

Proposed Oban Business Improvement District



Report to: Oban Lorn & the Isles Community Planning Group

From: Councillors Fred Hall and Duncan McIntyre, BID4Oban Steering Group

Date: 23 September 2012

Subject: Progress Report on development of Business Improvement District

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a brief overview of activities undertaken in developing a business improvement district for Oban in the past 6 months.
- 1.2 All activities to August 2012 have been focused on developing a comprehensive BID Proposal which reflects the priorities of local business and meets the legislative requirements of the Planning etc. Scotland Act 2006 'Business Improvement Districts (Scotland) Regulations 2007.
- 1.3 The focus of the BID4Oban Steering Group is now on campaigning for a Yes vote at ballot, and putting in place mechanisms for the operation of the new BID Company from 31 October 2012 which would be formed following a successful ballot.

2. BID Priorities

- 2.1 The consultation process revealed several clear priorities which emerged as 6 key objectives for a future BID:
 - Making the best first impression
 - Let's shout about what's happening in Oban (marketing and events)
 - Extend the season
 - Making Oban the place to stay, explore and spend
 - Working together for a more prosperous future
 - Making our town easier to visit
- 2.2 A series of over 20 project commitments are contained within these objectives, having been developed by a business planning group of local business owners.
- 2.3 Discussion with the Director of Development and Infrastructure and approval by a meeting of full Council on 28 June 2012 reached agreement on a financial

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contribution of £100,00 from the Council towards agreed project activities over 5 years. These activities complement Council strategy and actions. In addition a further £81,000 of in kind support from the Council was agreed in support of project delivery.

3. Project Timetable

Timescale	Project Activities
March – May 2012	Development and agreement of Business Plan projects based on business consultation findings, and working in partnership with Argyll & Bute Council Development and Infrastructure.
June 2012	Confirming financial contribution of Argyll & Bute Council following local elections. Agreement to ballot timetable with Returning Officer Operating Agreement on collection of levy agreed with Council Working to define database of voters (for nationals companies)
July 2012	Confirmation of intention not to veto BID Proposal from Council, following comments received from Scottish Government
August 2012	Business Plan printed Database of voters finalised Ballot packs distributed by Returning Officer on 24 August.
25 August – 5 October 2012	6 week campaign period in which businesses encouraged to return their completed voting papers.
5 October	Ballot count: result announced
	ON SUCCESSFUL BALLOT
31 October 2012	BID Company begins operation for 5 year period.

4. Finances

At end August 2012 a total of £11,217 was held by the BID Steering Group which, together with a further grant for interim funding from the Oban Common Good Fund of £3,000 will meet the following costs to 31 October 2012 when the BID company will commence:

- Conducting the campaign and ensuring all eligible businesses are aware and have an opportunity to vote: a key business event (12 September); advertising and mailing further information to all businesses voting),
- Conducting the ballot (for incurs a charge by the Returning Officer of the Council),
- Setting up the BID Company following a successful ballot: staff recruitment to paid positions; process for appointment of volunteer on-executive Board of Directors (appointed through nomination, or election if contested); operational arrangements.

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