



## Wakefield Business Improvement District

### Annual report 2018-19

#### 1.0 Background

In April, the Wakefield BID will have completed two out of the five years of its first mandated Business Plan. The BID brings together city centre businesses and organisations in a range of projects aimed at boosting the economic performance of our city.

The key aim of Wakefield BID is to make the city centre a better place to visit, shop, relax, work and live. A better city centre means a better trading environment and more prosperity for our city, our businesses and our residents.

Our Business Plan captures the key sentiments of our aims and these remain paramount:

- Spend income exclusively on activities that will build up footfall, dwell time and local spend
- Acknowledge that our customers' experience is critical to our ongoing business success and work hard to towards raising this
- Utilise the vibrant community life of Wakefield to enrich the city centre and its appeal
- Spend locally whenever possible to keep our money within the local economy
- Push hard and consistently to ensure that local businesses engage in the overall commercial life of Wakefield and participate fully in what we plan and organise

We still believe that the Business Improvement District model is the very best approach we have available to ensure that we realise our collective vision for the city and BIDs continue to be formed around the UK, now numbering over 300 in total. Many have completed their first five-year terms and have renewed their mandates, usually with increased turn-outs and majorities in favour, demonstrating that businesses are convinced that BIDs make an appreciable difference to their ongoing viability.

#### 2.0 Key activities

Projects completed successfully include:

- The development of a programme of new events for 2018, including a significantly improved Long Division, a Wakefield Car Show, Restaurant Week, Wakefield Cocktails in the City and two new Christmas events

- Production & delivery of 20,000 copies of a WFD XMS Christmas booklet, which promoted businesses from within the BID district and offered free advertising to levy-payers
- The appointment of a local organisation to assist the BID with marketing & communications
- The continuation of a business cost reduction programme for BID businesses via Meercat Associates
- A partnership arrangement with Arriva Travel to offer BID businesses & staff discounted travel on the local public transport network
- A move to a permanent office base in Silver Street Barstow Square
- The production and distribution of four newsletters to all BID levy-payers
- Positive media coverage in the Wakefield Express, the Yorkshire Post, the Yorkshire Evening Post, as well as via Ridings FM and BBC Radio Leeds, which has resulted in a total reach of more than 220,000 people
- The installation of over 50 Christmas lights features, including a major shooting star installation on the Kirkgate roundabout
- Social media campaigns on Twitter, Facebook & Instagram, with Facebook likes growing from 155 to over 900
- Partnerships with the Police, the City Council and other agencies to address the problems with antisocial behaviour including Shopwatch, Dispersal notices and ROAR accreditation scheme
- The development of a Smartwater can marking project, which has reduced on-street drinking within the city centre by approximately 60%
- The introduction of Clubcrew, Ask for Angela and Paramedic support initiatives to improve the evening economy experience for visitors
- Three Make a Difference Days, which involved litter removal, sandblasting of the streetscene, improvements to street furniture and cleaning of planters
- Additional planting & landscaping
- Ongoing preparations for Purple Flag accreditation to raise the management standards of the evening economy
- Ongoing investment in a software system to improve communication with BID levy-payers
- The creation of a new brand for the city
- Development of a WFD 130 campaign to celebrate the history of Wakefield
- The provision of professional photographic services for BID levy-payers
- Improvements to three prominent vacant premises
- Additional cleansing of key city centre areas
- Support to continue the free city bus system
- The introduction of a mystery shopping initiative to support improvements to the customer experience
- The receipt of the New Business of the Year award at the Wakefield Business Awards

### 3.0 Financial information 2018-19

The income to support the activities outlined in our business plan is derived principally from the levy collected from local businesses within the BID boundary, although some income arises from external sources, such as sponsorship and grants.

This levy is based on the Rateable Value (RV) of the property, as stated on the ratings list held by the Council's rating department and all liable business properties within the BID boundary, with very few minor exceptions, will pay 1.25% of their assigned RV, apart from those units which fall under the management of a shopping centre or market and who pay service charges to the operator, who pay 0.75% of their assigned RV. Units with a rateable value of less than £12,000 or unoccupied units are exempt from the levy.

The BID exists as a non-profit making Company, with all income being used towards the delivery of the Business Plan on behalf of our levy payers. We employ the services of a local firm of Accountants, SFB Group in order to provide independent financial accounts for the BID and to make all the necessary submissions & returns on our behalf.

The forecast financial summary for the year to 31 March 2019 is as follows:

#### INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2018-19

##### INCOME

BID levy	£ 256,193
Surplus brought forward from 2017-18	£145, 215
Total income	£401,408

##### EXPENDITURE

Lively & Well Promoted	£ 120,264
Smart & Attractive	£ 45,298
Welcoming & Accessible	£89,117
Great Place to do Business	£ 40,959
Management costs	£ 44,600
BID levy collection charge	£ 8,670
Contingency	£ 10,000
Total expenditure	£ 358,908
Forecast surplus to carry forward	£ 42,500

#### NOTES TO ACCOMPANY THE FORECAST FINANCIAL SUMMARY

1. Figures prepared as of the end of February 2019 and forecast until 31 March 2019
2. Final accounts to be prepared after the financial year end of 31 March 2019
3. Any forecast surplus will be fully budgeted against key BID projects in subsequent years
4. The figures differ from the stated Business Plan, mainly due to changes in Rateable Values following the 2017 revaluation process

#### **4.0 Plans for 2019-20**

We have developed a focused plan of proposed activities to cover the 2019-20 year and these allow us to prioritise a number of key activities, whilst also ensuring that we retain a strong focus on our Business Plan.

The 2019-20 Action Plan is therefore shown as Appendix 1 of this document.

We urge all BID organisations to become involved in our work. If you therefore wish to be involved in the management of the BID or participate in any of our work, then please visit our offices, at Silver Street Barstow Square or contact us as follows:

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