**Potential Options for CityCo to Manage ‘City Host’ Service Ambassadors**

**On behalf of**

1. **Existing Retail/Leisure BID**
2. **New city centre Accommodation BID**

**Heart of Manchester Retail BID – Current Arrangements**

City Hosts team been established since inception of BID in 2013, so approaching 10 year’s experience. Again Hosts are a key part of BID’s future business plan, ahead of ballot in December this year, seeking another 5 year term (April 2023-2028).

Originally managed by a third party, team have been managed directly by CityCo for the last three years. Role can be summarised as:

* X3 Key Host functions
  1. Greeting visitors into the BID district – focusing on visitors looking like they need help to find hotels, restaurants
  2. Visiting BID businesses – sharing key information about the BID and city centre. Each Hosts has ‘patch’ of businesses they have built a relationship with
  3. Environmental reporting on issues with public realm, including graffiti and other cleaning issues, mostly to MCC and BID Operations team for resolution
* Team largely work on own covering the three different functions at different times of day. Return to CityCo offices (Albert Square) for lunch and tea break
* Team leader reports to BID Project Officer, who provides over direction and synergy with rest of BID/CityCo team
* Use a phone based app to record environmental issues, update business contacts and other information
* 6 strong team (6FTE) covering 363 days a year (not Christmas day or Easter Sunday). Paid a salary based on the ‘real living wage’ and currently includes x2 Team Leaders paid an additional premium
* Dual bonus scheme based on (1) bi-annual mystery shop (2) quarterly absence record. Birthdays are a day off
* Full uniform provided with winter and summer options (predominantly from BID retailers). Overcoats and waistcoats are prominently branded with both an ‘*i*’ for information and BID logo
* Usual working hours 10am – 7pm Mon-Sat and 11-5pm Sunday. Rolling rota across 6 weeks with all team included in weekend working. Rota usually includes one full weekend off and a Sunday-Monday. All team are flexible to covering different shift patterns and share bank holidays equally
* Pension is as per CityCo. Health insurance scheme also. First x3 days absence unpaid

**Manchester City Centre Accommodation BID: Working Model Options**

**Key Functions**

* Provide a warm welcome to visitors to the city centre at main entrance gateways, particularly Piccadilly and Victoria Stations. Can also move to other key Metrolink and bus interchanges as visitor arrival patterns vary
* More likely to be based on station approaches/exits – to avoid being in the station and having predominantly timetable based enquires (this worked well in Leeds)
* At times of high visitor influx, could also work ad-hoc at the airport or any other desired locations. Could be in all locations for major festivals, events and conferences, e.g. political conferences, Pride, Diwali
* With different visitors arriving at different phases for business, leisure and night time economy, team hours would reflect this. Primarily 8am start time at both stations with higher staff numbers, plus potential of a later shift from 10am-7pm to help greet early evening visitors
* Will require a broad range of languages throughout the team to reflect Manchester’s international status
* All team would have high degree of service training (World Host accreditation or similar) and be able to direct visitors to hotels, landmarks such as arenas and conference centres
* All Hosts would have an app based system to record visitor interaction trends e.g. top ten locations requested
* Hosts can also do environmental reporting
* Possible links to hotel concierges also? Zoom/Teams?

**Working Arrangements**

Either

1. x8 (FTE) strong team. Gives continuous cover 363 year, across same rota as retail BID. With holidays and days off would mean some lone working

* One team leader
* Potential to include part time
* Mondays assumed least staff as quietest intake day

1. x12 (FTE) team as above but added benefits of working in teams at stations – so more cover and less gaps (e.g. all breaks are covered). As x8 option plus:

* More flexibility to be in multiple locations in the city at the same time
* Can maintain a larger team into the early evening, helping with those leaving conferences, arriving at stations. Shift A would be 8am-5pm and shift B 10am-7pm
* Two team leaders

**Management**

* Management would be via a team leader, reporting into the BID Project Officer who would ultimately manage across both teams
* Possible to share Host resource but this would be by exception, so as not to dilute the retail BID relationships with businesses, and ability to maintain level of operational reporting
* More likely to be shared cover at management level to ensure continuity e.g. if Team Leaders are on holiday

**Benefits**

* All as per the retail BID, allowing economies of scale across the two teams

**Considerations**

* Would need to develop/buy an improved visitor centric app system to record visitor interactions. Could be done with BID Base to refine current basic model
* Uniforms – would need specific branding or both teams ‘Welcome to Manchester’? With higher volume and likely higher turnover staff in Accommodation BID team, probably seek a corporate contract
* Location of team base for start/end of day and for breaks? Somewhere in or near the stations rather than all way back to CityCo?
* Free tram pass would allow rapid travel between the stations for team and help with cover!
* Both teams could lead the way with other volunteers and service teams in the city – e.g. shared training before Christmas Markets, team leader regular meetings with TfGM, history tours etc.