

June Shadow Board Draft Business Plan Pillars

The shadow board met for a final time to discuss the overall business plan. The points below were agreed to go into the draft business plan, to be produced by July. This will then be the subject of further consultation until a final business plan is produced in September. The final business plan will have more detail under each of the pillars.

1. Public Events

Background

Events were one of the major focuses of the first BID (running until March 2018). When we consulted with current BID levy payers in 2016, events again were by far the most important aspect of the BID for the majority of current levy payers.

Future Business Plan

There's broad agreement that the current BID event plan works. We run different events in different areas, attracting different demographics and at different times of the year, all co-ordinated with other city events, such as the Christmas Markets & Manchester Pride.

Purpose of our events:

- 1) Market and promote the city centre, driving footfall and repeat visits
- 2) To make the city centre more lively and vibrant
- 3) To achieve at other points of the year what the Christmas markets achieve in December

We will continue with the major BID events, all of which have grown in scale during the first BID term:

- Chinese New Year
- Halloween
- King Street Festival
- Student Events (spring and autumn)

We will continue to develop the summer festival offer.

We will also investigate the potential for other events, including a restaurant festival.

2. Marketing and PR

Background

Marketing of the city centre was essential in the first BID because of the huge impact of the new tram line being built through the retail core. There was a major focus on ensuring the 'business as usual' message was transmitted, primarily within the region. With the City Hosts Ambassador scheme, we've provided a welcome for visitors which has become increasingly well-used, not least because of Manchester's status as a leading visitor destination for UK and international tourists. We also produced a number of stand-alone marketing pieces such as a guide-book.

Future Business Plan

- The BID will continue to have a role in marketing the city centre, working closely with partners to maximise the offer to visitors.

- We will continue to run the City Host scheme providing a welcome to visitors.
- We will continue to produce ad hoc marketing materials including city guides, which are highly cost effective and good for the brand of the city centre.
- We will work on the physical visitor welcome, helping to improve the appearance of the city to visitors and working on wayfinding.
- We will develop the digital presence more, and enhance the BID's own brand
- Future work will also be focused on supporting Marketing Manchester's work in attracting overseas and UK national tourists. This will be seen in a number of areas—
 1. Providing incentives for new visitors on new routes
 2. Providing content to fill the itineraries of visitors
 3. Improving the culturally-aware experience for visitors once they arrive

3. Operational Activity

Background

The business plan of the first BID was focused clearly on marketing, events and promotion. The consultation process explicitly didn't endorse the BID delivering operational services.

However, increasing support has been given through the link to CityCo. CityCo responds to members of the BID as it would to CityCo members, logging issues, raising with the correct authorities and increasingly working on solutions directly with the private sector.

The consultation process that took place in autumn 2016 with BID members raised operational support as one of the desired major pillars for the future BID business plan.

Future business plan:

We will aim to have a direct input in areas such as rough sleeping, cleansing and crime within the BID area. Alongside, we will do more on the education of staff, customers and public around the issues that affect the BID area.

- A pot of money will be held for ad hoc activity as issues affect businesses
- On rough sleeping, we will support funding the Street Support app and developing the BID's own strategy
- We will investigate the potential for more street washing and greater investment in recycling bins.
- We will develop educational campaigns aimed at staff and customers to ensure businesses take responsibility for their own rubbish and to encourage people to give to BigChangeMCR and not directly to beggars.
- We will encourage businesses to work together to raise money for charity, engaging employees to fund-raise to have a direct impact on their neighbourhoods.
- The City Host scheme will continue to report on operational issues.
- We will continue to provide regular briefings on security and counter terrorism, and work with specific BID areas on evacuation and safety plans

We will not be directly managing services or seeking to replace current services provided by the public sector. All services supported by the BID will be additional to those provided by the public sector.

4. Lobbying

Background

The presence of nearly 400 businesses around a virtual 'table' was seen as one of the strengths of the BID when it was created. Almost immediately, the BID was focusing on lobbying and information flow around the Metrolink 2CC (and other) transport works. We had very regular meetings with the operational team behind the tram works, and lobbied hard to ensure businesses were contacted and fully briefed. When we were unhappy with communication, we went straight to the MCC Chief Executive and met with him or his team to raise serious concerns.

However, apart from in this area, lobbying has only been on an ad hoc basis, and has often received only a limited response.

Future Business Plans:

- We will ensure our own 'house' is in order—working amongst ourselves to solve operational issues e.g. commercial waste & litter—and influence our customers and staff
- We will look at the key priorities and campaigns of the local council and the Mayor's office—to 'go with the grain' and support their initiatives. For example, on helping making Manchester a world famous tourist city and on ending homelessness
- We will analyze issues and risks and be clear what conversations need to be developed (using a wider meeting of the BID membership), and then speak to other sectors (hotels, professional services) so we work together.
- We will develop specific campaigns for staff and customers, including charity fundraising.
- We will develop background materials around the size of the BID in terms of numbers of employees and importance to the economy

5. Internal Communications

We currently produce a monthly newsletter, have weekly sales and footfall statistics on the BID's website, have regular street meetings and socials, and produce quarterly print & online reports on the BID's activities.

The tragic events of May 22nd demonstrated the power in being able to communicate quickly and efficiently with businesses across the city centre. Within ten hours of the bomb at Manchester Arena, we sent out the first of many briefings across the BID, and to head and regional offices, while the Hosting team on the ground provided re-assurance and the latest news.

- We will seek to deepen our contact database and ensure ever more up-to-date knowledge of store staff addresses and information
- We will host an annual meeting/conference of all members of the BID to celebrate achievement and raise issues
- We will continue with City Host visits to the retailers as the best way of ensuring involvement
- We will continue with quarterly reports, and include regional and head offices in this.

Other matters:**Governance**

There will be a smaller main board than in the first BID, with representation across sectors and sizes of stores. Alongside, we will have sub-groups for each of the pillars of the business plan with wider membership than just the board members, as well as a finance and exec board which would take more detailed decisions where necessary. We will have an annual meeting open to all levy-payers, to discuss the business plan. We will also look to set up sector groups for finance and food and beverage.

Finance

The final decision on the levy level will take place after further consultation. However, we are committed to not having it about 1.5% of RV, and continuing with a discount for Arndale businesses that already pay a substantial service charge.

The BID's current administration costs at under 12% of total levy is one of the lowest levels in the country, and this is thanks to the union with CityCo, which can provide back-end support services. We will aim to keep this cost low so that all resources are directed at providing services.