

**REPORT FROM:** HOUSING, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
SERVICES MANAGER

**TO:** EXECUTIVE

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## **COLNE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the Executive on progress made with developing a BID for Colne, in particular the stages completed to date and estimated timescales/outcomes.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Members note progress update and timetable for the implementation of a Colne BID.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

To allow the development of the proposed Colne BID to continue.

### **Background**

1. The Housing, Health and Economic Development Team submitted a report to the Executive (16<sup>th</sup> March 2017), at which it was agreed that a Colne BID be developed, with a funding allocation of up to a maximum amount of £28,000 approved to appoint a consultant as a BID coordinator (Kolek Consulting)
2. It was agreed by the Executive, that the composition of the BID steering group to develop a BID for Colne, and the process for appointing members to the Group was to be agreed by the Gearing Up For Growth Panel.

### **Colne BID Steering Group**

3. Following on from the Executive decision to develop a Colne BID a public meeting was held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June. All businesses within the potential BID area were invited to attend and give their comments on any potential BID and also to express their interest in sitting on any future BID Steering Group. Volunteers were sought through an expression of interest

and application process and appointments to the Steering Group were then endorsed by the Grants for Growth Panel.

4. The meeting was promoted using a number of channels to ensure all Colne businesses became aware of the proposed BID. This included email, press releases, social media posts and face to face visits from the BID coordinator (Chris Kolek).
5. The previous report agreed by the Executive proposed that the Steering group would consist of a maximum of 10 people (seven businesses, two local authority Members and BID Coordinator). Following on from the expressions of interest received it is suggested that the membership of the steering group could be increased from 10 to 12 (up to nine businesses, two Pendle Councillors, and one Colne Town Councillor), with Chris Kolek and Pendle Council (Business Support Team Leader) facilitating the development as non-voting steering group members..
6. The Gearing Up For Growth Panel agreed (04/07/2017) that all businesses who expressed an interest were invited to join the Steering Group. Colne Town Council were asked to nominate a Councillor to be on the Steering Group, subsequently Cllr S Cockburn-Price has been appointed to represent Colne Town Council. The two Executive Members nominated to represent Pendle Borough Council were Councillors M. Iqbal and D. Clegg.
7. The steering group has subsequently met on three occasions to bring forward the development of a Colne BID. Although initial expressions of interest from Colne businesses were high, the actually number of businesses who have committed to sit on the steering group is slightly lower with seven seats allocated, and three elected Members. Appendix 1 – lists the current Steering Group Members. The Steering Group are regularly seeking new Members and the group is likely to evolve over time.

## **Business Priorities Survey and BID Proposal**

8. In August/September 2017 a Business Priorities Survey was undertaken, and sent/delivered to all the Businesses in the potential BID area (approx. 300 in total). The survey was completed by approx. 25% of businesses in the BID area.
9. The purpose of the survey is to inform, shape and focus what a Business Improvement District (BID) for Colne should address from the perspective of those running businesses and organisations in the town. The survey forms an important part of the ongoing consultations and engagement with business owners, partners and senior managers, not only providing the project with valuable intelligence on what matters most to the business community, but also serving as an opportunity to raise awareness of what BIDs are and to dispel some of the common myths and misconceptions that exist.
10. The survey asked three main questions, and businesses were given a list of options/projects.
  - What priorities do businesses have to improve trade and commerce in Colne?
  - What actions would a business be willing to pay for? (Through a BID)
  - Opinions of various specific projects to improve business and services in Colne.
11. The results for how respondents would improve business are detailed in the table below. The challenge to keep the number of empty units to a minimum was most often cited as 'high priority' by 85% of businesses.

	High Priority %	Medium Priority %	Low priority %
Marketing & promoting Colne to residents of the local area	65	29	6
Marketing & promoting Colne to day visitors and tourists from further afield	62	22	17
Encouraging more visits to Colne by offering discounted ticket charges on buses and trains	37	38	25
Expanding the number and range of events, festivals and entertainment in Colne	48	36	16
Promoting a safer environment for staff, customers and visitors	52	32	16
Keeping the number of empty shops and units to a minimum	85	15	0
Support, advice and training to improve the viability of businesses in Colne	38	50	13
Reducing the costs of running a business in the town	70	27	3

12. Businesses indicated which action they would be willing to pay for through a potential BID. The findings suggest even at this early stage that many businesses would at least consider paying towards activities which address their highest priorities, such as promotion/marketing of the town to visitors and locals, enhancing the appearance of Colne, and action to promote a safer town centre. Full results are in the table below.

Willingness to pay?	Definitely %	Would consider %	Not willing %
Marketing & promotion campaign to encourage Colne residents to use town	24	41	34
Marketing & promotion campaign to attract visitors/tourists from further afield	24	37	39
Transport incentives, including bus and rail discounts and promotions	11	16	74
Expanding the number and range of events, festivals and entertainment	16	35	49
Support for crime prevention initiatives to maintain a safe town	25	36	39
Promoting the town to potential new businesses or services	20	28	52
Helping to ensure that businesses can access free advice, training and support	19	24	57
Collective purchasing scheme to reduce overheads/costs of running businesses	19	35	46
Enhancing the appearance of the town through support for flower displays, etc	37	27	36

13. The survey sought to get more of an indication of what types of project activity or service might receive the most popular support from businesses and organisations in Colne. The survey findings reveal a strong interest in having an initiative to fill or improve the appearance of empty units, followed by a marketing campaign for Colne.

ATTITUDES TO SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Marketing of Colne as a visitor destination	76	8	16
Free mobile App promoting shops and services	58	17	25
Sponsorship of new or expanded festivals/events	59	11	30
Colne consumer website and social media	67	11	21
Promotion of Colne's evening economy	54	15	31
'Greener town' coverage of plants/flowers	62	10	28
Loyalty rewards scheme and voucher incentives	51	13	36
'Totally locally' campaigns to buy in Colne	69	6	24
Public transport promotions and incentives	51	17	32
Safer Colne, bar watch, shop watch and other crime prevention initiatives	67	13	20
Collective schemes that deliver savings for businesses	58	10	32
Free Wi-Fi throughout the town centre	57	20	23
Initiative to fill or improve appearance of empty shops	89	3	8
Pride in Colne' initiative connecting business and community	71	11	18

14. The survey findings provide an excellent insight into the priorities of the town's businesses, and provide some helpful clues on what they are willing to pay for. The results will now be played back to the town's business owners and managers, both as an opportunity to challenge and test the analysis, but also as an opportunity to elaborate on the detail of

some of these priorities. The BID proposal for Colne will then be produced based on the findings, this will outline the main theme/projects that any potential BID would fund.

## **Colne BID Area**

15. Following on from correspondence during the survey process it appears, that the most feasible option for a successful BID in Colne, would be option B listed in the initial feasibility study Option B – Wider Town centre (Appendix 2: Option B – Wider Town Centre Map and Income levy table)
16. During the next stages of producing a costed BID proposal, the figures for the project will be based on the potential income from this option. Option B income varies depending on the levy level (1% - 3%) and any exclusions for example properties under a certain size. This criteria will be decided by the BID Steering Group with consultation with the businesses in the BID area. The potential annual income levy could range from £59,989 to £179,968.

## **Progress Update – Timescales and next stages of development.**

17. Appendix 3 shows the estimated development timescales. The Plan had been amended to take into account the delays in starting the process due to the County Council and General elections. The Plan outlines the main actions to be undertaken.
18. The development process in total will take approximately 12 months from the start of the project, with a target completion date of June 2018. The process is coordinated by Chris Kolek, and supported by the members of the Colne BID steering group.
19. It is anticipated that the ballot/vote will take place in June 2018. There are a number of statutory deadlines that must be adhered to in the lead up to voting taking place. If business in Colne vote in favour of a BID for Colne, it is likely that the BID will actually be implemented in September 2018.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** There are no policy implications arising directly from the contents of this report. Although a BID will support the Council's strategy of supporting Town Centres.

**Financial:** The cost of funding a BID co-coordinator (Kolek Consulting) was agreed at a previous meeting of the Executive (16<sup>th</sup> March 2017)

**Legal:** None as a result of this report

**Risk Management:** None as a result of this report

**Health and Safety:** None as a result of this report

**Sustainability:** The introduction of a BID for Colne, should add to the sustainability and economic viability/success of Colne.

**Community Safety:** None as a result of this report

**Equality and Diversity:** All businesses within and surrounding Colne Town centre have been given the opportunity to express their interest in sitting on the Colne BID steering group.

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Steering Group Members

Appendix 2 - Bid Boundary and potential income table

Appendix 3 - Communications/Development Plan for Colne BID

## **| LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

## **Appendix 1 – Colne BID Steering Group Members**

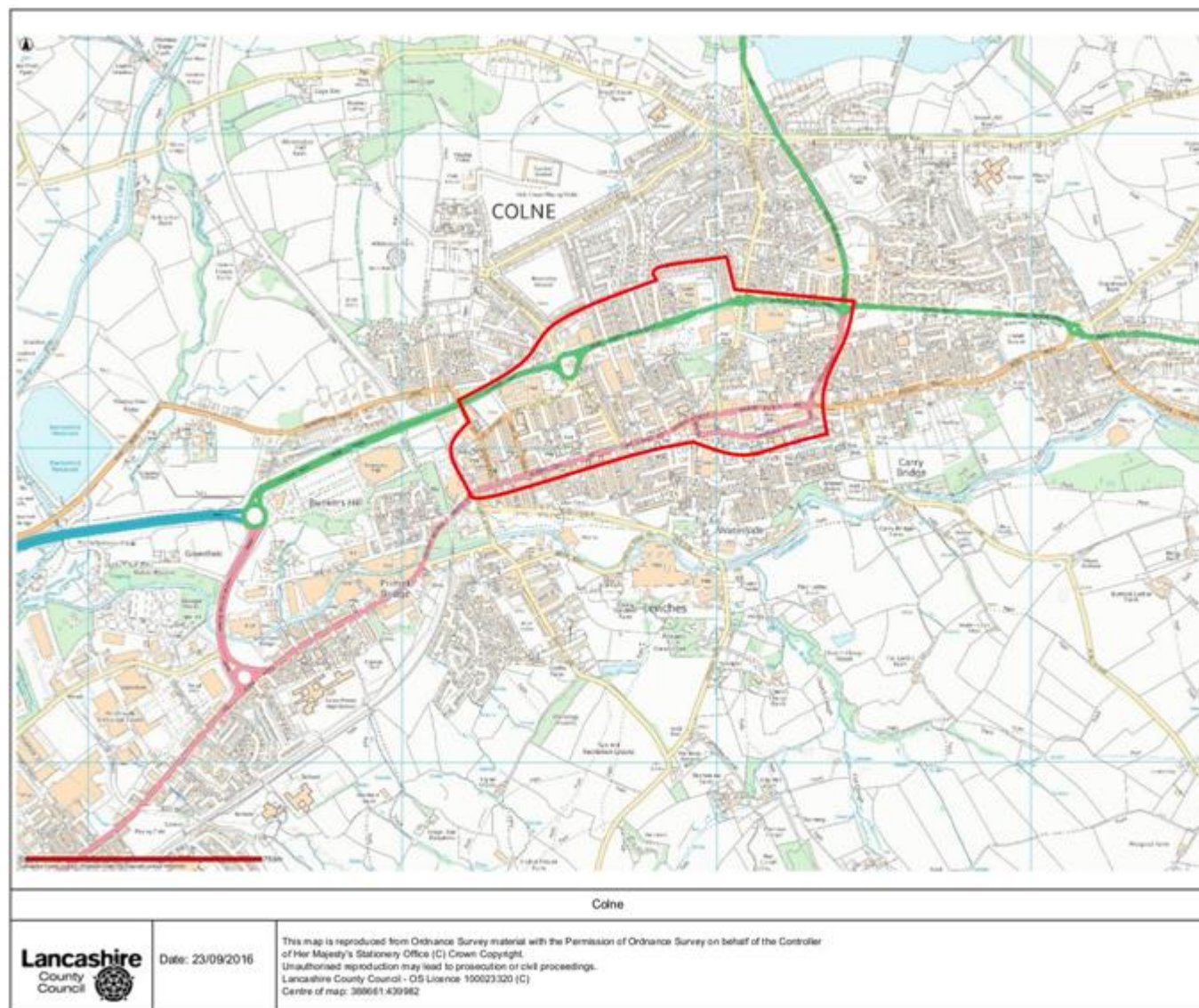
### **Colne Business**

1. Ashley Sutcliffe – Live Like The Boy
2. Emma Cornish – Co-op
3. Grahame Wharton – Grahame's Poultry, and Chair of Colne Town Centre Forum
4. Mark Bateman – The Bookshop, Colne
5. Matthew Eyre – Colne Tyre Centre
6. Peter Jagger – Stells Famous Pet Store
7. Phil Heyworth – JD Engineering
8. Vacant
9. Vacant

### **Councillors**

1. Cllr D. Clegg
2. Cllr M. Iqbal
3. Cllr S. Cockburn Price ( Representing Colne Town Council)

## Appendix 2 – Bid Boundary and potential income table



No of Business Premises	Exemption Thresholds	Aggregate Rateable Value £	Annual Fund 1% levy £	Annual Fund 1.5% levy £	Annual Fund 2% levy	Annual Fund 3% levy
290	None	5,998,930	59,989	89,984	119,979	179,968
220	<£3k	5,872,180	58,722	88,083	117,444	176,165
197	<£4k	5,790,080	57,901	86,851	115,802	173,702
169	<£5k	5,664,830	56,648	84,972	113,297	169,945

### Appendix 3 – Communications/Development Plan for Colne BID

Countdown to vote	Tasks and activities	Indicative timescale
-8 months	<b>Finalise BID Proposal including:</b> - Completion of revisions in response to consultations	Nov 2017 to Jan 2018
-5 months	<b>12 weeks Notification of Intention to Ballot</b> - 'BID Proposer' writes to Pendle Council (the billing authority) and the Secretary of State (DCLG) announcing intention to take the BID Proposal to a ballot of businesses	February 2018
-3 months	<b>BID Campaign for 'Yes' vote</b> - Public announcements and door-to-door canvassing	April 2018
-42 days	<b>Publication of Ballot Notice</b> - Pendle Council formally issues public notice of ballot to all eligible levy payers together with instructions on the ballot process (at least 42 whole days before the ballot date) - Final BID Proposal with all relevant information available for viewing from this date.	May 2018
-1 month	<b>Ballot Papers issued including:</b> - Ballot papers issued to all ratepayers eligible to vote in the BID ballot (at least 28 whole days before the ballot day)	May 2018
0	<b>Ballot Day</b> (last day of ballot period)	Tbc June 2018
+1 days	<b>Announcement of ballot result</b> - Pendle BC public announcement of result as soon as practicable after the ballot day, ideally next working day.	Tbc June 2018
+3 months	<b>BID start date</b>	1 September 2018



