

Business Improvement District Initiative	13th December 2016
To: The Leisure and Development Committee For Information	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Accelerating Our Economy & Contributing To Prosperity
Outcome	Maximising business opportunities.
Lead Officer	Head of Prosperity and Place
Cost: (If applicable)	Up to £50,000 from the allocated budget – Stage 1: £7-10,000.

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the ‘Business Improvement District’ (BIDS) initiative.

Background

Coleraine Town Team (CTT) is progressing with the proposal to introduce a Business Improvement District (BID) for Coleraine Town Centre itemised as part of the Town Centre Management function, which sits under the Place & Prosperity Service Area of the Leisure and Development Directorate.

What is a BID?

A BID is a business led initiative within a defined geographical area, in this case Coleraine Town Centre, which will identify actions for additional improvements which are funded via an additional mandatory levy collected through the rates system.

‘A BID can occur where a group of interested businesses get together with their local authority to consider what improvements are needed in their area over and above statutory provision. They then put together a plan, cost it, and decide on an amount of levy that each business must pay over a 5-year period to fund the improvements. The plan is then put out for ballot across all businesses included in the BID area. If the ballot is successful, the BID is implemented, and all businesses in the area must pay. BIDs have seen tremendous success across England, Scotland and many other European and international locations. Since the establishment of national Business Improvement District legislation in England and Wales in 2005, there are over 180 BIDs in place investing more than £300 million into local economies. Source NI BIDS Academy website. <http://nibidsacademy.co.uk/about/>

The Business Improvement Districts Act (NI) received Royal Assent on 21 March 2013 and secondary legislation was implemented in 2014. This has allowed businesses in Northern Ireland to work with their local councils to establish BIDs on a statutory, rather than voluntary, basis.

The BID process takes an average of 12-18 months to establish and to date 6 towns within NI have successfully gained a YES vote for their BID [Ballymena, Strabane, Newry, Belfast One, Belfast Cathedral Quarter, Enniskillen]. CTT will be adopting the 3 step approach identified as part of the NI BIDS Academy pilot programme introduced by the legacy Department for Social Development and facilitated by NI BIDs Company.

Phase	Estimated timeframe	Estimated cost
Foundation Phase	months 0 - 3	£7-10k
Development Phase	months 4 -10 [+/- 6mths]	£60K
Campaign Phase	months 11-12	

CTT will be starting the Foundation Phase of the process and will complete the following actions during the period January to March 2017:

- Engage NI BIDs Company to assist in the Foundation Phase of the Coleraine BID development to include the following:
 - Partnership Review.
 - Development of database and information system.
 - Conduct feasibility study.
 - Identify resources and costs.
- Set up the Coleraine BID company.

For information

As per the business plan for this year, staff will move ahead with the initial phase of BIDs as outlined above.