

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Enterprise Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>15 June 2011</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Hamilton Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID)</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Advise Committee on discussions with the Chamber of Commerce to investigate the opportunity of a BID (Business Improvement District) for Hamilton
- ◆ Seek Committee approval to support the Chamber of Commerce in their campaign.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the Council supports the Lanarkshire Chamber of Commerce in the promotion of a Business Improvement District (BID) for Hamilton Town Centre
- (2) that financial support of up to £45,000 over financial years 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 is provided to the Chamber of Commerce as a contribution towards the costs of campaigning for a positive vote and, if successful, the setting up and operation of a BID company.

## 3. Background

3.1. A Business Improvement District (BID) is a precisely defined geographical area within which businesses have voted to invest collectively to improve their trading environment. BIDs are not a replacement for any services provided by the Council, neither do they affect the level or quality of service provided by the local authority. A BID would provide additional or enhanced services as determined and procured by the local businesses. In summary:

- A Hamilton BID would be a partnership between SLC and the local business community.
- BIDS are an investment in the local trading environment
- BID goals are agreed through consultation and engagement with all stakeholders.

3.2. A BID should support the long term sustainability of the town. Hamilton needs to address the retail migration to out of town developments. A BID will seek to increase customer footfall which should support all businesses within the area. A BID will:

- Enable a planned and coordinated approach to the management of the town
- Provide a sustainable funding stream for the town

- 3.3. All the stakeholders in the town will benefit from the presence of a BID through
- Increased economic activity and footfall with increased spend, sales and profit
  - Improved partnership working between private and public sectors
  - Increased private sector involvement in the delivery of Town Centre initiatives, allowing the Council to focus on core activities.
  - Harnessing private sector management and organisational skills
  - Providing a new sustainable investment that does not detract from other resources
- 3.4. Typically the type of activities carried out by a BID include:
- Marketing of the town/promotional activities - street ambassadors
  - Crime reduction e.g. taxi marshals, Street Pastors, Pub Watch, Safety Zones
  - Environment /Cleanliness - chewing gum removal, hanging baskets, shop front grants
  - Accessibility – signage/lamp post banners, seating, maps & guides, free shuttle buses
  - Vibrancy-Artistic / sport opportunities, kids activities, art in shop windows
- 3.5. The process for the creation of a BID comprises, firstly, the identification of a defined geographical area. Extensive consultation is then undertaken to identify the key issues and a proposal is developed. This proposal / business plan will include delivery guarantees, performance indicators and a management structure. The proposal is put to the non-domestic rate payers within the BID area who would be responsible for paying the levy.
- 3.6. Businesses must vote in favour of the BID in order for it to be established. They vote via a postal ballot that would be conducted by the Council. A successful BID requires the vote to meet two tests:
1. More than 50% of votes cast must be in favour
  2. The positive vote must represent more than 50% of the rateable value of the votes cast.

The BID mandate is for a maximum of 5yrs, but can be extended through another ballot.

#### **4. Proposals**

- 4.1. The Chamber of Commerce has already made a successful bid to the Scottish Government BID Fund for £20,000 of support towards developing a case for a Business Improvement District to be established in Hamilton Town Centre. A website has been launched ([www.hamiltonbid.org](http://www.hamiltonbid.org)) and a Steering Group will be formed.
- 4.2. Scotland already has ten established BIDS and a further ten in development. Bids based in Inverness and Dunfermline are proving to be very successful for both businesses and the council. They have a proven track record of boosting footfall and they are also building a civic pride in their town. Further examples include Elgin which is introducing a free shuttle bus to bring customers into the town and Alloa, where they have launched a shop front improvement scheme. These initiatives are funded and developed by the BID partnership.

4.3. Hamilton's stakeholders have the opportunity to lead the way and develop the first Business Improvement District in Lanarkshire. It is recommended that the Council supports the Chamber of Commerce and the wider business community in Hamilton to establish whether support exists for such a BID and, if so, to progress this initiative.

## **5. Employee Implications**

5.1. There are no employee implications arising from this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1. The £45,000 of costs associated with the Council's involvement in establishing a BID have been identified from existing budgets held by Enterprise Resources.

## **7. Other Implications**

7.1. The risk associated with not supporting the proposal is that the proposed BID might fail and important initiatives to support Hamilton Town Centre could be lost leading to increased calls for Council intervention and investment.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

8.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore, no impact assessment is required.

8.2. Consultation is at an early stage. However, should Committee approval be given detailed consultation with appropriate Council services, particularly Roads & Transportation and Community Resources will be undertaken in order to identify and quantify the existing and future level of Council activity in the BID area.

**Colin McDowall**

**Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)**

11 May 2011

### **Link(s) to Council Objectives/Improvement Themes/Values**

- Improve the quality of physical environment
- Support the local economy by promoting the right conditions for growth, improving skills and employability
- Partnership working, community leadership and engagement

### **Previous References**

- None

### **List of Background Papers**

- None

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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