



The Business Plan

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The Dorchester BID Company

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DORCHESTER BID

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1 INTRODUCTION By Oliver Letwin

"We quite rightly take pride in our democracy in this country. The BID concept is groundbreaking in that it provides a democratic means for businesses to improve their local area. Its essence is self help and fair play. This project has been developed entirely by members of the Dorchester business community and offers some good solutions to local business issues.

Businesses have contributed ideas and voted for projects which will both benefit business and enjoy local support. It is fair and democratic because all businesses in the area get a vote in the ballot and if the plan is adopted the payments are scaled to the size of business.

The effect may be to improve footfall but the whole community will benefit from a cleaner smarter, safer town and our sense of place will be enhanced by the successful promotion of Dorchester, our unique county town.

This is an exciting time for Dorchester not just because of the new developments beginning at the Brewery and Charles Street but also the prospect of a BID in the town centre has given the whole town a lift.

I'm delighted to give my whole-hearted support to a genuine grass-roots initiative and would urge you to vote 'YES' in the forthcoming postal ballot in February 2008. This is your chance to help Dorchester to realise its full potential and a YES vote is a vote for a brighter future for Dorchester".

2 CHAIR'S FOREWORD By Keir Francis

"A Business Improvement District is a vehicle for change in a town, but not change imposed from on high. A BID goes to the heart of democracy in that it gives local business people the opportunity to suggest and introduce measures that *they* believe will have a positive impact on their business and the BID area as a whole, making it a cleaner, brighter and more vibrant place to visit, work and do business.

We have consulted widely with local businesses both on a one to one basis and by holding a series of open meetings to ensure that the programme of improvements to Dorchester town centre contained in the BID proposal reflects the priorities of the local business community.

This is a time of change for Dorchester as Poundbury continues to develop apace and the Brewery site and Charles Street car park redevelopments get under way. It is vital that these important and necessary improvements do not distract us from issues which they do not address such as the promotion of Dorchester to the wider world, giving visitors to Dorchester a better and more informed experience and addressing the problems of parking in Dorchester- all issues identified in our consultation as being of importance to local businesses.

One of the great benefits of a BID is that it promotes dialogue and understanding between different parties. In Dorchester, the BID initiative was started by the Chamber of Commerce who then worked on behalf of the business community to raise the necessary funds required to get the BID off the ground. Discussions and presentations with WDDC, DCC, Dorchester Town

Council, the Duchy of Cornwall and then later, the Rural Renaissance Partnership resulted in funding of £45,000 being raised to see the idea through to ballot.

The Dorchester BID Company has liaised closely with all three levels of local government about both practical issues such as the management of the ballot and in establishing what plans they have in the pipeline so that our projects add value and in no way replace them. Our discussions with the developers mentioned above have meant that they can integrate some of our proposed projects into their own plans at an early stage – such as the popular idea of a land train connecting different parts of the town.

We have had the overwhelming support of businesses both large and small in the town. Without countless hours of voluntary work put in by the members of the Steering Group and the hard work and enthusiasm of our tireless project manager, Phil Gordon, this idea would never have come to fruition.

The BID proposal is the outcome of many months of widespread consultation and we know that the final set of projects put forward for the BID will enjoy wide support from local businesses. We have taken every opportunity to explain that our BID will be funded by a small levy on the business rates. The BID legislation allows for a levy of up to 5% but we have opted for **just 1%** of rateable value to keep your investment to a minimum.

This amount represents a small part of the annual marketing budget for an individual business, but the total created from all the BID area businesses, would provide a substantial fund that would make a *real* difference in Dorchester. Over the five year term of the BID nearly half a million pounds would be raised to spend on improvements to the town. Experience from other BIDs suggests that it may be possible to double this sum by seeking matched funding for projects from a variety of sources.

We know that Dorchester is a great place to live, shop and visit. We want to tell the world as much and ensure that the town is seen as a dynamic centre for tourism and business. With the help of your “YES” vote when we hold the ballot in February 2008 we can all BID for a better Dorchester. Please support the future of Dorchester by supporting the BID.”

If you have any further questions after reading these proposals or you would like a one to one meeting please get in touch with Phil Gordon on 01305 263244, or visit www.dorchesterdorset.co.uk

Glossary of Abbreviations:

BID	Business Improvement District	RV	Rateable Value
LA	Local Authority	DCC	Dorset County Council
WDDC	West Dorset District Council	BRP	Business Rate payer
DBID	Dorchester Business Improvement District		

3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Statement of Intent: Our aim is to establish a BID in the Dorchester town centre. We will accomplish this through localised governance and efficient management, creating the bespoke business environment that enables businesses to flourish and at the same time offer many benefits to the whole local community.

What is a BID?

BIDs or Business Improvement Districts are a business-led initiative designed to enable communities to come up with new solutions to town centre problems and enhance the town centre environment. Legislation was passed in 2004 and the first BID started in Jan 2005. There are now over 57 BID towns in the UK, the nearest being Plymouth and most recently Taunton. The nearest in size to Dorchester is the market town of Keswick.

Benefits of the Dorchester BID

- Improved marketing and promotion for Dorchester
- Increased visitor and shopper footfall
- Longer customer visits to Dorchester
- Enhanced street environment & entertainment
- Safer, cleaner & more vibrant town centre
- Improved shopping, living and visitor experience
- Better consultation and engagement with the Council relating to strategic issues
- Increased property values
- Maximise Dorchester's retail potential within the Southwest region
- Ring-fenced BID investments

Dorchester BID will deliver:

Town Promotion and Marketing: The BID will raise Dorchester's profile and its desirability as a great place to spend time by funding a range of promotional activities over and above those undertaken by the Local Authorities. These will include targeted marketing campaigns, promotional leaflets and advertising. The promotion of music, arts, specialist markets and other town events and the production of welcome packs and guides for tourists. Assist visitors by providing a well connected, Dorchester specific website which will be linked to individual businesses in the town free of charge. The Dorchester BID will promote the early adoption of pay on exit parking and better signage in and around Dorchester.

Safe, Secure and Enhance: The BID will promote initiatives to improve safety and security in Dorchester by linking the Police with the business community, work with the Local Authorities to improve park and ride facilities and promote the early implementation of the pedestrianisation of all of South Street together with better facilities for the disabled, provide a fund to support the provision of Christmas lights and regular year round colour washing/ laser lighting of important buildings, make a financial contribution to music and street entertainment and organise window dressing courses and advise to help increase footfall and maximise impact on the high street.

Clean and Green: The BID will reduce the use of plastic bags in Dorchester with the production of the 'Dorchester Bag' and the facility to offer businesses an 'own branded' version, co-ordinate and part-fund the development of featured roundabouts on the approaches to the town, support and assist the Local Authorities with the promotion of cardboard recycling for businesses. Working in partnership with the Local Authorities, Developers and businesses the BID will plan for and provide funding towards a clean and green Land Train to connect the town centre with the two new developments at Charles Street and Brewery Square. This project will help unify the town and offer increased mobility and access to those with disabilities. Target 'grime hot-spots' with specialist deep cleaning.

How did we decide on these projects? We held over 100 face to face meetings with individual businesses, large and small. We created an interactive website which allowed businesses in the BID area not only to vote for their favourite projects every month but also to suggest projects – a facility pioneered by and unique to the Dorchester BID. We held a general public meeting to discuss possible projects followed by three themed public meetings, one on each of the above themes and these were open to all businesses in the BID area and to the general public, the businesses being individually invited by letter to the meetings. We also researched the project lists of other BIDs for good ideas and examples of best practice. We will continue to run the facility for businesses to both submit ideas and vote for projects throughout the life of the BID so we are aware of and responsive to changing priorities and hope to make further use of website interaction to gather business feedback about the implementation of projects.

How will we know that our projects have been effective? The success of these initiatives will be measured with appropriate key performance indicators. The impact of town promotion and enhancement will be measured by both footfall (as currently recorded by the TIC) and percentage change in shopping patterns from a reporting group of representative businesses. We will also use attitudinal surveys at regular intervals to capture changes in resident and visitor views of the attraction and security of the town. The success of the bag project will be evident in both the number of bags distributed and the decrease in bulk orders of plastic bags in shops joining in the scheme.

How will it be funded? The legislation allows for a levy of up to 5% of business rateable value. To make the cost of a BID attractive **we adopted a low 1% levy** on any business with a RV of more than £3,000. Those with RVs of less than £3,000, or who are outside the BID area (including landlords currently not obliged to contribute) are invited to make voluntary contributions. We have already secured a number of pledges to make voluntary contributions from businesses and individuals who can see the positive impact a BID will have in Dorchester and want to support it even though they do not have to pay the levy!

Management and Delivery: The BID will be run by Dorchester BID Company, a non-profit making company limited by guarantee. Company officers will be elected annually by the members – all businesses paying the levy. The management of the BID will be handled by a Management Group consisting of company officers, representatives of the businesses in the BID area (to be elected annually by members) and representatives of the local authorities and other stakeholders. Meetings will be held bi-monthly and local authority specialists will be invited to attend particular meetings. The BID projects will be delivered by paid employees of the Company.

4 WHAT IS A BID?

BIDs or Business Improvement Districts are a business-led initiative designed to enable communities to come up with new solutions to an area's problems and to enhance the business environment. Legislation was passed in 2004 and the first UK BID started in January 2005. There are now over 56 BIDs in the UK, the nearest being Plymouth and the most recent Taunton. The nearest in size to Dorchester is the market town of Keswick.

A BID is a defined geographical area where business rate payers within that area agree to contribute financially for a fixed period of time for the delivery of additional services to improve the commercial environment. These may be town centres or in some cases, other areas of commerce.

The BID is driven by local business rather than Government and **100% of the contribution made to the BID is for the benefit of the BID area. This empowers you, the local business owner to have your say regarding how the money is spent.**

This is in contrast to business rates where typically less than 10% of your contribution is returned from central government for investment and it is difficult to establish how much of this is actually spent to assist local businesses. Business has little or no say in how the money is spent.

Through consultation, projects are suggested, discussed and selected for inclusion in the BID proposal. Once the BID has been established, these projects are funded through the levy and implemented by the BID Company.

The BID concept was established to:

- Identify initiatives that will stimulate business within the BID area
- Increase visitor numbers, footfall and consumer spend
- Create sustainable funding for local investment
- Empower businesses to implement change
- Enhance the environment and services for those who live, visit and do business within the area

It is up to businesses to decide collectively if they wish to have a BID and this is done **by means of a ballot where business owners of all eligible rateable properties (hereditaments) are entitled to vote.** The term of a BID can run for a maximum of five years, as in ours. If the BID Company wishes to extend the life of the BID *after* that term, then another ballot is required.

How will it be funded?

The legislation allows for a levy of up to 5% of business rateable value. To make the cost of a BID attractive **we adopted a low 1% levy** on any business with a RV of £3,000 or more. Those with RVs of less than £3,000, landlords who are currently not obliged to contribute or those who are outside the BID area and therefore not obliged to pay the levy are nonetheless invited to make voluntary contributions in support of the BID.

We have already secured a number of pledges to make voluntary contributions from businesses and individuals who can see the positive impact a BID will have in Dorchester and want to support it even though they do not have to pay the levy!

Will a BID allow the local authorities to reduce or replace their services?

No, absolutely not! BIDs do not affect the level or quality of service already provided by the local authorities to the area. **A core aim of a BID is to provide additional or improved services** as identified and requested by local businesses **over and above the baseline services provided by any of the local authorities.**

Baseline agreements are drawn up between the BID Company and the appropriate Local Authority, see 'baseline agreements' elsewhere in this document. The BID will monitor services detailed in the baseline agreements.

5 WHY DOES DORCHESTER NEED A BID?

**Statement by Alistair Chisholm
Town Crier and President of the Chamber of Commerce**

"We all know that this town of ours is very special and that change is in the air. Dorchester can now look forward to an exciting and vibrant development on the site of the Eldridge Pope brewery. Many of us believe that the developer chosen for Charles Street will make a success of that town centre site as well. So there's plenty happening, the future looks bright.

BUT,

- What about the established town centre?
- Will it be as attractive when compared to these shiny new developments?

Having stepped off the train from London on your first visit to the county town of Dorset, does anyone or anything tell you that you can see the grassy banks of one of this country's finest Roman amphitheatres. How many people who have heard of the Tolpuddle Martyrs are made aware that the very court in which these men were tried and found guilty is here in Dorchester?

There's plenty of information about London for travellers leaving from Dorchester South railway station – have you ever thought how odd it is that there's no information about Dorchester for people arriving at the same station?

The BID could do something about these things and a lot more besides. It could smarten up tired buildings, promote that which is special and help to revitalise our pride in Dorchester. REMEMBER that everything delivered by the BID will be an extra, an add-on to those services currently provided by the local authorities.

Whilst other centres in the South West have seen major changes to the urban environment lead to increased growth and commercial success, Dorchester has not, thus far, been so favoured. It has an incredibly rich history and Thomas Hardy is only the best known of a string of literary connections that most towns would be proud to broadcast. The BID gives us the opportunity to promote this literary heritage and make it more accessible to discerning visitors. Tourism expert, Kenny Boyle, the marketing director of Visit Britain, recommended that Dorchester play to these strengths, its history and unique associations."

6 HOW MIGHT YOU BENEFIT FROM THE BID?

The Community:

- Improve shopping, living and visitor experience
- Enhance street environment & entertainment
- Safer, cleaner & more vibrant town centre
- Help produce social well-being & improve quality of life
- Encourage corporate social responsibility
- Provide sustainable investment for ongoing capital projects/services
- Create a positive sense of place and provide community pride

The Businesses:

- Improve marketing and promotion for Dorchester
- Increase visitor and shopper footfall
- Longer, more relaxed customer visits to Dorchester
- Increase consumer spend and sales - can lead to increase in profits
- Maximise Dorchester's retail potential within the Southwest region
- Reduce costs (crime reduction, joint activities, e.g. promotions/marketing)
- Flexible enough to address the issues of individual sectors
- Give businesses a local voice
- Better consultation and engagement with the Council relating to strategic issues
- Create a more appealing environment for employees
- Fair system, those that invest benefit – Proportionate fees for small businesses
- Can decide and vote for action before making the investment
- Ring-fenced BID investment to make a *real* difference in Dorchester
- Can control the BID process and monitor results - flexible

Local Authorities:

- Harness private sector management/organisational drive and skills
- Develop partnership between private & public sector
- Promote greater understanding of the role of the local authorities
- Produce economic well-being and economic growth in area
- Provide new, sustainable investment and doesn't detract from other resources
- Has wide commercial support

Landlords and property owners:

- Assist capital value growth
- Increase property values & rental potential
- Increase an area's desirability and attract occupiers
- Attract inward investment
- Increase in trade which affects turnover-based rents (some retail)
- Could help properties away from main footfall areas

7 VOTING AND LEVY ARRANGEMENTS

Voting and the Ballot:

West Dorset District Council election services will preside over the ballot on behalf of the Dorchester BID Company. The notification of ballot will be sent to businesses in mid-January and ballot papers for voting will be sent to the appropriate person in each organisation by the 1st February 2008 and must be returned to the ballot holder before 5pm on 28th February 2008.

The result of the ballot will be announced on the 29th February 2008 once all papers have been counted.

The business owner of each and every eligible* hereditament within the defined BID area has a vote. This figure stands at 431 hereditaments at the time of writing.

A proxy vote will be available, details of which will be sent with the ballot paper.

In order for the Dorchester BID to go ahead the following two criteria must be achieved

- **More than 50% of those that have voted are in favour**
- **The aggregate rateable value of those that have voted in favour must be more than that of those who have voted against.**

With a successful 'YES' vote, the mandatory levy will be charged on all eligible* hereditaments within the BID area.

Making your investment go further:

The Dorchester BID will endeavour to raise additional funds from voluntary contributions, matched funding and other appropriate funding streams. This way, we hope to turn the BID fund of around £96,000 into a much larger one. This will enable us to do more within the existing project missions as funds permit.

*** Any occupied business with a RV of £3,000 or more inside the defined BID area.**

The Dorchester BID Levy:

The Dorchester BID levy has been set at 1% of the rateable value of the hereditament. The levy is payable annually in April and will be collected on behalf of the BID Company by West Dorset District Council.

Although WDDC are obliged under BID regulations to collect the levy on behalf of the BID and can charge for doing so, they have chosen to waive this collection fee as an 'in kind' contribution to the success of the BID.

Dorchester BID – What will it cost your business?

This table gives a good guide to the BID levy and shows how it scales fairly depending on the size of the business.

Property RV	Annual Cost @1%	Weekly Cost	Daily Cost
<£3000	Nil	Nil	Nil
£3000	£30	58p	8p
£5000	£50	96p	14p
£8000	£80	£1.54	22p
£10,000	£100	£1.92	27p
£15,000	£150	£2.88	41p
£25,000	£250	£4.30	68p
£30,000	£300	£5.77	82p
£50,000	£500	£9.61	£1.37
£75,000	£750	£14.42	£2.05
£100,000	£1000	£19	£2.74

For this modest cost, your contribution to the BID fund will help make a *real* difference to Dorchester's future. Together, we can make our town a better place to live, visit and, of course, do business.

To keep the administrative costs of running the BID to an absolute minimum and due to the relatively small amounts of money being collected there will be no reduction, exemption, relief or part-year refunds on the BID Levy. This means that irrespective of the actual amount of rates paid by a business in the BID area, the levy will always be calculated as 1% of the full rateable value.

Although hereditaments with a rateable value below £3000 or outside the BID boundary are not eligible to vote in the BID ballot, they are encouraged to make voluntary contributions and are welcome to contribute ideas for future BID projects via the DBID website 'ideas bank' feature. Several companies and individuals have already confirmed that when the BID goes ahead they will make voluntary contributions to boost the BID projects fund.

Changes to the BID levy or Rateable Values:

The 1% levy will remain at 1% for the full 5 year BID term. Although some existing BIDs around the country decided to build in an inflationary increase each year, the Dorchester BID Company has chosen not to do so. This is because firstly, we wanted to offer the best possible value to businesses and show that through good management of funds and careful stewardship, such increases would not be needed. Secondly, we expect over the course of the 5 year BID term, that partly as a result of BID projects and partly the impact of new

developments scheduled for Dorchester within the BID area, the income to the Dorchester BID would increase naturally anyway. It also keeps the calculations simple!

There is due to be a re-assessment of rateable value within the term of the BID. The 1% levy remains the same but the Levy on an individual business may increase or decrease dependent on any alteration to the rateable value as determined by the VOA (Valuation Office Agency).

8 THE DORCHESTER BID TEAM

The team will consist at the outset of a Project Manager whose role will be to oversee the implementation of the projects supported by an administrative officer. This team will report to the Dorchester BID Management Group.

Their work will also include liaison with local authorities and joint project agencies, locating and applying for other funding streams, finance and the day to day running of the office.

The Dorchester BID Company at present is made up of the following:

Chairman: Keir Francis

Directors of the Board: Julian Nangle and Alistair Chisholm

Project manager: Phil Gordon

Supported by members of the Steering Group:

Roger Gould (Goulds)

Tim Batty (World Heritage)

Richard Southam (Aequae Sulis)

Gerald Duke (Nantes)

Margaret Morrissey (Decorate Dorchester)

Jon Joynes (M&S)

Matt Foxwell (Waitrose)

Rick Townsend (The Blue Raddle)

Chris Sheppard (Multivolt)

Monique Chester (Thorntons)

Liaison Members and Local Authority Support:

Cllr Molly Rennie Dorchester Town Council

Trevor Hedger WDDC Business Support Team Leader

Inspector Les Fry Dorset Police

Post Successful Ballot: A new BID management team will be elected by businesses within the BID area in Dorchester.

9 THE DORCHESTER BID CONSTITUTION

The Company:

The BID Company will be a not-for-profit registered company limited by guarantee.

Aim:

The aim of the Company will be to manage the running of the Dorchester BID.

Objectives:

The Company will:

- hire and manage staff to run the BID
- manage the day to day running of the Dorchester BID
- make appropriate arrangements for the holding and spending of the BID levy
- monitor development of the projects against the business plan
- liaise with both stakeholders and outside bodies
- liaise with West Dorset District Council on the management of the levy collection process

Membership:

Membership of The BID Company will comprise of every business within the BID area which pays the BID levy and voluntary contributors.

Member Companies or Organisations shall appoint a representative to attend and vote at the AGM.

The Board:

The BID Company's Board of Directors will be made up of 14 voting members who will be elected by the membership. It will be responsible for the management of the BID and for all decisions relating to the BID. An initial Annual General Meeting will be held in April 2008 to elect a new Board of Directors. The pre-ballot Steering Group will continue until such time as the new Board is formed. The structure of the Board will be representative of the numbers and types of business in the BID area.

Where necessary the Board will be empowered to co-opt new Directors to keep this number constant until the following AGM.

The Board Members will include:

Business Sector - Up to 12 members (A cross-section from Retail, Office, Leisure & Catering)
Landlords and Voluntary Contributors – 2 Members

The Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Company Secretary will be elected from the members of the board.

Meetings:

Meetings of the BID Company's directors will be held at least quarterly or more often if deemed necessary by the Chairman.

Members of the Company are entitled to attend all Board meetings and may address the board if invited. There will be a democratic period at the end of the meeting in which time members of the public can request a space on the agenda for the following meeting. At every Meeting the Minutes of the preceding Meeting shall be proposed for acceptance as a true record of events and, if approved, signed by the Chairman.

The AGM:

The Annual General Meeting will be held in April. All members will be invited to the AGM and will be entitled to one vote per entitled organisation. Twenty-one days' notice of such Annual General Meeting shall be served upon the membership. Every two years the calling notice shall have attached nomination papers for the election of a number of members of the Board.

At the Annual General Meeting the Board shall present a report of their activities during the previous year.

A suitably qualified Independent Examiner shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting to verify the Accounts of the current Financial year.

The Accounts of the preceding Financial year to 31st December, duly confirmed by Independent Examination, shall be laid before the Members for acceptance.

Elections:

All nominations for directors and officers of the Board shall be made in writing and sent to the Project Manager on the official nomination papers at least fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting.

Finance:

West Dorset District Council will collect the levy for the BID Company. This process will be managed by a Committee made up of the Chairman and two voting members from each organisation, the BID Company and West Dorset District Council meeting at least twice per year.

The Company Treasurer will be appointed annually at the AGM. The Treasurer shall keep proper records and present a report at every meeting of the Board.

The BID Company accounts will be examined independently on an annual basis and presented at the AGM.

Cheques issued by the Company will be signed by two out of three signatories authorised by the Board.

The Company's financial year will run from January 1st to December 31st.

Voting:

Voting at all meetings will be by a show of hands of the voting members present. The Chairman shall have a second or casting vote in the event of an equality of votes. A quorum for a meeting will be 5 voting board members.

Non-Voting Observers:

Observers representing other bodies will be invited to attend meetings as will ex-members of the Steering Group not eligible for Board membership.

Project Manager:

A project manager reporting to the Board and a Secretary will support the Board. The Project Manager will formally report to the board at least quarterly.

Minutes

Minutes of meetings will be taken by the Secretary and will be considered to be public documents.

10 THE BID AREA

Businesses that are in the roads listed and inside the red band on the BID map are in the BID area. Only levy paying businesses (rateable value £3000+) are eligible to vote in the ballot.



- Acland Road
- Albert Road
- Allington Street
- Charles Street
- Church Street
- Colliton Street
- Cornwall Road
- Culliford Road (to bridge)
- Durngate Street
- Fairfield Road
- Friary Lane
- Glyde Path Road
- High East Street
- High West Street
- Icen Way
- Linden Avenue
- Maumbury Road
- (as far as Fairfield Road)
- New Street
- North Square
- Northernhay
- Prince of Wales Road
- (To Culliford Road junction)
- Princes Street
- South Street
- South Walks
- The Grove
- Trinity Street
- Weymouth Avenue
- Wollaston Road
- York Road

11 THE DORCHESTER BID MISSIONS

Statement of intent:

Our aim is to establish a BID in Dorchester town centre. We will accomplish this through creating the bespoke environment that enables businesses to flourish in Dorchester town centre.

As a result of broad consultations with local businesses, a series of themed evenings to generate project ideas and finally through the use of an online voting system on the DBID website **we have distilled the most requested projects into 3 main 'mission' areas these are:**

Mission 1: Town Promotion and Marketing

Mission 2: Safe, Secure and Enhance

Mission 3: Clean and Green

Management:

Projects will be managed by the Project Manager unless there is already a lead agency in place. In this case there will be close liaison between the Project Manager and the lead agency and funding will be released once a business plan or specific project objectives have been agreed.

Timescales:

Some of the BID projects will be one-offs or short term whilst others may run for the full duration of the 5 year BID term. For example, town promotion projects will run throughout the term of the BID whereas projects such as the proposed pay on exit parking may be complete well before the end of the BID term.

Alterations to BID arrangements:

All budget headings and project costs can be altered within the constraints of the revenue received through the BID investment fund. The BID management Company will be empowered to move funds between budget headings. The BID area and the BID investment percentage cannot however be altered without a BID Alteration Ballot.

In the event of revenues being less than anticipated (e.g. following a review of rateable values or a change in the number of occupied business premises) the proportionate allocation of funds to the different mission areas will remain the same but, of course, the sums allocated will be reduced.

Conversely, if additional funds are received (e.g. following a review of rateable values or a change in the number of occupied business premises) the proportional spend in the different mission areas will remain the same.

Voluntary Contributions:

Voluntary contributions will be collected and managed by the BID Company treasurer. There will be a register of these contributions and the donor will have the option of recognition or remaining anonymous.

MISSION ONE:

TOWN PROMOTION AND MARKETING (budget £33,000 p.a)

Aims:

- Raise Dorchester's profile and its desirability as a great place to spend time
- Fund a range of promotional activities over and above those undertaken by the local authorities
- Use the full marketing potential of the Internet to connect and promote Dorchester and its businesses
- Increase visitor and shopper dwell time spent in Dorchester
- Increase visitor numbers, footfall and consumer spend
- Promote the early adoption of 'pay on exit' parking to remove a prime cause of failed transactions (pay and display timeout panic!)
- Enhance the visitor experience with improved signage within and around the town
- Attract further inward investment into the town

The Projects:

Development of a regional advertising strategy with targeted marketing campaigns to include targeting 'ABC1' shoppers in outlying areas and further afield; create a positive Dorchester town brand; effect communication with stakeholders and shoppers, produce a well-connected website to promote Dorchester and provide a free gateway to BID area businesses; produce promotional leaflets & advertising; welcome packs & guides for tourists.

£29,000 p.a.

Promote the early adoption of pay on exit parking in the town centre car parks and better signage in and around Dorchester

£4,000 p.a.

MISSION TWO:

SAFE, SECURE AND ENHANCE (budget £20,500 p.a.)

Aims:

- Improve safety & security in the town centre. Promote initiatives linking the Police with the business community
- Reduce parking problems
- Make visits to Dorchester a more relaxing and memorable experience
- Add colour and vitality to the town
- Increase shopper dwell-time
- Maximise footfall and help businesses increase their impact on the street

The Projects:

Park and Ride: Work with the local authorities to enhance park and ride facilities. Provide part-funding for a 3rd bus and the addition of new stops around the town to make the service more useful and more popular.

£7000 p.a.

Creative lighting: Provide a fund to support the provision of Christmas lights and the all year round colour washing/laser lighting of important buildings.

£7000 p.a.

Increase impact on the street & footfall: Visual merchandising (including window dressing) courses to be run regularly followed up with advice for individual businesses should they request it.

£2000 p.a.

Pedestrianisation: Promote the early implementation of the pedestrianisation of all of South Street together with better facilities for disabled access.

£2000 p.a.

Add a dash of Colour: Assist in the co-ordination, marketing and part funding of music and other family entertainment in the town centre. The main objective here will be to provide a range of quality street entertainment on a regular basis including music, performing arts and numerous novelty acts.

£2500 p.a.

MISSION THREE:

CLEAN AND GREEN (budget £18,000 p.a)

Aims:

- Reduce the use of plastic bags in Dorchester
- Improve visitor first impressions when visiting Dorchester
- Support an improvement in recycling facilities for Dorchester businesses
- Improve connectivity between the town centre and the two new developments
- Provide specialist deep cleaning to target 'grime' hot spots

The Projects:

Reusable Cotton and Canvas Bags: Building on the success of our pilot project the BID will extend the production and distribution of the 'Dorchester Bag' - a range of reusable cotton and canvas bags. In addition we will offer businesses their 'own branded' version if required.
£4000 p.a.

Featured Roundabouts: Co-ordinate and part-fund the development of featured roundabouts on town approaches.
£2000 p.a.

Better recycling: Work with the Local Authority to improve the provision of facilities for cardboard recycling for businesses and help to identify additional opportunities for recycling.
£2000 p.a.

The Land Train: Build a land train fund. Working in partnership with the local authorities, developers and businesses, plan for a clean and green land train connecting the town centre with the two new developments at Charles Street and Brewery Square with a eco-friendly Land Train. This project will help to unify the town and offer increased mobility and access to those with disabilities.
£8000 p.a.

Deep Cleaning: Target 'grime hot spots' with periodic specialist deep cleaning
£2000 p.a.

12 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The BID will use a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor projects, and what they deliver. As well as continuing to evaluate the projects that are being undertaken by the BID, there are also a number of measurements that can be taken regularly to confirm that your investment in the Dorchester BID is having a positive impact in the area.

Each BID project will have specific KPIs identified and these will be detailed at the start of each project and presented on the website with updates. Projects will commence at different times during the BID term.

Examples would include:

- **Footfall** - Visitor numbers to Dorchester (1% average annual increase over national trends would be a suitable target for the town promotion project)
- **Car Parking data** including short/long stay and parking dwell time (5% average increase in dwell time will indicate that shoppers are spending more quality time in Dorchester)
- **Perception of security and safety in Dorchester** (determined by survey to match perception to fact - working in cooperation with Dorchester Police)
- **Month vs. Month relative sales data** (Establish a reporting group of retail businesses to quantify % change in turnover relative to previous years (An increase compared with national figures would indicate a healthier trading environment)
- **Number of empty commercial units** (monitor and compare year on year, the BID influence should be reflected in a decrease in the number of empty commercial units)

Business and User surveys:

The Dorchester BID will conduct annual surveys of both Businesses and Users to establish the perceptions of where we are now and to help us monitor progress over the term of the BID. These surveys will also be designed to identify any issues that need to be addressed to further improve the BID's positive impact on Dorchester.

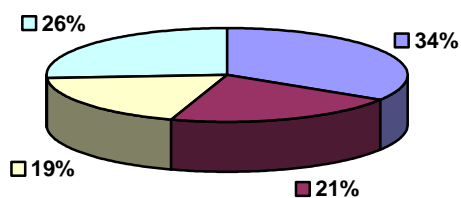
13 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The budget forecast for the first year is calculated from a 1% levy based upon the 2007 list of non-domestic rateable values. We anticipate that this total will be considerably enhanced by voluntary contributions and other funding streams.

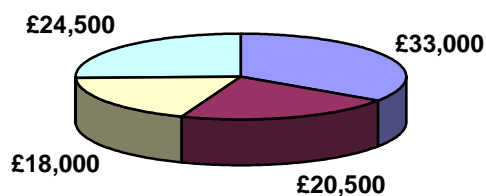
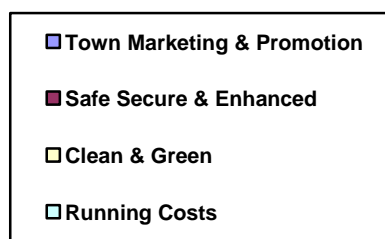
First Year Budget based on 1% levy income of £96,000		
Town Promotion & Marketing		% of Expenditure
Town Marketing & Promotion	£29,000	
Pay on Exit & Better Signage	£4,000	
total	£33,000	34%
Safe, Secure & Enhanced		
Contribution Towards 3 rd Park & Ride Bus	£7,000	
Promote Pedestrianisation of South Street	£2,000	
Creative & Christmas Lighting	£7,000	
Window Dressing Courses & Advice	£2,000	
Street Entertainment and Music	£2,500	
total	£20,500	21%
Clean & Green		
Dorchester Bag Project	£4,000	
Featured Roundabouts	£2,000	
Promote Recycling & Collection of Cardboard	£2,000	
Land Train Development	£8,000	
Deep Cleaning	£2,000	
total	£18,000	19%
Fixed Costs		
Staff, Admin & Running Costs	£12,000	
Office Rental	£4,000	
Post, Stationary & Phone	£1,600	
Advertising & Media	£1,500	
Travel & Subsistence, Meetings & Entertainment	£1,000	
Insurance, Legal & Professional Costs	£1,400	
Training & Subscriptions	£250	
Bank Charges	£100	
Contingency	£800	
Reserves to protect against non-payment of levy	£1,850	
total	£24,500	26%

Dorchester BID Draft 5 Year Budget and Cash Flow based on 1% levy						
	£	£	£	£	£	£
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Totals
INCOME						
Income (1% BID Levy)	96,000	96,000	96,000	96,000	96,000	480,000
EXPENDITURE						
Marketing & Promotion	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	165,000
Safe, Secure & Enhanced	20,500	20,500	20,500	20,500	20,500	102,500
Clean and Green	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	90,000
Running Costs	24,500	24,500	24,500	24,000	24,500	122,500
Total expenditure	96,000	96,000	96,000	96,000	96,000	480,000

BID Expenditure %



Predicted First Year Expenditure



14 CONSULTATION & MARKET RESEARCH

Consultation:

Its never easy to find the best way to communicate with businesses – we are all so busy these days just trying to make a living, and anything coming our way that does not seem to have immediate relevance tends to get over looked unless it has 'BILL' or 'INVOICE' clearly marked on it!

Since the Dorchester BID began to gain momentum earlier this year we have sent out several letters to all the businesses in the BID area telling them about the BID and inviting them to a series of general and 'themed' evenings to collect ideas and discuss potential projects. We also continue to have a lot of media coverage (over 40 pieces so far) in the Dorset Echo, Western Gazette and View From Dorchester publications as well as local radio.

In parallel with these activities our BID Project Manager Phil Gordon has had a constant stream of one to one meetings with businesses in the BID area. This is a very long process with over 430 businesses to see so if you have not seen him yet and would like a priority visit please contact the BID office.

These 'one to one' visits are a good opportunity for you to ask any questions that you may have regarding any aspect of the BID and Phil or any member of the Steering Group would be pleased to hear from you with your questions.

During the summer of 2007, four open meetings were held to consult with the local businesses as well as members of the public in order to explain the intentions of the BID as well as gathering ideas for projects that the BID could undertake. There was a general information evening followed by three themed evenings on 'Town promotion & Marketing', 'Safety & Security in Dorchester' and finally one covering 'Clean and Green' projects. These meetings were well attended, but for those not able to attend there was (and still is) an 'Ideas Bank' feature on our website (www.dorchesterdorset.co.uk) which allows anyone to suggest a project idea for the future.

After these meetings had taken place, all project suggestions were logged on to the Dorchester BID website. Each and every business within the BID area was entitled to a number of votes every month in order that they could decide which of the projects they would like to see happen in Dorchester with a successful 'yes' vote in the February 2008 ballot.

Pilot projects:

Back in April, we ran a special 'deep clean' pilot. Members of the Steering Group went out into three different areas around the centre of Dorchester and tried out some powerful cleaning equipment. The effects were impressive and even months later you could still see the difference between the area cleaned and not cleaned. Public response was very favourable with more a couple of onlookers asking "When are you going to do the rest of the town?"

The Dorchester BID also helped fund trial 'street entertainment' on Saturdays during the summer. A number of different entertainments were organised including a string quartet, blues and folk music ensembles and a children's entertainer.

Finally, with the remainder of the pilot project fund, we acted on an idea to reduce the use of plastic bags in Dorchester, suggested at the 'Clean and Green' themed meeting.

After some research and the sourcing of an ethical manufacturer, a bag was designed and a range of reusable cotton and canvas bags produced for the pilot project. Less than eight weeks after the idea was suggested, they were available in a number of shops throughout Dorchester, demonstrating just how responsive a BID can be to a good idea. It was also a *real* example of how projects can attract extra funding, as Dorset County Council were impressed enough with the 'BID Bag' to contribute additional money to the pilot.

The reaction to the bag pilot has been so positive that with a BID going ahead, there would not only be a 'Dorchester' bag but due to popular demand a 'branded' version could be available for businesses that want their own company look on them.

Market research:

Over the whole period of the build up to the Dorchester BID from the very early days before any seed funding had even been secured, there has been constant consultation with a range of businesses in Dorchester to help evaluate whether or not Dorchester town centre might benefit from having BID status.

From the outset, there has been a very favourable response to the idea. Perhaps in the early days, some healthy scepticism and indeed even a degree of apathy were to be expected as Dorchester has suffered in the past from being promised various schemes and ventures which did not get past the initial planning stage.

For those who did the original research into BIDs on behalf of Dorchester, it soon became apparent that this was not only a *real* and *achievable* initiative, but also could provide exactly what the town has needed for a number of years - an agent of change to help stimulate the growth of business. Any such early reactions of suspicion turned into a real 'buzz' of excitement once the whole BID concept was better defined and understood. A whole day visit from BID expert Dr Julie Grail who addressed local government and Chamber of Commerce members and a public meeting about BIDs and how they worked helped to create this turning point.

Part of the research undertaken was to look at just how successful other BIDs have already been in the UK and elsewhere around the World. BIDs are widely acknowledged as being instrumental in reversing the decline of under performing commercial districts and are a tried and tested success story.

Although relatively new to the UK, BIDs are already giving an ever sharpening competitive edge to those towns and areas that have decided to become BIDs. If you need further reassurance, take a look at the 'Heart of London BID' (<http://www.heartoflondonbid.co.uk/>) – they became the first British BID to re-ballot after running their first term. They gained a massive 86% 'YES' vote in February 2007 to continue their BID for another 5 years.

The research shows that Dorchester has a unique opportunity increase its own competitive edge by being the first market town on the south coast to benefit from BID status.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Within the BID area there are currently 431 hereditaments entitled to vote
- There are 29 Roads within the defined BID area
- Within that area there are
 - 5 Museums
 - A cinema
 - Corn Exchange
 - town centre car parks
- Approximately 15,000 people work within the BID area
- All three local authorities (Town, District and County) have premises within the BID area and as such, are full contributors to the levy
- Improvements that are due to take place within the first five years of the BID;

Charles Street Project: www.charlesstreetproject.com
info@charlesstreetproject.com

Brewery Square: www.waterhouse.uk.com
Andrew@brewerysquare.com

15 BASELINE AGREEMENTS

Always remember that the Dorchester BID fund will only be used to provide services over and above those already provided by the Local Authorities (LA's).

As a result of meetings with the LA's, baseline agreements have been drawn up to ensure that the scale, extent and frequency of the LA's activities are clear. This will enable the Dorchester BID to monitor these activities and ensure that they remain consistent with the year's plans.

As a reminder, services already being provided and paid for by prevailing business rates include the following:

- **Street Cleaning**
- **Tourism**
- **Car Parking & Management**
- **Park and Ride facilities**
- **Street Furniture**
- **A consistent contribution to Christmas lights**
- **Highways Engineers**
- **Highway Maintenance**
- **Police and Emergency Services**
- **Trading Standards**
- **Waste Management**
- **Markets and Events**
- **Environmental Health**
- **Winter maintenance**
- **CCTV**

16 RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk 1: Insufficient funding

Likelihood: Low

Impact: Medium – The budget would need to be revised if the Levy collection rates are poor or additional funding sources cannot be secured.

Mitigation: To ensure that the BID can be delivered, the collection rate of the Levy needs to be 98%. If additional funding can be secured, then this will assist with the high level of Levy collection percentages that are required but historical data in relation to business rate collection indicates that a 98% collection rate is not unrealistic.

Alternative: The BID would continue to seek funding elsewhere.

Risk 2: Inadequate Management

Likelihood: Low

Impact: High – The deliverance of the objectives are paramount and are the responsibility of the Project Manager, Staff and the Board.

Mitigation: The board will meet on a regular basis to evaluate the delivery of the projects. The Project Manager and Staff will continually monitor the projects. The Project Manager will provide at least quarterly reports to the Board confirming the status of the projects and highlighting any issues that need to be addressed. The local authority has a scrutiny role in overseeing judicial management of the BID

Alternative: The BID management processes would be improved.

17 INVESTMENT OF LEVY

There will be several projects that are not going to be undertaken straight away due to logistical and developmental constraints.

In view of this, the Dorchester BID Company intends to invest the monies allocated for these projects in order to raise some additional funding. At current investment rates, this would achieve 5.75% per annum in a high yielding building society or bank account deemed acceptable by the Board.

18 THE DORCHESTER BID TIMETABLE

Ballot Campaign	December 2007 to February 2008
BID Business Plan released	December 2007
Notification of Ballot	17 th January 2008
BID Proposal sent out	25 th January 2008
Ballot Papers Sent	28 th January 2008
Ballot Closing Date	28 th February 2008 at 5.00PM
Announcement of ballot	29 th February
BID Set Up Period	March to May 2008
BID Levy Commencement Date	7 th April 2008
BID Levy invoices sent	7 th April 2008
Official Launch	19 th May 2008
1st AGM (Election of Board)	April 2008
2 nd AGM	April 2009
Annual Review	April 2009
Financial Year	1st January to 31st December
Ballot for BID renewal	BID term 5 years, renewal May 2013

19 CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions relating to the Dorchester BID, or have project ideas/suggestions for helping to improve the BID area and the business climate in Dorchester please contact us via the website, call us or write to the address below.

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4 Linden Avenue
Dorchester
Dorset

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Mobile: 07799 494886

Email: dorchesterbid@btinternet.com

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You can also download a copy of this business plan or an executive summary from our website.

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