

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Policy and Resources– For Information	Dated: 13/02/2025
Subject: Business Improvement District Update	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • fulfils contractual duties • provides business enabling functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diverse Engaged Communities - Vibrant, Thriving Destination - Providing Excellent Services
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	£
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	No
Report of:	Katie Stuart, Executive Director, Environment Department
Report author:	Ruby Raw, Stakeholder and Programmes Coordinator, Environment Department

Summary

Members requested an update further to a report and discussion Business Improvement Districts held at Policy and Resources Committee in October 2024.

Recommendation(s)

Members are recommended to note this report for information

Main Report

Background

In October 2024, Members agreed:

- for a renewal ballot to commence in the Cheapside Business Alliance BID and the Aldgate Connect BID areas, on the basis of their draft Business Plans.
- To support the City Corporation’s evolving relationship with the City BIDs by endorsing Officers’ proposals to achieve the following objectives:

- i) A shared understanding of roles, including developing baseline analyses of City services, strategies and projects for each BID area,
- ii) Better coordination of goals, with an initial focus on Business perception analyses and the recast Destination City programme.
- iii) Good governance including reporting back against shared success criteria.
- iv) Smarter use of resource, including regular officer working groups for better internal coordination and more support for Member Observers.
- v) Investing in Strong working relationships, supporting the Chairs and Boards.

It was agreed that an interim report would come back to Policy and Resources Committee later in the civic year providing an update before the current Court was dissolved. This would allow for existing Members familiar with the discussions being able to review progress. This paper forms the interim report.

Current Position

Since this report, officers have undertaken actions and plans to reflect the commitments of the BIDs paper presented in P&R October 2024.

1. To achieve: *A shared understanding of roles, including developing baseline analyses of City services, strategies and projects for each BID area:*
 - In February, a **Member briefing session** will held with; the Remembrancer who will explain the relationship of BIDs and the unique business franchise status of the City Corporation, and Pat Brown, the consultant commissioned who provided recommendations and advice that informed the initial BIDs report in P&R October 2024. This will gave Members an opporutnity for greater understanding of the City-BIDs relationship and reasons behind officer proposals.
 - Officers will conduct a similar **briefing session for BID Chairs** including an explanation of the contracts held between the BIDs and the City Corporation.
 - Officers are **developing a guidance document on BIDs** for Members, Officers and BID partners. This will contain an explanation of the roles and responsibilities involved in the relationship we have with our BIDs in the Square Mile. This will be used to guide all parties in their approach to working together. This should clarify understanding, set clear expectations and support a more fruitful relationship.
2. To achieve: *ii) Better coordination of goals, with an initial focus on Business perception analyses and the recast Destination City programme and iv) Smarter use of resource, including regular officer working groups for better internal coordination and more support for Member Observers.*

- In the short term, regular **internal officer working groups** and an **Officer – BID Operational working group** will be set up to coordinate cross-Corporation BID activity and programme management.
 - These 2 groups should support effective collaborative work to deliver focussed outcomes based on approved BID business plans and enable us to capture and plan City Corporation resources spent doing this.
 - Longer term, Corporation officers intend **join forces and resources** with the BID teams **to conduct the perception analysis** that informs the BID proposal for BID renewals or formation.
 - This should provide officers and BID teams with better business insights on business hyper local priorities as well as their views on how strategic Corporation work affects their businesses. This should ensure that the additional work we do with BIDs adds genuine value. It will also reduce the likelihood of City and BID efforts duplicating or contradicting one another.
 - **A BID representative**, Charlotte Fletcher, Chair of Cheapside Business Alliance BID, has been **appointed to the Destination City Advisory Board**. The Destination City team have committed to working with the BIDs on
 - Attracting new businesses to the Square Mile
 - Improving Ground floor experience
 - Sharing Data and Insights
 - An approach to Way-finding
 - Comprehensive communications
 - On 10th December 2024, the Deputy Policy Chairman convened a meeting with Member Observers to gain their perspectives on how Member involvement might be improved based on their experience. Support for reviewing the time sat on BID Boards and guidance from officers was expressed.
Officers will continue to work with Member Observers and the Policy Chair's Office to develop this.
3. To achieve: *iii) Good governance including reporting back against shared success criteria and v) Investing in Strong working relationships, supporting the Chairs and Boards.*
- For the next calendar year, Quarterly Lunches and **Strategic Partnership Boards**, chaired by the Policy Chair, will bring together BID Chairs, Senior Officers and Member Observers to ensure BID Chairs are briefed and consulted on Corporation business-related Strategies and programmes. This will also provide a platform for BIDs and/or Senior City officers to be propositional about future collaborative working, which can **feed down into the Operational Working Group**.

- Longer term, officers intend to **offer of administrative support provide to BID Chairs** in appointments of their BID team, guidance on their contracts with the City Corporation and other ad hoc support, where requested. This recognises and addresses that BID Chairs and Directors are often time-poor and need support at critical points in the BID life cycle.

4. Further to requests regarding the BIDs paper presented at October 2024 P&R committee, London Councils were contacted to obtain a general view of Local Authority – BID relationships in London. No particular consensus was expressed.

However, Officers intend to open a **discussion with City of Westminster** (who currently have 18 BIDs (anticipating to increase to 22 this year) to share experiences of facing internal resource challenges and their solutions to inform own approach.

Options

5. None

Proposals

6. None

Key Data

7. None

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic Implications:

The aim of these action is to improve our relationships with Business Improvement Districts as entities that represent our Square Mile Business' interests.

Resource implications:

These actions will require officer time to absorb and plan how they implement into BAU across their individual teams. No additional resourcing required at this time.

Conclusion

This report outlines in more detail the Structure of governance and the immediate to longer term plans that intend to achieve the outcomes proposed in the BIDs report which was approved by P&R Committee in October 2024.

Background Papers

- Referenced BIDs report approved at P&R October 2024

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