

PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

WORKING PLYMOUTH SCRUTINY PANEL: MARCH 2015



1. Background

Plymouth City Centre Company Ltd established a Business Improvement District for Plymouth City Centre in April 2005 and it was renewed for another 5 year term in 2010.

Plymouth City Council Cabinet, at its meeting on 9th December 2014 received a paper on the proposals for a further 5 year term to take effect from March 2015. The paper ; Renewal of the Business Improvement District for Plymouth City Centre, described the significant achievements and improvements in the city centre over the last 10 years and how the Plymouth City Centre Company has provided a major voice for many businesses, organisations and partnerships within the City.

The Cabinet supported the proposals and approved the recommendations, namely to;

- Continue to endorse the principles and overall approach of the Plymouth City Centre Company BID and their Business Plan for 2015 to 2020
- Approve the City Council's financial and in kind contributions as set out in this report and to demonstrate continued commitment to the City Centre company BID at existing levels through the proposed BID Concordat and Contract for the provision of services within the Plymouth City Centre Business Improvement area.
- Authorise the City Council Chief Executive as returning officer to instruct a Ballot Holder to undertake a ballot of appropriate businesses within the City Centre Company Business Improvement District area.
- Delegate to the Strategic Director for Place authority to vote on behalf of the City Council in the Plymouth City Centre Company Business Improvement District ballot.
- Delegate to the Strategic Director for Place authority to approve the Plymouth City Centre Company Business Improvement District Contract provided that it accords with the general principles set out in this report.

2. The Ballot

The Council, as Ballot Holder are currently undertaking a democratic ballot of all eligible businesses located with the BID boundary with a ballot deadline of 5pm 16th March 2015. The formal ballot proceedings are being conducted by the Electoral Reform Service. The result of the BID ballot will be announced on 17th March 2015 and assuming a majority of businesses vote 'Yes' in the ballot (both by number and rateable value), the BID will be renewed.

3. The legislative framework

The legislative framework for BIDs includes a provision permitting a local authority to veto BID proposals regarding specific matters. With Plymouth BID being effectively a partnership between the Council and the business/retail sector in the shape of the City Centre Company it is considered important that a degree of independence is maintained when the time comes for the Council, as a whole, to consider whether the power of veto is applicable. The Working Plymouth Scrutiny Panel has been asked to review these matters in accordance with the Secretary of State BID regulations;

Question 1. Does the BID conflict to any material extent with any policy formally adopted by the Council?

Answer. No, the city centre in Plymouth is vital to the heart of the community and the businesses which trade within it. It is a key priority for Plymouth City Council and for the future of the city overall.

Question 2. Does the BID significantly disproportionate financial burden on any person/ class of persons in the geographical area of the BID?

Answer. No, the BID if successful will apply a 1.332% levy to all business rate payers within the BID area

Question 3. Has the geographical area of the BID changed? If so why?

Answer. Yes, the BID area has been extended to include Bretonside and Bretonside Bus Station to take account of the forthcoming development in that area.

Question 4. What is the level of support as evidenced by the result of the BID ballot for the BID proposals?

Answer. The voting mandate and the result of the ballot will be provided verbally to the Working Plymouth Scrutiny panel following the announcement of the result the day before

Question 5. What were the costs in developing the BID proposals and canvassing?

Answer. Costs have been met by the Plymouth City Centre Company as BID Proposer

4. Summary

This paper provides evidence that the Plymouth City Centre Business Improvement District, BID proposals and the ballot comply with matters in accordance with the Secretary of State BID Regulations. This information together with details of the voting mandate and result are to be considered by the Working Plymouth Scrutiny Panel in order for it to determine whether it chooses to exercise its power of veto

The Working Plymouth Scrutiny Panel is invited to view the BID Business Plan 2010-15 at: www.plymouthcitycentre.co.uk/BID .

Author: Patrick Knight, Economy and Employment Manager, Economic Development

Date: 2 March 2015