

BIDS DUNDALK 2014 - 2018

BUSINESS INVESTMENT DISTRICT SCHEME DUNDALK LIMITED “**BIDS Dundalk Limited**” submits the following proposal in accordance with section 129C of the Local Government (Business Improvement Districts) Act 2006 to Dundalk Town Council as the relevant Rating Authority under which the BIDS proposal is to operate.

BID Company Details

BIDS Dundalk Ltd,
C/o Dundalk Chamber
Unit 4, Partnership Court
Park Street
Dundalk, Co. Louth.

Company Registration:

Registered in Dundalk, Ireland. Reg. No. CRO 45061

Initial Subscribers to Memorandum:

Paddy Malone; Bill Tosh; Chris Brayden; Harry Traynor; Brian O’Neill

Solicitors:

Daniel O’Connell & Sons
14 Francis Street
Dundalk.

Auditors :

Frank Lynch & Co
Seatown, Dundalk.

INDEX

(A) BIDS Dundalk Limited – Promoters of the BID

- (i) Introduction.
- (ii) Listing of Company Directors
- (iii) Management Committee.
- (iv) Business Consultation

(B) Proposed boundaries for The Business Investment District Scheme

(C) A current list of each ratable property within the proposed Business Improvement District.

(D) Details of the BID scheme 2014 - 2018, including:

(a) Description of the objectives to be achieved under the BID scheme.

- (i) Finance & Investment opportunities
- (ii) Events Calendar
- (iii) Marketing, Tourism & Promotions
- (iv) Town watch
- (v) Policy Responses

(b) The date by which the scheme is expected to be in operation and the number of years the scheme is expected to operate.

(c) A schedule which specifies the projects, services as provided by Dundalk Town Council that are relevant to the scheme being proposed, hereafter referred to as (“baseline services”).

(d) Detailed estimates for each year over which the scheme being proposed is to operate, listing the expenditure that would be necessary to carry out, provide the projects services or works under the BID scheme.

- (i) An estimate of the annual BID contribution.
- (ii) Estimated income from Levy

(e) Budgets for other activities from the BIDS scheme.

BIDS Dundalk Ltd

(i) Introduction

Dundalk is a key Gateway designation bordering NI, in a region where trading normality and dynamics have evolved very positively. The Town has welcomed normalization, a concept not previously thought possible providing an opportunity for regeneration possibilities despite the lack of government funding under the original Gateway Proposals. The challenge for its rates-payers remains on how it might transform and build a diverse retail environment, improve its leisure offerings and attract the investors that have by-passed it for decades.

We propose that the Continuance of a Town Centre Commercial Manager(TCCM) under an agreed framework, with a detailed brief to address both commercial and investment difficulties, is the core resource which this BIDS will be structured upon. The TCCM resource will be tasked to continue to address gaps, resource options and deliver new **investments opportunities** directly building a viable town through core **events and activities**, Strengthen **promotion and marketing** and create vitality and viability in Dundalk through a **Safer Streets programme** that will encompass the formal **Townwatch** anticrime scheme and process's currently operated nationally by other organisations.

(ii) Listing of Company Directors/Management Committee

Directors proposed

Paddy Malone, Chartered Accountant/Partner Malone &Co

Brian O'Neill - Proprietor RQO'Neill

Harry Traynor - Property Manager Marshes Shopping Centre

*** 3 other members of the Management Committee will be required as Directors of the Company.

(iii) Management Committee

Chair: From following nominations, or, adoption

Rate-payers nominations

- 1 Brian O'Neill, Proprietor RQ O'Neills
- 2 Harry Traynor, Property Manager Marshes Shopping Centre
- 3 Siobhan Mc Tighe – Crowne Plaza Hotel
- 4 Martin Mc Eilligott – Proprietor Life style Photography
- 5 Tom Muckian – Proprietor Carrolls Bookshop
- 6 Paddy Malone – Chartered Accountant/Partner Malone &Co
- 7 Tim Mullins – Proprietor Glengath House
- 8 David Mc Gee – Proprietor Mc Gee Insurance
- 9 TCCM
- 10 Town Councillor
- 11 Town Councillor
- 12 Council Official
- 13 Council Official

Administration arrangements

It is proposed BIDS will continue to operate from the current TCCM offices on Market Square as this location provides an Independent structure that is easily accessible to both public and private interested parties.

Governance

The Directors function will be to ensure company secretarial and legislative remit compliance. The Management Committee will act as the operational management team.

- It will progress Dundalk BIDS through monthly meetings to consider agreed agenda issued in advance, receive progress reports from committee representatives, establish priorities and respond to its stakeholders expectations.
- The meeting quorum is accepted as 50% of Management Board.[minimum of 6] Decisions, if not unanimous, will be adopted only with a minimum two-thirds attending voter support.
- The Board of Directors will establish and publish its principles for adopting expenditure and sanctioning accounts' payments which concurs with all stakeholders required standards. Simple reporting routines showing period cost-center expenditure and variance analysis are believed appropriate and will be scrutinized in advance by an appointed Finance Group drawn from the core Committee. An annual general meeting will be held every year after the accounts are approved by the management committee.
- The Board of Directors will establish funding draw-down criteria with Dundalk Town Council and produce a work programme which recognizes resulting cash-flow projections. Any overdraft funding that is required will be negotiated by the BIDS Finance Group and only applied in emergency.
- Events proposed which have target outputs will be managed as independent cost-centers, the BIDS Management Committee may choose to directly manage such events but must be mindful that each is expected to contribute to event running costs for the BIDS office.
- Dundalk BIDS will reserve the flexibility to vary targets and outputs, but only by negotiated agreement with the promoters i.e. the Directors and Management Committee and Dundalk Town Council.

- Six-Monthly activity progress tracker reports will be published and disseminated for all rate-payers attention, through the local press.

It is proposed to establish, principally from the Management Committee, a number of working subgroups for:

Finance – inclusive of sponsorship opportunities

Events Development inclusive of promotional activity

Town watch – safer streets scheme

Investment – data capture / vacant premises etc

Policy Responses

Subgroups will be encouraged to adopt such other expertise and agreed resources as are deemed necessary to deliver their targets.

(iv) **Business Consultation**

In 2009, Dundalk Chamber argued successfully to Town Council for the deployment of a Town Centre Commercial Manager to address retention and improvement of both leisure and retail “high street” offerings. The Council agreed to a specific levy of half of one percent onto rates. That levy remains in place.

During that Summer Dundalk Chamber polled 400 Town Centre businesses and recorded that 72% believed that a TCCM remained the preferred option, as the mechanism to drive Town Centre growth and meetings for rate-payers, including those from service and manufacturing supported by direct consultations with recognized business interests unanimously endorsed the continuance of the role.

(B) Proposed Boundaries for the Business Improvement District

The premise that we have adopted with respect to boundaries, evolves from our view that a Vibrant Town Centre is an essential pre-requisite for Dundalk to both serve and retain its local regional population and to become the preferred point of

visit for retail and leisure visitors to the region. It is a matter of record that in recent years Dundalk has suffered very high leakage to the North .

Some of this is accounted by duty and trading practice differentials, which exacerbated the other aspect, the decline in diversity and failure to attract regenerating investors, all fuelled by legacy perceptions from the wider community.

A regenerated Town Centre is essential and the role of the TCCM and BIDS plays a fundamental part as a pre-requisite for industry, a tool to attract industrial investment and equally for trading sustainability for the Centre.

We believe that any new BIDS levy should be supported by the full urban rate base.

(C) List of current ratable properties in the Proposed Business Improvement District

See appendix 1

(D) The BID Scheme

(a) Description of the objectives to be achieved under the BID scheme.

The key objective of the BID scheme is to further establish the resource of our TCCM to develop and implement a programme that will contribute to the strengthening of Dundalk as a Retail and Leisure destination.

- (i) **Finance and Investment:** Creating and actively maintaining data bases for all current consumer suppliers and for vacant or derelict commercial premises. To use this information to bench-mark, identify gaps and to research and cultivate options to overcome such deficits shown. In parallel to create premises options for investor use and/or development profiling. The TCCM would be the one-stop contact for incoming traders and providers. This work will draw on both existing statistics that the Town Council maintains and those collated from physical data-gathering and commercial sources and should be shared out to all active partners.

(ii) **To Progress an Events Calendar** where major events provide focus and profile to Dundalk Town and encompass partner activity – creating a Town Wide Identity and unity.

(a) St Patrick's Day is the traditional starting point for the towns schedule and these past years have seen growth on a budget

(b) Historic Festivals should be revived and private promoters have expressed the need for better Administrative and Marketing support to ensure it receives the widest appeal.

(iii) **Marketing, Tourism & Promotion:** The TCCM's key role will be to raise private sector sponsorship for All Events and create promotions that advantage traders during and after these events. He/ She would crucially pull-together all the disparate influences and expertise that collectively ensure success. The TCCM would be tasked to create a Steering Forum to research and propose an event format, delivery vehicle, marketing campaign and budget which would meet the aspirations of both the town and sponsors from such a major entity. The provision of a business plan for such activity is essential.

The TCCM would create a unified annual marketing campaign for seasonal and leisure promotions agreed and funded by traders, as another key mechanism to return footfall to Dundalk high streets and shopping centres. As a measure of their impact, the TCCM would establish a footfall measure regime to establish trends and ensuing incremental value.

(iv) **Townwatch Safer Streets Campaign:** Dundalk has suffered somewhat more so than other towns from retail crime. We propose within the BIDS scheme that the TCCM continue a Safer Streets programme through enhanced development of the existing Town watch, which would encourage individual private security

resources, to provide early warning notice of known shoplifters, to collectively act as a joined-up resource to notice and monitor credit card fraud and assaults to Garda and to contribute to a renewed townscape. Such a scheme will require the continued commitment from current members agreement with TCCM providing an identifiable link.

- (v) **Policy Responses;** The BIDS Management Committee would collectively be tasked to agree and provide considered policy statements to supplement Town Council provisions for consultation on all key issues which affect trading, namely: Parking provisions and charging; Transport- principally traffic flow and public service provisions; Streetscape - street cleaning, tenant mix criteria, signage, planting, shop fronts etc; Planning responses (but not objections), Security – inclusive of CCTV and Policing needs. The TCCM's contribution would be to examine such experience and best practice that prevails, through proactive interaction with Irish and UK ATCM associations.

(b) Operating period

The operating period for the renewal of the BID scheme will commence in January 2014 and run for a period of 5 years.

(c) Schedule of services provided by Town Council

A schedule which specifies the projects, services currently provided by Dundalk Town Council are not strictly relevant to the proposed scheme given that all the outputs are supplementary. Such baseline services in respect of Events are noted below.

(d) Outline Annual estimates of expenditure for detailed BIDS outputs.

Expenditure	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Salaries	€ 88,000	€88,000	€88,000	€88,000	€88,000
Professional Services; Legal; Accounting; Audit	€ 5,000	€ 5,000	€ 5,000	€ 5,000	€ 5,000
Utility Costs Association Membership Of ATCM / AISC	€15,000	€15,000	€15,000	€15,000	€15,000
Marketing and Promotions	€14,000	€14,000	€14,000	€14,000	€14,000
Total	€122,000	€122,000	€122,000	€122,000	€122,000

The average BID Levy rate of 1.5% will be required to support this proposal and would therefore remain as is current with no further demand on rate payers.

Expenditure to be Incurred	€205,276	
		_____ = .9874
Ratetable Valuation	207,897	

Annual Bid Contribution Levy

Annual Bid Multiplier	.9874	
* Ratetable Valuation	207,897	= € 205,276

****** Footnote**

The Calculation above is based on a full collection of 1.5% however the BIDs office have based their proposed budget on net income allowing for rate write offs and refunds. Any additional income will be used for the marketing and promotion of the Town.

RV	DTC€ in €	Rates Paid	BID Levy	% of Rates
50	65.83	3,292	49.37	1.5%
100	65.83	6,583	98.75	1.5%
200	65.83	13,166	197.49	1.5%

(e) Budgets for other activities from the BIDS scheme.

It is the case that the activities targeted from this project are not income generating, particularly from events but should encompass a value to meet staff costs. The promoters aim, is to ensure that the events funding meets all those particular liabilities, this is the realistic outcome. The promoters will ensure that both Marketing and Promotions activities are matched with at least equal participant funding lines, given that these are quite low levels.

The key measurable outputs Dundalk BIDS expects to deliver include:

- Comprehensive premises and competitive data for both Town Hall, Existing and In-coming Businesses
- Improved Profile for Dundalk through professionally organized and adequately funded Events
- Systematic assessment and identification of businesses and investors that meet the identified gaps in diversity
- Focused marketing of the Towns strengths or ESP's with organized promotions that hit the optimal targets and involve all sectors.
- Identification and adoption of retail and leisure best-practices for regenerating and growing regional towns

- A step change in the efficiency to deter crime, so to improve businesses and shoppers confidence and create a welcoming environment.
- Exploitation of the new opportunities to do business cross border that benefits Dundalk Town and it's rates base

Summary:

We would urge the widest support for the continuance of the current BIDS project and whilst accepting that existing or proposed projects within BIDS may not have been completed effectively, they are still of relevance in today's economic environment and the need for a sustained and comprehensive progression of the BID process is as prevalent now as it was at inception.

Dundalk has historically suffered from an identity crisis, and having put the issues of the conflict behind, now needs to build to the future. Progression of BIDS for a further term ensures we can continue to enhance all that has been achieved and to nurture and improve our town addressing its immediate needs and developing its aspirations.