRS should provide regular stats of how many businesses are logging on etc.

All agreed that a storenet radio is a good BID project and should go ahead

However all requested further information on the exact number that would realistically be required i.e. how many pubs / retailers?

Action for next meeting: RL and MB to get figures for next BID Steering Group Meeting.

5. Taxi Marshals

PM said that Taxi Marshals would be a project that would benefit the evening economy and that indicative costs would be:

- Two taxi marshals
- Working 9.30pm – 4.30am
- Fri / Sat / Sun Bank Holiday
- Uniform
- Radio

Costs

£25k per annum

SZ said that if 100 radios are a one-off cost at £22,500 and would benefit all business sectors this could be justified but two taxi marshals at £25,000 per annum for each of the five years of the BID term to benefit a percentage of businesses is a niche project that would only appeal to the pubs.

LP questioned the need for Taxi Marshals and said their remit could be wider; BC said that BID security would be a better role and would benefit all business sectors.

MB said for £20,000 a year the Lichfield BID could have their own PCSO, PM said they would not work after certain hours but a Police Officer at £40,000 pa would.

BC said that it should be a wider brief – to create a safe presence within the city. BC also said he would not know what a Taxi Marshal was and other businesses in the BID area may also ask this question.

SZ said her business would not benefit from Taxi Marshals, SL said that is there was some safety wardens / patrol it would help visitors / revellers feel safe and they may return to shop in Lichfield.

[The Steering Group did not make a decision on the Taxi Marshals.](#)

[Action for next meeting: BC asked MB / PM to write a job description for the Taxi Marshals / City Rangers.](#)

6. Purple Flag Award

PM said that Purple Flag represents the standards which need to be achieved and maintained for a successful evening economy. It is similar to the Green Flag for parks and Blue Flag for beaches.

Purple Flag can bring real benefits which include:

- A raised profile and an improved public image for the location
- A wider patronage, increased expenditure
- Lower crime and anti-social behaviour
- A more successful mixed use economy in the longer term

Costs:

<u>Population of local authority</u>	<u>Fee to accompany entry</u>	<u>12 month 'light touch' fee to maintain status</u>
<u>Under 50,000</u>	<u>£1,500</u>	<u>£500</u>
<u>50,000 - 200,000</u>	<u>£2,250</u>	<u>£750</u>
<u>Over 200,001</u>	<u>£3,000</u>	<u>£1,000</u>

SZ said that The Purple Flag Award and Best Bar none would only benefit the pubs and what percentage of businesses in the BID area were pubs; the BID budget should be spent in accordance with the percentages of each business sector. MB to find out number.

LP asked if the BID was concentrating on too many projects about safety rather than projects to benefit this sector in other ways.

BC said shouldn't Lichfield get known for its reputation on an evening and wouldn't that address this rather than winning an accreditation to display a purple flag.

[The Steering Group did not make a decision on the Purple Flag Award.](#)

[Discuss at next BID Meeting.](#)

7. Best Bar None

BBN is a national award scheme supported by the Home Office and aimed at promoting responsible management and operation of alcohol licensed premises. It was piloted in Manchester in 2003 and found to improve standards in the night time economy, with premises now competing to participate. It has since been adopted by 100 towns and cities across the UK and is now being taken up internationally.

The aim of BBN is to reduce alcohol related crime and disorder in a town centre by building a positive relationship between the licensed trade, police and local authorities.

It reduces the harmful effects of binge drinking as well as improves the knowledge and skills of enforcement and regulation agencies, licensees and bar staff to help them responsibly manage licensed premises.

The process of becoming recognised by BBN includes meeting minimum standards and culminates with a high profile award night with category winners and an overall winner.

Responsible operators are recognised and able to share good practice with others. A scheme can also highlight how operating more responsibly can improve the profitability of an individual business and attractiveness of a general area.

In 2007 an agreement was reached between Greater Manchester Police, the Home Office and BII, the professional body for the licensed retail sector, to develop the scheme nationally. An independent committee has been formed and is currently chaired by Philip Kolvin QC. BII's role in Best Bar None is to help and foster future development of the scheme.

[Action for next meeting: PM to get cost for Best Bar None Accreditation](#)

[Discuss at next BID meeting.](#)

8. Footfall Counters

MB said that footfall counters had been tabled previously and at that time the steering group were not in favour in investing in footfall counters however SL was concerned that the BID would have no way of measuring the success of BID events and initiatives and this data would be key at BID AGMs and in writing the second five year BID Business Plan.

For example:

In April the Nottingham BID organised 48 Hours of Fashion, a two-day event in the Old Market Square to highlight the city's broad mix of high street, designer and independent fashion as well as to showcase Nottingham itself – a city that offers an unbeatable visitor experience.

Over the Friday and Saturday of the event, footfall was 16% higher than for other Fridays and Saturdays in the month. If it was not for their footfall counters they would have no way of gauging the success.

Cost of high tech, latest technology counters:

Three locations / three footfall sensors, installed at the same time as WIFI which would reduce the costs (by UK Mobile Media):

- Cost per sensor: £1,450
- Calibration charge per sensor: £120
- Installation per sensor: £800

Cost

£7,110 for three footfall cameras (one off cost)

£400 per annum thereafter

BC said perhaps LP could ask Jones Lang LaSalle whether, for a fee, they would be willing to share information of footfall as Three Spires Shopping Centre is a good area to reflect the footfall in the rest of Lichfield City Centre.

LP asked whether these footfall counters recorded the weather as this was useful and Three Spires footfall counters do not do this.

LP said that Experian provide footfall data and should be approached for a cost.

LP asked who would be extracting the footfall data as the BID Manager / Town Centre Manager would find it time consuming and their role should be front facing public role.

BC said the BID Manager would need administrative support. MB suggested an apprentice.

The initiative of Footfall Counters was agreed by all.

Action for next meeting: MB to ascertain two other quotes for comparison.

9. BID Loan

MB explained that the Steering Group had no budget to fund the design / print / postage of the BID Business Plan in spring 2015.

The Government have a BID Loan fund and MB and ET have completed the application for this. The interest rate is 1% and it can be paid back during the five year term of the BID and does not have to be paid back if there is a no vote.

The BID Loan Fund could also fund a PR company to assist during the BID campaign months and also enable the Steering Group to fund some 'small wins' – demonstration projects.

ABM said this was mentioned at the last Steering Group Meeting and he thought we had already applied.

PM said that the application had now been completed so it was being mentioned to ensure that all were in support of it prior to it being submitted.

All agreed it should be submitted.

10. BID Business Plan

MB said that ET had written the draft BID Business Plan and that it was a working document that when finalised would go out for business consultation for feedback from all businesses.

SZ asked why on the BID Budget (page 15 of the draft business plan) was the Business Crime Manager accounted for twice, it was stated in the line above too.

PM said this was an error and this line would be removed.

BC said he could not see any strategy within the BID Business Plan and that this would have to be written in i.e. the strategy is to create a magical Christmas and the objectives to do this are X, Y, Z.

The Steering Group discussed the Lichfield Style Event. SZ said that with experience of running and participating in fashion events the steering group should be mindful that footfall generated doesn't translate into sales.

SZ was concerned about it being held in Lichfield Cathedral opposed to a marquee in the market square, the location is key. MB said that Harvey Nichols use Manchester Cathedral for their fashion show; SZ said Harvey Nics budget and expertise was most probably greater than Lichfield BID Steering Groups.

PM said that the BID budget in the business plan stating £10,000 per annum was incorrect as it would not take place every year and this would be amended.

SZ said how about a more targeted approach i.e. a Lichfield Wedding Fayre.

SZ and BC said that the BID should carry out targeted, direct marketing rather than prospect marketing.

BC said that technology and ways of interacting with customers has changed and that perhaps the Fashion Show could be online as this was the way that people engage nowadays.

The Steering Group agreed that committing to a Fashion Show / Style Event for all five years of the BID Business Plan was a big commitment and that by stating it within the BID Business Plan could create issues in future years when the BID would have to honour all projects stated within it. Times change

and the marketing strategy that would be undertaken in year 1 of the BID could find that there is no need / demand / interest in a Fashion Show.

LP said that the Food Festival works well because there is an interest and a demand for that.

The Steering Group agreed that the Style Event should be written into the BID Business Plan as a potential project, following the outcome of the marketing strategy so as to ensure that the BID is not wasting funds on an event that there is no demand for.

SL said the heading in the BID Business Plan could be 'More Events' and there could be a panel that decide these each year. LP said that following a yes vote the BID should set up smaller, focused committees that focus on 'Magical Christmas' etc.

SZ asked why an office for the BID Manager had not been accounted for in the BID budget. MB said it was common practice for the BID Manager to be hosted and some businesses / shopping centre liked to host the City Centre Manager. BC said office space was not cheap and SZ said there were added costs of the landline, broadband, meeting room etc.

PM said the Council had offered to help with hosting the BID Manager and there could also be room within the new Police Station that will soon be built.

BC asked Cllr Pritchard whether the City Centre Manager could use office space within the Council and he agreed he could not foresee that to be an issue.

SL, LP, SZ, BC said that the BID business plan budget was very specific and this opens the BID up to scrutiny. The projects within each theme should be grouped. SL said this would also help with meeting future KPI's as currently the BID Business Plan leaves no room for adjustments.

Action for next meeting: MB to confirm where the City Centre Manager will be based.

BID Business Plan to be re-written so that the budget lines on page 15 of the draft business plan are not so specific. Categorise the themes so that, following the marketing strategy the budgets can be more flexible.

11. Any other business

MB mentioned parking; it remains the perceived biggest issue to businesses in Lichfield.

SZ said that the BID should carry out marketing to create awareness that is 'Just £4 to park all day in Lichfield' and also draw up comparisons to other towns and cities and their parking costs.

SZ said Coventry is a BID area and that does not give free parking.

MB said a BID Business Plan should be a direct reflection of the projects and initiatives that businesses want and for £15,000 per annum the BID could provide 100 free car parking spaces each week or on a certain day. This would address the concerns of businesses.

LP said that the BID should not focus on vote winners and should do what is needed.

MB said many BIDs offer free parking initiatives.

Date of next meeting

MB said that BID meetings are the first Monday of every month.

SZ said that with Christmas / New Year the next meeting on 5th January would be too soon for the work to be done on the draft BID Business Plan.

All agreed to hold the next meeting in February 2015.