

Wakefield Business Improvement District

Annual report 2017-18

1.0 Background

In April, the Wakefield BID will have completed one out of the five years of its first mandated Business Plan. The BID brings together city centre businesses and organisations in a range of projects aimed at boosting the economic performance of our city.

The key aim of Wakefield BID is to make the city centre a better place to visit, shop, relax, work and live. A better city centre means a better trading environment and more prosperity for our city, our businesses and our residents.

Our Business Plan captures the key sentiments of our aims and these remain paramount:

- Spend income exclusively on activities that will build up footfall, dwell time and local spend
- Acknowledge that our customers' experience is critical to our ongoing business success and work hard to towards raising this
- Utilise the vibrant community life of Wakefield to enrich the city centre and its appeal
- Spend locally whenever possible to keep our money within the local economy
- Push hard and consistently to ensure that local businesses engage in the overall commercial life of Wakefield and participate fully in what we plan and organise

We still believe that the Business Improvement District model is the very best approach we have available to ensure that we realise our collective vision for the city and BIDs continue to be formed around the UK, now numbering almost 300 in total. Many have completed their first five-year terms and have renewed their mandates, usually with increased turn-outs and majorities in favour, demonstrating that businesses are convinced that BIDs make an appreciable difference to their ongoing viability.

2.0 Key activities

Elizabeth Murphy was appointed as BID Manager in June 2017 and has recently been joined by City Centre Ambassadors Megan Davis and Caroline Briggs. These new appointments have given the BID a renewed impetus and projects completed successfully include:

- The development of a programme of new events for 2018, including an improved Long Division, a Wakefield Car Show, Wakey Races Soapbox Rally and Restaurant Week
- Production & delivery of 20,000 copies of a WOW Christmas booklet, which promoted businesses from within the BID district and offered free advertising to levy-payers
- The appointment of a local organisation to assist the BID with marketing & communications
- The introduction of a business cost reduction programme for BID businesses via Meercat Associates
- A partnership arrangement with Arriva Travel to offer BID businesses & staff discounted travel on the local public transport network
- Temporary office accommodation being set up in Unity Works, which was followed by a move to a permanent office base in Silver Street Barstow Square
- The production and distribution of two newsletters to all BID levy-payers
- Over 20 positive press features in the Wakefield Express, the Yorkshire Post and other local publications
- Successful lobbying to influence the City Council not to introduce charging beyond 6pm on Sundays
- Social media campaigns on Twitter, Facebook & Instagram, which have grown to a combined total of almost 1,000 followers since June 2017
- Meetings with the Police, the City Council and other agencies to address the problems with antisocial behaviour
- The introduction of the first Make a Difference Day in January 2018, which involved litter removal, sandblasting of the streetscene, improvements to street furniture and cleaning of planters
- The replacement of over 30 city centre bins
- Additional planting & landscaping
- A Small Business Saturday event in December 2017
- Preparations for Purple Flag accreditation to raise the management standards of the evening economy
- Assistance to small businesses in gaining retail grants
- Hosting of the Association of Town & City Management regional meeting
- Investment in a software system to improve communication with BID levy-payers

- The creation of a new Gin Festival and VIP launch event for the Food, Drink & Rhubarb Festival
- Support for the successful introduction of a RingGo app to improve parking in the city centre

3.0 Financial information 2017-18

The income to support the activities outlined in our business plan is derived principally from the levy collected from local businesses within the BID boundary, although some income arises from external sources such as sponsorship and grants.

This levy is based on the Rateable Value of the property, as stated on the ratings list held by the Council's rating department and all rated and liable business property within the BID boundary, with very few minor exceptions, will pay 1.25% of their assigned RV, apart from those units which fall under the management of a shopping centre or market and who pay service charges to the operator, who pay 0.75% of their assigned RV. Units with a rateable value of less than £12,000 or unoccupied units are exempt from the levy.

The BID exists as a non-profit making Company, with all income being used towards the delivery of the Business Plan on behalf of our levy payers. We employed the services of a local firm of Accountants, SFB Group in order to provide independent financial accounts for the BID and to make all the necessary submissions & returns on our behalf.

The forecast financial summary for the year to 31 March 2018 is as follows:

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2017/18

INCOME

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| BID levy | £253,526 |
| Voluntary contributions | £600 |
| Total income | £254,126 |

EXPENDITURE

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Lively & Well Promoted | £20,825 |
| Smart & Attractive | £17,688 |
| Welcoming & Accessible | £26,420 |
| Great Place to do Business | £12,313 |
| Management costs | £26,449 |
| BID levy collection charge | £8,500 |
| Contingency | £10,000 |
| Total expenditure | £122,195 |
| Forecast surplus to carry forward | £131,931 |

NOTES TO ACCOMPANY THE FORECAST FINANCIAL SUMMARY

1. Figures prepared as of the end of February 2018.
2. Final accounts to be prepared after the financial year end of 31 March 2018.
3. The forecast surplus will be fully budgeted against key BID projects in subsequent years.
4. The figures differ from the stated Business Plan, mainly due to changes in Rateable Values following the 2017 revaluation process.

4.0 Plans for 2018-19

We have developed a focused plan of proposed activities to cover the 2018-19 year and these allow us to prioritise a number of key activities, whilst also ensuring that we retain a strong focus on our Business Plan.

The 2018-19 Action Plan is therefore shown as Appendix 1 of this document.

We urge all BID organisations to become involved in our work. If you therefore wish to be involved in the management of the BID or participate in any of our work, then please visit our offices, at Silver Street Barstow Square or contact us as follows:

01924 632262

info@wakefieldbid.co.uk

www.wakefieldbid.co.uk

[Facebook.com/wakefieldbid](https://www.facebook.com/wakefieldbid)

[@WakefieldBID](https://www.instagram.com/WakefieldBID)

Wakefield BID Action Plan 2018-19

Introduction

The aim of Wakefield BID is to make the city centre a better place to visit, shop, relax, work and live. A better city centre means a better trading environment and more prosperity for our city, our businesses and our residents and we plan the following activities in 2018-19:

Objective 1: Lively and well promoted - budget £85,500

Deliver a dynamic promotional plan, to include enhanced i) Branding ii) Identity building iii) Design iv) PR v) Digital & social media vi) Campaigns vii) Market intelligence. In doing this, ensure that a balance is struck between the promotion of the various sectors identified in the Business Plan, including i) Retail ii) Health & Beauty iii) Culture & Leisure iv) Professional services v) Wakefield College vi) Events.

Ensure that, whilst retaining a balanced approach to a range of communication methods, that greater emphasis continues to be placed on electronic media.

Continue to work with a group of stakeholders to better collectively market the city centre and partner with all appropriate local, regional & national promotional activity.

Objective 2: Smart and attractive – budget £73,500

Continue plans to arrange additional floral displays and festive and creative lighting for 2018.

Provide an ongoing programme of additional cleaning services, with a focus on targeted street cleaning and deep cleaning, including the purchase of a high-quality pressure washer.

Agree and publish initiatives which will improve and protect the public realm and the buildings of the city centre, including working with landlords, agents and others to ensure that vacant premises or derelict properties are improved.

Organise at least two Make a Difference days during the year.

Objective 3: Welcoming and accessible – budget £93,500

Agree and publish plans to influence and optimise the integration of transport links in respect of trains, buses, taxis, car parks, cycling, pedestrian flow & signage.

Recruit a City Centre Warden, with a specific focus to closely work with the Police and other agencies in tackling antisocial behaviour and crime issues which impact upon the visitor experience.

Work with businesses and other partners including the Police and Local Authority to develop a plan to attain Purple Flag status.

Introduce and publicise measures to tackle anti-social behaviour and crime issues which impact upon the visitor experience and businesses in certain areas both day and night.

Work to highlight and support the free city bus system.

Objective 4: A great place to do business – budget £30,000

Influence and publish plans and proposals for new buildings, signage, building refurbishments and public realm developments.

Work with partners, landlords and property agents in the marketing of the city centre to those potential new businesses and investors.

Continue to deliver Business Cost Reductions for BID Businesses.

Agree and publish a scheme for 2018 with Wakefield College to develop business skills.

Appoint an organisation to promote and develop customer service excellence through award schemes which profile businesses and individuals and celebrate, recognise and promote a great shopping, eating and drinking experience in the city centre.

Develop effective communications between businesses and the BID organisation, including quarterly newsletters, regular email updates and website maintenance.

Delivery

To assist the delivery of this action plan, four working-groups will be set up as follows:

| | |
|--|---|
| <u>Lively & Well Promoted</u> Jon Ingham Lee Appleton Jenny Thompson | <u>Smart & Attractive</u> Lynne Thompson Andy Shearwood Alan Robinson |
| <u>Welcoming & Accessible</u> Kim Purcell Alan Robinson Billy Muirhead | <u>Great place to do business</u> Graham Howarth Charlotte Faulkner Denise Jeffreys |

Measures and governance

The Wakefield BID will measure the impact of our projects and will communicate progress back to all BID businesses in several ways, including:

- Organising an annual survey of BID businesses from 2018 to seek detailed feedback on their perception of the performance of the town and the BID
- Producing and distributing an Annual Report to BID members to track progress and continue to develop activities in line with business feedback
- Inviting all BID levy-payers to an AGM to report back to them on operational, project and financial management

We will also commission an organisation to assist with measuring i) Footfall ii) Digital media engagement iii) Sales iv) Media exposure v) Engagement of BID businesses vi) Engagement of public vii) Visitor surveys viii) Number of events ix) car park usage x) Public transport usage xi) Crime figures xii) Business awards xiii) Enquiries through commercial property agents.