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Experience Milngavie Business Improvement District

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Business Improvement District?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a business-led initiative within a defined geographical area of a town, city, business district or rural area, where businesses work together and invest collectively in local improvements to their business environment.

These improvements and services will be in addition to those services delivered by local authorities. Through consultation, a range of projects and services is agreed and a business plan developed. This is then put to a democratic vote involving all the eligible businesses in the proposed area.

A BID is often, although not exclusively, a partnership arrangement through which the local business community and statutory authorities can take forward projects which will benefit the local economy.

A BID is not a substitute for central or local government services, but is away additional funding can be raised which businesses then decide how to use to strengthen the local business economy.

What are the benefits of a BID?

BID provides sustainable funding for an agreed period of time, allowing the private sector to work with partners within a flexible mechanism to deliver a wide variety of projects and services which will improve their business environment.

A BID can deliver major benefits to businesses through:

- Increased footfall
- Increased consumer spend and sales
 - Reduced costs
 - Reduced crime
- Enhanced maintenance and care
- More effective joint activity e.g. collective procurement and marketing
 - Improvements to physical surroundings
 - Helping attract and retain staff
 - Attracting new investment
- Improved competitiveness against other locations.

What type of services and projects can a BID deliver?

A BID can cover almost any project or service that the businesses agree would be of benefit and worth funding, as long as these are additional to the services provided by the statutory authorities.

Projects can tackle issues such as:

- access
- safety and security
- environmental improvements
- marketing and promotion
- asset management.

How do we know our services are additional?

It is important to demonstrate that services are additional to those delivered by the local authority. The steering group will include in the business plan a memorandum of understanding or service level agreement showing what services are delivered by the local authority in the proposed BID area.

Local authority services and, where relevant, other statutory authority services will be benchmarked at the beginning of the BID and monitored during the lifetime of the BID.

What role does business play in developing the BID?

Each BID is developed by business for business. Experience from elsewhere is that the initial development stages are brought forward by the public sector with private sector support and generally in areas where there is an existing private/public sector partnership.

Normally, a steering group or task group is established, made up of predominantly private sector individuals and some public sector representatives. After consultation with the businesses, the steering group will identify the proposed geographical area to be covered, the issues to be addressed and projects to be included in the business plan.

The business plan will also set out the delivery mechanisms and performance indicators, as well as the BID governance and management structures.

How is a BID funded?

A BID is funded by business – tenants and, where agreed, property owners – through a levy calculated on the non-domestic rates valuation. The BID steering group will propose the levy rate in the business plan. The levy contributions could be made by a combination of tenants and property owners or by tenants alone. The levy can also be varied by location, by business size or by business sector. The levy monies raised can only be used for the delivery of the BID business plan. Everyone contributes and everyone benefits.

For the latest information on the Experience Milngavie BID, visit

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