

Agenda Item	3
Report No	CIA/57/15

REPORT ON INVERNESS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Report by Inverness City Area Manager

**Summary**

This report provides a summary of the activities of the Inverness BID Ltd, operating as Inverness City Centre Business Improvement District (BID), for the period November 2014 to December 2015

**1. Background**

- 1.1 BID is a private sector led initiative where businesses, within the clearly defined geographical city centre area work together, invest and collectively deliver projects over an agreed period that will have impact in that area.
- 1.2 BID is an independent, not-for-profit company limited by guarantee which is entirely separate from the Council. BID is run by a Board of Directors drawn from Members of the Company which are businesses located within the City Centre.
- 1.3 BID started operating in April 2008 as one of the first in Scotland. There are now 34 operational BIDs in Scotland with 6 voted into being by local businesses over the past year. They are being used as the primary mechanism for the business community to collectively create a budget which can be used flexibly to promote business growth.
- 1.4 Inverness BID is a geographic BID representing the four City Centre business sectors (office, hospitality, retail and property owners). A map showing the extent of the area covered by BID is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.5 Businesses in the BID area originally voted for a BID to be established in March 2008 and when that 5 year term of office was complete in March 2013 a renewal Ballot was held which confirmed the support of the city centre business for a further 5 year term to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.
- 1.6 That Ballot result showed a massive 77% of BID continuing (up from 73% in 2008) on a turnout of nearly 50% of the city centre businesses (34% in 2008).
- 1.7 BID's remit, as agreed by its members and set out in its Business Plan 2013-18 is to deliver a series of projects and services to improve the trading environment of Inverness City Centre to the benefit of the business levy payers, their customers, clients and visitors.
- 1.8 BIDs are supported by the Scottish Government as part of its economic strategy.

## **2. Benefits and Partnership Working**

- 2.1 Governance of BID rests with the Board of Directors who report to their 850+ members of the Company on a regular basis, with their AGM held each Spring. The Directors are drawn from representatives of each of the business sectors in the City Centre. Board Membership is shown at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.2 The Inverness Provost & Leader of the City is a Member of the Board of Directors and attends Board Meetings, which are held approximately every six weeks. The primary links to the Council are through the Provost/Leader of the City and the City Area Manager. The City Area Manager meets with the BID Manager on a regular basis to ensure consistent communication at City level. The BID Chairman also maintains wider links with the Council. The Director of Development and Infrastructure and the Inverness City Area Manager support the role of the Provost/Leader of the City in relation to BID issues.
- 2.3 There is a focus on the need to promote economic vibrancy, which is at the heart of the objectives of the Councils Programme and the Inverness City Vision and BID is clearly aligned with these ambitions.
- 2.4 The BID Chairman sits on the Inverness Castle Working Group and BID also feed into the work of the Inverness City Taskforce, led by the Director of Development and Infrastructure.
- 2.5 Links through regular meetings have been established between the City BID and the Inverness/Lochness TBID.
- 2.6 BID will be present at committee to give a powerpoint presentation on the work of the Company.

## **3. Partnership Projects**

- 3.1 BID continues to work with Highland Council on a number of joint initiatives (see below) that add value to what is provided by the Public Sector in an effort to generate economic vibrancy.
- 3.2 Coach Ambassador Scheme – At the request of the Highland Council between the months of May and October 2015 BID provided a Coach Ambassador Service to act as a liaison between the residents and businesses on Ardross Street and with the Coach Operators as part of making 'Inverness Coach Friendly'. More than two hundred and sixty different companies visited Ardross Street to drop off/pick up with July with 392 coaches being the busiest month – the busiest day was Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August when it was used by 38 coaches. There will be a further report to Committee early in 2016.
- 3.3 Advocacy – Streetscene Amenity  
The formulation of a new co-ordinated policy proposal on the management of anti-social behaviour. BID understand the complexities of addressing anti-social behaviour issues and have been supportive in facilitating an operations base for partners from both the public and voluntary sector in their work within the City Centre. BID also support the new Inverness Response Team – led by Police Scotland and the Council.

- 3.4 Advocacy – City Centre Development Brief  
BID is working with the Council in updating the Brief and formulating a clear set of practical propositions for the improvement of the built environment in the City Centre.
- 3.5 Safety – Inverness Community Safety Partnership (ICSP)  
Set up in 2010, the ICSP has become a template model for the delivery of partnership working in the City. The Council and BID have worked with the Police, NHS Highland, Highlands and Island Fire and Rescue service and others including the Third Sector, to deliver projects such as Operation Respect, Bonfire Night safety messages, Operation ‘True Grit’ the joint approach to dealing with Cold Calling.
- 3.6 Safety – BID Security Task Team and Taxi Marshals  
Jointly funded by Inverness Common Good Fund and BID - this has provided a service which has been recognised by the Police as providing a significant contribution to reducing crime in the City centre.
- Marketing
- 3.7 BID recognises the value that events bring to the city centre and has worked with the Council to create a “Welcome” to many events including most recently the 2015 World Orienteering Championships. They will also be assisting with the marketing and the welcome for the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Golf Open Championship, at Castle Stuart Golf Club in 2016.
- 3.8 Amenity – Gull Management  
This is a project to remove eggs and nests from Inverness city centre and the adjacent areas. Following the SNH report it was always recognised that there would be no quick fix to the problem of gulls which without an intervention programme, SNH project grows at the rate of 7% per annum. The project is run by BID and is jointly financially supported by them and the Inverness Common Good Fund. A total of 6,091 eggs have been removed in the past 4 years which has, in a carefully managed way, restricted the number of nesting gulls in the City centre. SNH recently projected that the 1753 eggs removed in 2015 prevented between 501 & 808 gulls being fledged i.e. reared to an age at which they can fly.
- 3.9 Amenity – City Flowering Project  
BID co-ordinates this project and in 2015 a total of 826 floral displays were provided in the city with BID co-funding with support from the Common Good Fund. Following completion of the Flood Prevention Works earlier this year, this summer’s floral baskets were extended by a further 130 displays to include the Riverside areas.
- 3.10 Amenity – BID Ambassadors  
The BID team continues to monitor amenity issues in the city centre as well as undertaking removal of fly-posting and graffiti which are reported to and dealt with in liaison with the Council and the Police.
- 3.11 Business Professional Development  
BID continues to run business training events to give city centre enterprises are running a series of business awareness events to give the small/medium enterprises support in areas such as Social Media, Visual Display and Marketing.

- 3.12 The relationship between BID and the Council has developed over the years to one of a respectful understanding of the needs of each organisation. A communications protocol has been put in place so BID is given prior notice of matters that may affect the City Centre. Presentations are also regularly made to BID Board meetings
- 3.13 BID has been successful in making application to the Inverness Common Good Fund for project funding which has allowed more effective use of the funds put into BID by City businesses. **Appendix 3** provides a summary of the projects funded in the current financial year.
- 3.14 The relationship between business and the public sector is vital to the ongoing development of the City of Inverness. BID represents the 850+ businesses in the City Centre. Being a body incorporated under statute, BID is thus a significant partner of the Council in ensuring that Inverness has a high profile as “the City in the Highlands” and the private sector “adds value” to the activities of the public agencies. Although BID’s focus is on the City Centre, there is no doubt that the benefits of working with BID pro-actively and progressively is leading to reflective benefit on the wider areas.
- 3.15 If the projects listed in this report were not undertaken in partnership with BID, the Council could find it more expensive to deliver such projects, certainly to the same standard, or indeed to deliver some of them at all.

#### **4. Implications**

##### **4.1 Rural, Legal, Risk, Equalities and Climate Change implications.**

The projects highlighted in this report meet all aspects of Council Policy. Care is taken to ensure that the benefits of each project are shared by a broad cross-section of the community.

#### **Recommendation**

The Committee is invited to:

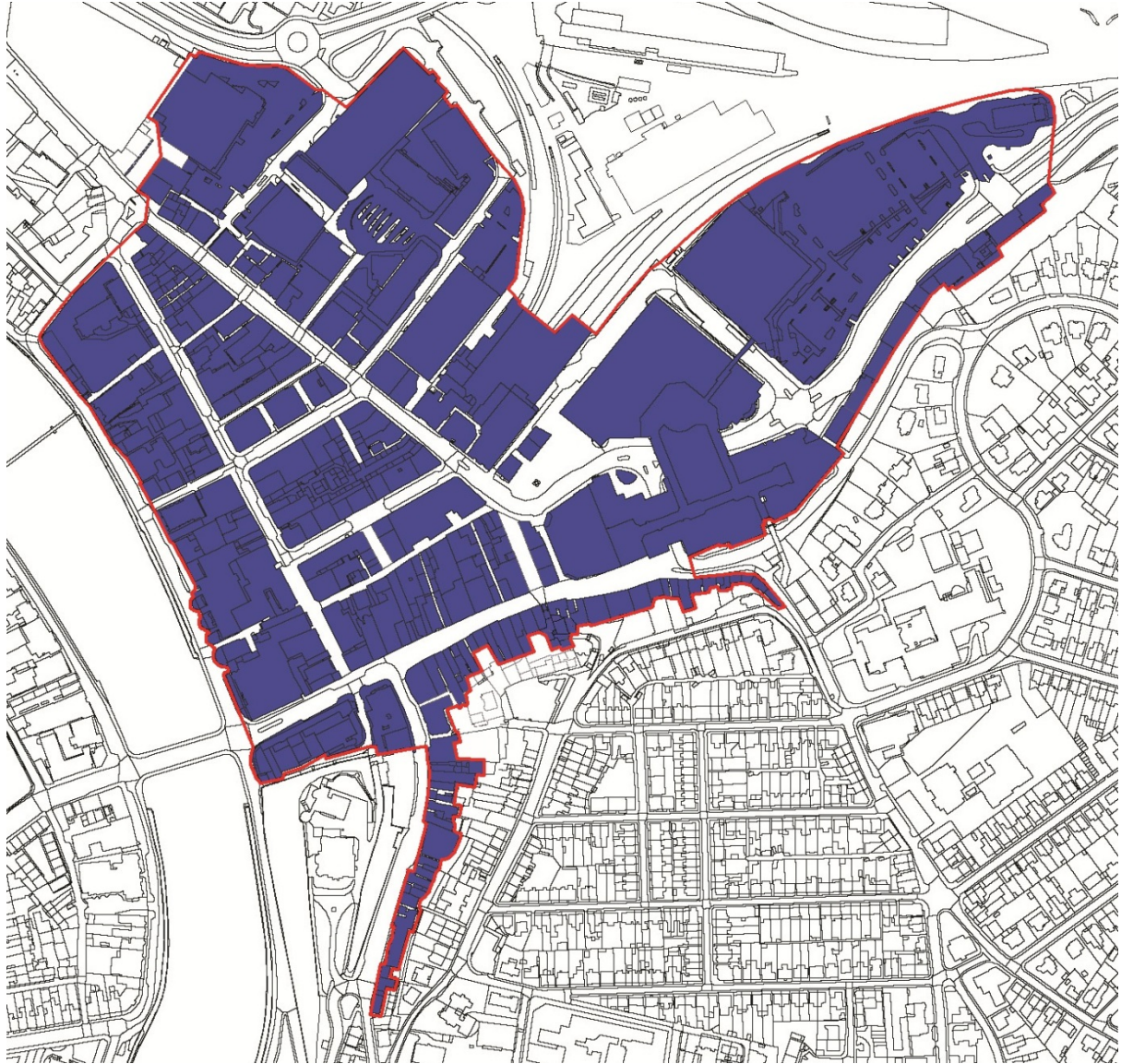
- (i) endorse the work detailed in this report; and
- (ii) note the presentation provided by Inverness BID representatives and the on-going development of partnership working.

Designation: Inverness City Area Manager

Author: David Haas, Inverness City Area Manager

Date: 14 November 2015

Background Papers: None



**Inverness BID Directors (Nov 2015)****Appendix 2**

Mr Craig Duncan	McDonalds Restaurant
Mrs Jackie Cuddy	Eastgate Centre
Cllr Helen Carmichael	Inverness Provost & Leader of Inverness & Area
Mr Duncan Chisholm	Duncan Chisholm & Sons Ltd
Mr Bill Fraser	Duncan Fraser & Son
Mr Malcolm Fraser	Duncan Fraser Fishmonger
Sheonagh Jack	Marks & Spencer
Mr Charlie Lawrence	Graham & Sibbald
Mr Don Lawson	Johnny Foxes/The Den
Gayle MacLeod	Boots
Mr Brian Philip	The Music Station
Ms Graine Riach	Edinburgh Woollen Mill
Mr Donald Shaw	Allen & Shaw
Mr Peter Strachan	Serco Caledonian Sleeper
Mr Graham Thomson	Coffee Affair
Mr Graham Watson	MacLeod & MacCallum

**Contribution from Inverness Common Good Fund to BID delivered projects 2015/16**

**Appendix 3**

**Marketing**

Inverness Street Theatre Festival                      Oct 2015                      Contribution of £7k to total project cost of £25k

**Civic Amenity**

City Centre Floral Displays                      June-Oct 2015                      Contribution of £50k to a total project cost of £77k  
Gull Project                      Summer 2015                      Contribution of £12k out of total project cost of £16k

**Community Safety**

Task Team                      Easter & Summer 2015                      Contribution of £5.5k of total project cost of £11k  
Operation Respect                      Christmas & New Year 2015                      Contribution of £5k of total project cost of £10k  
Inverness Community Safety Partnership                      2015/2016                      Contribution of £12k out of project cost of £32k

**Coach**

Coach Ambassador                      Summer 2015                      Provision of £17k for total project cost of £17,381