

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

11 October 2007

UPDATE ON WINCHESTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR (OPERATIONS)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB1450 - Winchester BID Development Update - 11th April 2007

CAB1240 - Winchester Business Improvement District - 22nd March 2006

LE11 - Progress through partnership – The role of Winchester City Centre Partnership and the opportunity offered by Business Improvement Districts - 30th November 2005

WTF69 - Winchester Business Improvement District - 18th January 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Members will be aware that a Business Improvement District for the centre of Winchester was formally approved this summer through a postal ballot organised by Winchester City Council. This report provides a brief update and overview of finances, including the use of the £5,000 contribution from the Town Forum budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members note the content of this report, and are satisfied that their contribution has been spent appropriately.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 A Business Improvement District (BID) “is a partnership between a local authority and the local business community to develop projects and services that will benefit the trading environment within the boundary of a clearly defined commercial area.” (*Fast facts for BIDs partners, Association of Town Centre Managers*). Winchester City Centre Partnership formally proposed a BID to Winchester City Council in June 2007, based on a period of consultation with the business community. The official postal ballot was arranged by the Council in July 2007, leading to a majority vote in favour of establishing a BID in Winchester (the declaration of results is attached at appendix 1).
- 1.2 The area covered by the BID is Winchester city centre, as far as Andover Road and Stockbridge Road in the north-west; North Walls, Eastgate Street, and Bridge Street in the south-east; Colebrook Street, The Square, Southgate Street, and Romsey Road in the south-west. A map is attached at Appendix 2 showing this area.

2 The Winchester BID

- 2.1 The vision of the Winchester BID is to: “*Create a business led programme of investment throughout Winchester city centre, raising the quality of experience for businesses, residents and visitors*”. The business plan, a full copy of which can be found at <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/Business/TownCentreManagement/BIDs/> , details projects based under the following headings:
- a) Street management – this includes cleaning, flowers and decoration and waste management
 - b) Community safety – this includes additional Police Community Support Officers, graffiti and fly posting clearance, Shopwatch and Pubwatch services
 - c) Promote business – this includes an annual Christmas festival, a retail guide and a marketing campaign
 - d) Broadening participation – the new BID management company will make all BID member companies part of the decision making process
 - e) Evening economy – work with the city council’s economic development officer and other partners to make the evening period in Winchester a more enjoyable and active place to be
 - f) Access – lobbying for improvements to access the city centre

2.2 Winchester City Council will collect the levy on behalf of Winchester City Centre Partnership, the BID management company, from January 2008. Delivery of the projects within the business plan will begin from April 2008. These projects are currently being developed with those who will deliver the services.

2.3 The Winchester BID will last for five years. In the last of these years, a programme of consultation will be undertaken leading to a local ballot in order to decide whether the BID should continue for a second term.

3 Winchester Town Forum support for the BID

3.3 Winchester Town Forum agreed to contribute £5,000 towards the cost of developing the Winchester BID. This was added to further contributions from Winchester City Council as set out below:

i) Start Up Costs

a) From LABGI allocation:

- £30,000 cost of employing an assistant city centre manager to allow the city centre manager time to develop the BID
- £15,000 (estimated) cost of purchasing software for the levy collection, and training staff in how to use that software. It is agreed that 50% of this cost will be reclaimed from the levy which is collected
- £3,000 cost of administering the BID ballot

b) Town Forum contribution:

- £4,600 contribution towards the cost of consultation meetings with businesses; design and print of BID prospectus, and marketing of the BID business plan

ii) Ongoing Revenue Costs

a) From existing economic development base budget:

- £25,000 per year continued contribution to the Winchester City Centre Partnership as part of a baseline service level agreement (which also provides for the management of the new Business Centre in Parchment Street)

b) Growth monies to be identified in 2007/08 and onwards:

- £25,000 per year for the life of the BID as Winchester City Council's BID levy on its rateable properties (buildings and car parks). It has been proposed this is taken from LABGI funds, but there is currently no formal allocation.

4 Current Activities

4.1 Much of the work now being carried out by officers of the City Council and the City Centre Partnership is 'behind the scenes'. It includes:

- a) reorganising the City Centre Partnership to include the new responsibilities and role of a new BID management company;
- b) finalising with partner organisations the commissioning and administration of the enhanced levels of service provided for by the BID business plan;
- c) procuring new levy collection software, installing it and training Revenues staff who will be using it;
- d) finalising the formal reporting procedures to Winchester City Council which is required under the BID regulations;
- e) maintaining a watching brief over the administration of the BID, and providing general ad hoc support in this regard

4.2 Time has also been spent on the completion of Winchester Business Centre, which will be the new home of the BID company. A report on the business centre will be presented to Town Forum at its January meeting.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

4 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 4.3 The Winchester BID contributes to the economic prosperity aim of the corporate strategy, in particular supporting vibrant city, town and village centres.
- 4.4 The Winchester BID contributes to the economic prosperity aim of the community strategy, in particular;
 - Town and village centres are economically viable and attractive
 - Businesses and developers make a positive contribution to the local community and their surroundings

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.3 As outlined in paragraph 2.1 above

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Winchester BID proposal, business plan and management arrangements
www.winchester.gov.uk/Business/TownCentreManagement/BIDs/

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Declaration of BID ballot results

Appendix 2 – Map of BID area

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003
WINCHESTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
Declaration of Result of the Ballot

I, Stephen Whetnall, Ballot Holder, do hereby certify that in relation to the Winchester Business Improvement District ballot held between 28 June and 26 July 2007 :

1. the total number of votes cast in the ballot excluding those rejected was: 369
2. the aggregate rateable value of each hereditament in respect of which a person voted in the ballot is: £13,553,476
3. the total number of votes cast in favour of the question asked in the ballot was: 199
4. the aggregate rateable value of each hereditament in respect of which a person voting in the ballot has voted in favour of the question asked is £8,359,025

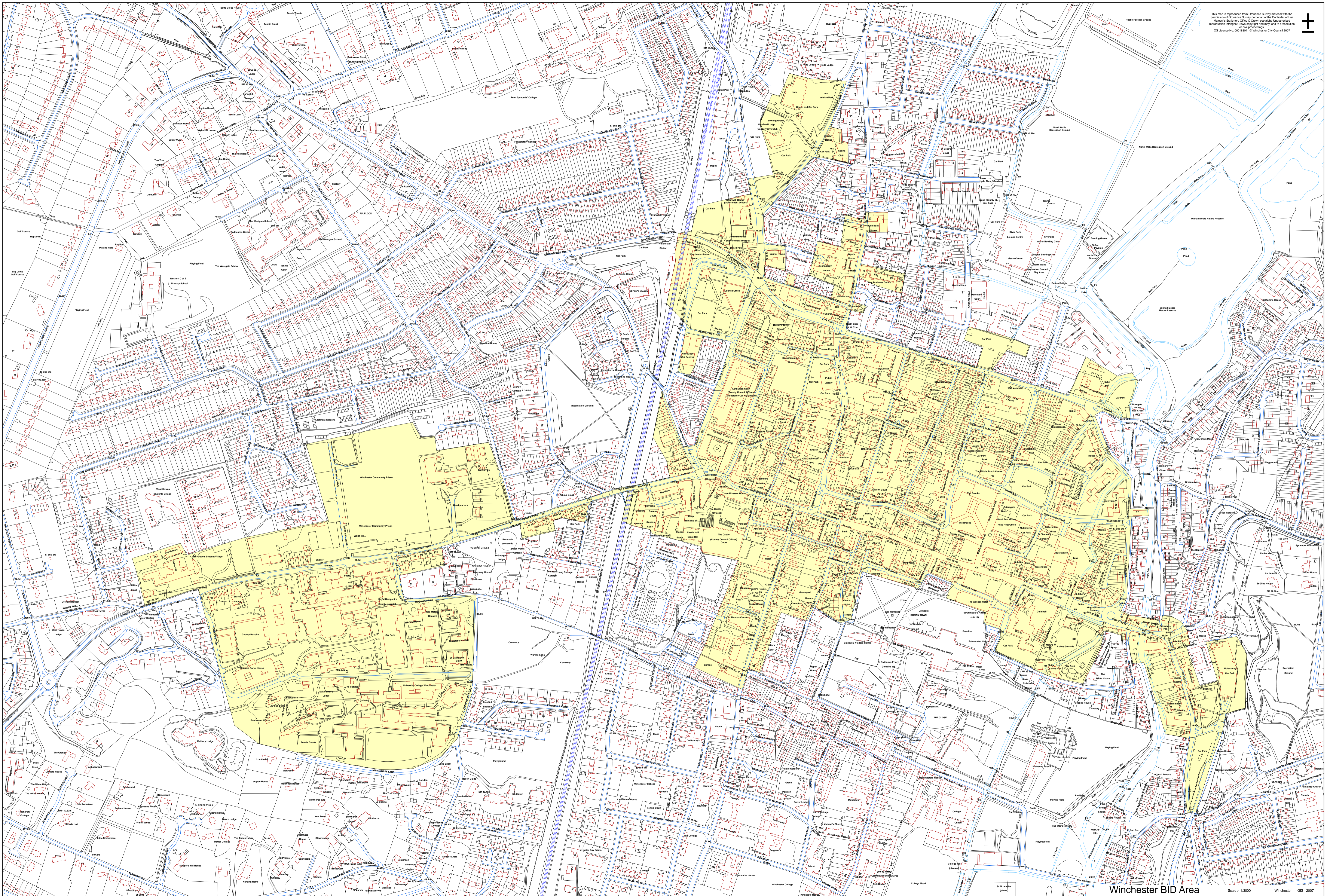
Accordingly I declare that:

- (a) the majority of persons voting in the ballot have voted in favour of the business improvement district proposals; and
- (b) the aggregate rateable value of each hereditament in respect of which persons have voted in favour of the proposals exceeds the aggregate rateable value of each hereditament of those voting against.

I therefore do hereby declare that the Winchester Business Improvement District proposals have been approved in this ballot in accordance with Section 50 of the Local Government Act 2003.

S Whetnall
Ballot Holder.

27 July 2007



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