



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Key Decision [No]

Ward(s) Affected: Central and Heene

JOSC Working Group - Review of the Worthing Business Improvement District (BID)

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the recommendations from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) Working Group which was created as part of the JOSC Work Programme to review the Worthing Business Improvement District (BID).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That JOSC consider the report and recommendations from the Worthing Business Improvement District (BID) Working Group and refer the recommendations to the appropriate Executive Committee or Sub-Committee (JSC) for consideration in due course.

3. Context

- 3.1 As part of its Work Programme, JOSC agreed to set up a Working Group to review the Worthing BID and proposed Business Plan for the BID prior to its

renewal and ballot process which is due to be held in Autumn 2022 for a further 5 year BID term which is due to run from 2023 - 2028. The Working Group agreed the following terms of reference and project objectives for the review as follows:-

(a) - To review the current Worthing Business Improvement District (BID) process and its proposals for 2023-2028 to help allow the local authority to make an informed decision as to whether the BID arrangements are likely to conflict to a significant extent with an existing policy, place a financial burden on rate payers or the burden from the proposed levy is unjust or whether they should be considered for support; and

(b) To propose any recommendations and comments via the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) to the Joint Strategic Committee and Worthing Executive Members to assist with the BID process.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 JOSC is asked to consider the report and recommendations from the Worthing BID Working Group set out in the Appendix to this report and agree to refer the recommendations to the appropriate Executive Committee or Sub-Committee for further consideration in due course.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1 The JOSC Working Group that has undertaken the BID review has held discussions with relevant Council Officers, local businesses, the Worthing Town Centre Initiative, other BID operators in England and the national BID support organisation. Details of these discussions and the evidence provided are set out in the accompanying report at the Appendix.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications relating to this report but recommendations contained in the Working Group report, if implemented, will have financial implications as Worthing Borough Council is a BID Levy payer.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.

- 7.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority to do anything that individuals may do (subject to any current restrictions or limitations prescribed in existing legislation).
- 7.3 BIDs are partnerships between a local authority and local businesses through a ballot process to provide services and improvements for the local community. The provision of the services and improvements is funded by a levy, paid by the local business rates payers in addition to non-domestic rates. The Local Government Act 2003 gives the Council the power to approve the formation of a BID and to collect the BID levy that will fund improvements. The Business Improvements District (England) Regulations 2013 sets out the requirements for establishing BIDs.
- 7.4 The Council may, in prescribed circumstances, veto BID proposals (within 14 days from the date of the ballot), for example if the BID scheme conflicts with other plans or policies formally adopted by the Council or if it places a significant financial burden on rate payers. There is then a right of appeal to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government within 28 days of the result of the ballot being published.

Background Papers

Any papers referenced in the Working Group report.

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Matter considered. The issues contained in the Working Group report relate to the BID which aims to improve the town centre economy and increase footfall and spend.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Matter considered. A vibrant town centre with thriving businesses will help improve social value for the communities of Adur and Worthing and visitors to the town.

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered and no significant issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered. The report from the Working Group has reviewed the BID proposals for the fourth term which includes a priority to deliver a safer, more welcoming town. Previous work of the BID to improve community safety in the town has also been discussed during this review.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no significant issues identified.

3. Environmental

The report from the Working Group has reviewed the environmental issues connected with the Worthing BID proposals.

4. Governance

Matter considered. The JOSC Working Group has been set up in accordance with the JOSC Procedure Rules and forms part of the agreed JOSC Work Programme for 2021/22. Recommendations from the review will need to be presented to the appropriate Executive Committee or Sub-Committee for consideration.