

Skipton Business Improvement District

Skipton BID Business Plan



2009

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Appendix 1 THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2004

1 Executive Summary

What is Business Improvement District?

A business improvement district (BID) is a defined geographical area where businesses are invited to come together to make decisions on improving their trading environment. Through consultation, a range of projects and services are agreed and these are then voted upon by all the businesses in the area.

To establish a BID, businesses:

- identify a geographical area
- decide which new or expanded services they need to enhance their trading environment
- vote to invest collectively
- finance a BID through a levy on their business rate
- seek to lever in additional resources from elsewhere
- establish delivery guarantees and performance indicators
- manage an independent company to deliver the BID

All business ratepayers who would pay a levy in the BID have a vote on the projects proposed. The ballot will have to meet two tests:

First, a simple majority (above 50%) of those voting must vote in favour.

Second, those voting in favour must represent a majority of the aggregate rateable value of the hereditaments (rateable value). A successful vote results in the projects and services being implemented through a levy that is charged in addition to standard business rates.

The vote for the Skipton BID will take place early in 2009. If successful, the Skipton BID will operate between 2009 and 2014. After this it can be extended or renewed, subject to a new vote.

The Need for a Business Improvement District

A Skipton BID would spend money raised through the levy on projects which meet a set of objectives designed to promote Skipton, facilitate change, advance business growth and enable Skipton to continue as a thriving, prosperous place.

The Business Improvement District Area

The BID area covers the commercial centre of Skipton incorporating the main retail and leisure areas. It excludes the industrial estates which could be the subject of a future, separate bid.

A BID for everyone

The BID aims to improve trading conditions for ALL businesses, not just those in the retail industry. Those in the service sector rely on a thriving local economy and prosperous hinterland. By encouraging favourable conditions in the town centre as a whole, the overall prosperity of the community will be enhanced.

Aims, Objectives and Delivery

The principal aim of the Skipton BID is to promote, facilitate and advance the BID area as a better place to invest, work, do business, visit and live and to contribute to the development of Skipton as a vibrant and inclusive community.

The vision for the Skipton BID is:

“The Skipton BID aims to provide a clean, safe and attractive environment that meets the demands of businesses, the local community and visitors, ensuring Skipton remains a vibrant recreational and economic destination and commercial centre.”

The vision will be delivered through six key objectives:

Objective 1: To market and promote Skipton as a high quality visitor destination

Objective 2 To improve and enhance the built environment

Objective 3: To improve resident and visitor satisfaction of Skipton’s car parks

Objective 4: To help finance and develop existing and new festivals and initiatives which add to the cultural activity of Skipton

Objective Five: To expand Skipton’s provision of Christmas lights and underwrite provision of Christmas festivals

Objective 6 To provide a well trained and flexible work force

For each objective there are key delivery projects that complement existing programmes and funding regimes, and which are compatible with local, regional and national policy drivers.

Benchmarking and Targets

The performance of the business improvement district will be monitored, measured and evaluated at two levels:

Customer Satisfaction Survey – through market research visitors, local residents and business people will be surveyed at the beginning, mid point and end of the BID period. A sum of 5 per cent of the BID levy (£5,459 per annum) has been set aside for this research.

Project Key Performance Indicators – will be set for each project and monitored and reported to the Board of Directors and BID’s members. In addition the BID will conform to the British Bids annual evaluation. This is being used by members of the British Retail Consortium and the Inter Bank Rating Forum for assessment of individual BIDs

Income and Expenditure Plans

Estimates of income and expenditure have been undertaken for the Skipton Business Improvement District. The calculations of project costs, central costs and staff costs have been based on previous experience of members of the BID Reference Group and costs provided by suppliers. These assumptions have been used to create a financial forecast of expenditure for the five year operational period of the Skipton BID.

The Skipton BID will apply a levy of only 1% of rateable value on all properties with a rateable value of over £3,000 located in the eligible area.

The levy will be applied on the basis of the latest available rateable values as provided by Craven District Council. This will generate around £600,000 over the five-year life of the Skipton BID, to fund the projects identified in the Business Plan and achieve the stated strategic objectives.

Management Arrangements

The management and operation of the Skipton BID will be undertaken by a company limited by guarantee – Skipton BID Ltd. All businesses in the BID area will be eligible to join Skipton BID Ltd and appoint its directors. The Skipton BID board will completely control the funding and activities in the BID area.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The BIDs project will be monitored by the BID's Board on a quarterly basis. In addition, Skipton BID Ltd will follow the standard evaluation system set up by British BIDS (Bb) and recognised by the British Retail Consortium and the Inter Bank Rating Forum

The project finances will be managed and monitored by Skipton BID Ltd. The financial management of the project will be operated in accordance with appropriate financial procedures and project management procedures to be agreed at the first Board meeting of Skipton BID Ltd.

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2 What is a Business Improvement District?

2:1 Definition

A Business Improvement District (BID) is an initiative now being introduced into the UK after many years of success in America and Canada.

It is a defined geographical area where businesses are invited to come together to decide how to improve their trading environment. BIDs were agreed through the powers conferred by section 150 (1), (2) and (3) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 2003.

BIDs are currently operating in 53 locations across the UK, ranging from large city centre areas such as Liverpool, Birmingham and London boroughs, through to smaller locations such as Keswick, Sleaford and Great Yarmouth. To date (October 1 2008), there have been 13 unsuccessful votes.

A BID is private sector led and driven by the businesses of the area. Through consultation, the key issues are identified, a range of projects and services are agreed, and these are then put to a democratic vote involving all the eligible businesses in the area. If the vote is successful then the projects are implemented through a levy that is charged in addition to standard business rates.

A key stage in the development process is the identification of an appropriate BID boundary and the size of the potential levy and the funding required to deliver the necessary projects.

The projects funded by a successful BID should enhance not replace services currently provided by local authorities.

2:2 The Ballot Process

All business ratepayers in the area covered by the BID have a vote on the proposals, and to go ahead, more than 50% have to vote 'yes'. Those in favour must also represent at least 50% of the rateable value in the area. If these criteria are met, then the Business Plan will be activated and all eligible businesses within the BID district boundary will be charged the BID levy. The persons entitled to vote, and be liable for the levy, are the ratepayers of premises in the BID area. Properties with a rateable value of less than £3,000 will be excluded from both the vote and the levy to ensure that the cost of collection and administration do not exceed the income raised.

Following a successful original vote, neither the BID arrangements, nor the levy percentage can be changed without an alteration ballot. This must follow the same criteria as the original vote - the majority must vote in favour of the alterations, and this majority must represent at least 50 % of the total rateable value of the BID.

2:3 The Levy

The BID proposals will be funded through a levy on business rates. The Skipton BID will apply a levy of 1% of rateable value on all properties with a rateable value of over £3,000 located within the eligible area.

The levy will be applied on the basis of the most recent rateable values as supplied by Craven District Council. This will generate approximately £600,000 over the five-year life of the Skipton BID, to fund the projects identified in the Business Plan and achieve the plan's strategic objectives.

The Skipton BID will initially operate between 2009 and 2014, and after this it can be extended or renewed, subject to a new vote. Over these five years the Business Plan will be subject to ongoing review and evaluation.

2:4 Skipton BID Company

Skipton BID Limited will undertake the management and operation of the Skipton BID. All businesses in the BID area will be eligible to join the BID Company and appoint its directors. More details on Skipton BID Limited can be found under chapter 8 of this document. The Articles of Association of Skipton BID Limited can be found in Appendix 2.

2:5 Key Milestones

Summer 2007 - Skipton Chamber of Trade agrees to proceed with Skipton BID project

November 2007 - Part-time co-ordinator appointed for Skipton BID

December 2007 – First meeting of steering group

April-July 2008 - Development of objectives and draft proposals

August-October 2008 – Development of final objectives and proposals

October 2008 – BID Business plan prepared

November 2008 – Notification of ballot and distribution of Business Plan

February 2009 - Vote

April 2009 - Levy collection begins

April 2010 - First year projects implemented

Spring-Summer 2010 - First year AGM

Spring-Summer 2011 - Second year AGM

October 2011 - Mid term evaluation

Spring-Summer 2012 – Third year AGM

July 2013 – Fourth year AGM

October 2014 - Final programme evaluation

February 2015 - Potential second phase of BID or winding up of BID company

The BID programme will end in March 2014 and at this point businesses will be consulted in relation to the success of the BID over the five year period, and if they wish to see it continue. The option to continue will need to be put to a new vote of all eligible businesses.

2:6 Additional projects

The delivery of the projects detailed within this Business Plan is subject to a successful ballot by businesses ending on February 2 2009.

During the five-year period of the Business Plan it is likely that a number of new projects and opportunities will come forward. The delivery of these projects will be dependent on securing additional income either from external funding sources or revenue generating incomes as the Skipton BID gathers momentum. The five-year Business Plan is based on secured and forecast revenue sources.

3 Why a Skipton Business Improvement District?

3.1 The benefits of a Skipton Business Improvement District

It has been recognised by businesses across the country that the enhancement and improvement of the trading environment has a direct benefit to businesses in both the retail and service sector.

In Skipton, local business people have identified that a BID offers the opportunity to improve a number of areas of the 'Skipton offer', which could extend the trading season, increase visitor numbers and as a result increase business turnover and profitability.

While this directly benefits the shops, restaurants and cafes of the town, a BID would also provide advantages for the service sector, which relies on a prosperous community for its commerce. If our commercial sector is thriving and an affluent resident population maintained, the hinterland of service industries can also thrive. A declining commercial sector and a community whose prosperity is in decline would inevitably lead to a decline in profits for other sectors of the Skipton economy.

The BID has identified a number of issues through a series of consultations held with the business community in early 2008

The BID proposal has been developed from the ideas of improvement that emerged from these consultations and the key issues identified as impacting on the trading environment of the town centre. Following the consultation process, improvements identified have been assessed by a reference group (see Appendix 3) to determine deliverability.

It is intended that the BID programme will address these issues through a programme of investment throughout the town.

It is expected that the 1% BID levy of rateable value among ratepayers within the defined area over a five-year period would:

- create effective marketing and promotional tools to highlight Skipton's services, attractions, facilities and activities to residents and visitors;
- enhance and improve the built environment;
- promote Skipton as a high-quality visitor destination;
- provide car parks which are more friendly to visitors and residents, encourage longer stays and eliminate the risk of incurring parking fines;
- encourage a safe and inclusive environment;

The BID is a chance for Skipton businesses to invest in their town and ensure its progress as a thriving, prosperous community. It is an opportunity for businesses to bring to fruition projects which will improve the attractiveness of their town but which, for a variety of reasons, cannot be delivered through the local authorities.

It is envisaged that a Skipton BID will bring tangible benefits to both the business community and the wider community of which they are part. The BID is governed and steered by the local business community and backed by government legislation. Businesses will be able to take control of their own future trading environment, shape things that affect them and also have a positive impact on the wider community.

3.2 Economic Impact

The implementation of this Business Plan will have a significant economic impact on businesses located in Skipton. A package of improvements will make the public realm within the town centre more welcoming, attracting more shoppers and visitors and encourage the resident population to use its facilities rather than visiting other destinations.

Initiatives such as an enhanced Skipton Sheep Festival and encouragement of existing events such as the Waterways Festival will encourage a greater flow of pedestrian footfall resulting in the potential for increased spend in the town centre. It will create in such visitors a positive image of Skipton and

leave an impression of the town as a bustling, thriving, interesting place to which they would like to return.

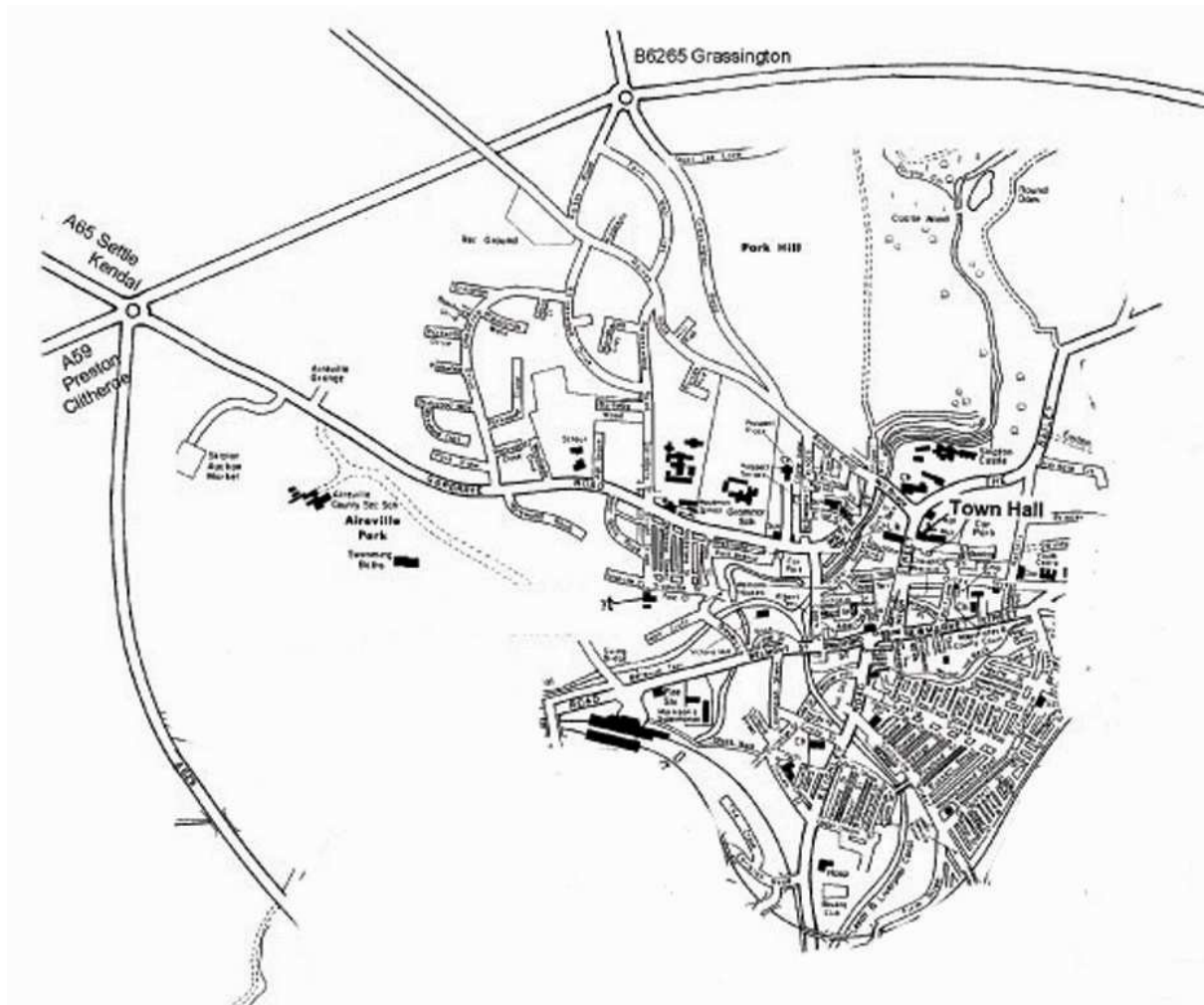
Seasonal improvements such as improved Christmas lights would also be an attractive draw for visitors and encourage a feeling of pride and well-being in the resident population.

Ensuring that a safe and clean environment is maintained within the town centre will encourage greater investment among the town centre retailers.

Replacing a system of car park charging which financially penalises motorists who may return a few minutes late to their vehicle will remove the possibility of leaving a highly negative impression of their visit to the town. It will also stimulate longer stays in the town, because motorists will not have one eye on the clock to cut short their visit.

Overall, the BIDs programme will ensure the maintenance of a positive visitor experience that will result in the continuation of the high quality offer provided in Skipton.

4 The Business Improvement District Area



The area covered by the Skipton BID is set out above. Specifically it includes the following streets, roads etc

Albert Street	Carleton New Road (<i>that part of, situated to north of railway line</i>)	Gargrave Road (<i>including Skipton Auction Mart</i>)
Albion Square	Cavendish Street	Gas Street
Albion Yard	Chapel Hill	Grassington Road
Back Bridge Street	Clifford Street	Hallams Yard
Belmont Street	Coach Street	High Street
Belmont Wharf	Craven Court	Jerry Croft
Bowers Wharf	Craven Street	Keighley Road
British School Yard	Cross Street,	Lower Union Street
Brook Street	Cumberland Street	Mill Bridge
Brougham Street	Devonshire Place	Mill Lane
Broughton Park	Duckett Street	Mount Pleasant
Broughton Road	Duke Street	Newmarket Street (<i>to its junction with Otley Road and Brougham Street</i>)
Canal Street,	Firth Street	
Canal Wharf		

Otley Street
Providence Place
Park Avenue
Raikes Road
Rectory Lane
Rope Walk

Rowland Street
Royal Oak Yard
Sackville Street
Salisbury Street
Sheep Street
Skipton Castle

Swadford Street
Victoria Square
Victoria Street
Water Street

The following properties are exempted from the Skipton BID:

Those with a rateable value of below £3,000

Hospitals

Schools

Voluntary organisations with premises of a non-commercial nature

5 Aims and Objectives

5.1 The Aim

The principal aim of the Skipton BID is to promote, facilitate and advance the BID area as a better place to invest, work, do business, visit and live. This will contribute to the development of Skipton as a vibrant, lively, inclusive community. By raising the profile of the town of a “happening” community, all businesses will either directly or indirectly, benefit. For some businesses this will be clear, demonstrable benefits. For others the benefits will come from the general raised prosperity of the community and customers they service.

The vision for the Skipton BID can be summarised as:

“To provide a clean, safe and attractive environment that meets the demands of businesses, the local community and visitors, ensuring the town remains a vibrant recreational and economic destination and commercial centre”.

5.2 Key Objectives

1 To market and promote Skipton as a high quality destination

This objective aims to raise the profile of Skipton as the centre for retail and tourism in the southern Yorkshire Dales. A professional marketing company will be used to ensure that Skipton is portrayed as a vibrant town with many attractions and places it in the forefront of public awareness as a town to visit and do business in.

2 To improve and enhance the built environment

This objective aims to raise standards of appearance through enhancement of the built environment with cleaner ginnels, improved signage and tidier areas which have been neglected in the past. The measures taken will ensure a safer and more pleasant environment within the BID area for workers, residents and visitors alike.

3 To improve resident and visitor satisfaction of Skipton’s car parks

This objective aims to ensure that, in partnership with Craven District Council, customers of the town’s car parks are provided with the best possible image of the town. The switch from “pay and display” tickets to “pay on foot” will have the dual benefit of removing the likelihood of visitors cutting short their stay (and thus spend) in the town and removing the prospect of visitors receiving a parking ticket if they overstay, thus creating a bad lasting impression of their trip to Skipton.

4 To help finance and develop existing and new festivals and initiatives which add to the cultural activity of Skipton

This objective aims to expand and develop the existing programme of festivals within the town which put Skipton in the public eye. New events would be encouraged and existing ones would be underwritten to ensure that bad weather or other unforeseen circumstances do not incur losses.

5 To expand Skipton’s provision of Christmas lights and underwrite provision of Christmas festivals

This objective aims to remove the uncertainty over provision of Christmas lights in the town centre and provide financial stability for the Christmas Yuletide Sunday markets which bring thousands of visitors into Skipton benefitting both local and national retail outlets. The Yuletide markets are heavily dependent for their financial success upon the weather and a BID would guarantee against the event ceasing due to financial losses caused by bad weather. However, any sums not used may be transferred to the other projects.

6 To provide a well trained and flexible work force

This objective aims to provide all BID members with the opportunity to attend free courses provided by Craven College's training arm, Tyro training. Specific courses can be tailored to meet individual requirements, paid for by the BID process. One course will be specific to decision makers, enabling them to develop opportunities from a changing business environment. It involves a strategic review of the organisation that will clarify the organisation's capability to meet its planned objectives.

6 Delivery Plan

THE delivery of the projects included in the Skipton BID will involve close working partnerships with local authorities and other agencies. In many instances, these working relationships already exist. There is no provision for salaried staff within the Skipton BID, however the BID will enable those existing links to be developed and financially supported to provide improved services and facilities to the benefit of the business community.

6.1 Objective details

An outline of the objectives, the budget allocated and outcomes expected is set out below

Objective One: To market and promote Skipton as a high quality visitor destination

Description: Using a locally-based professional marketing company the objective is to raise the profile of Skipton as the centre for retail, commerce and tourism in the Dales through a publicity campaign and to bolster the offer available in Skipton through new festivals.

Partners and agents: Skipton Town Council, Craven District Council, Yorkshire Tourist Board, British Waterways

Budget allocation over five years: £81,895 (plus £27,295 for research)

Outcomes: Research carried out which for the first time ascertains current visitor behaviour and perceptions, results to be used for subsequent future improvements and targeting
Expanded Sheep Town festival as unique to Skipton (potentially as a week long event)
Develop an annual 'Skipton Events' brochure listing all genuine 'visitor attractions', incorporating regular festivals (Waterways festival, Vintage Car Rally, ClogFest, Gala, Farmers Markets, Christmas Markets, Skipton Music season at Town Hall, Special events at Skipton Castle, Professional productions at Auction Mart, Exhibitions, Timings of any on-foot guided tours of town) and widely distributed
Editorial articles generated and pushed in wider national and regional publications
A single Skipton website regularly updated with links to any BID member and controlled by the BID company

Objective Two: To improve and enhance the built environment

Description: To support, finance and promote the visual appearance of Skipton Town Centre and its environs

To increase the quantity and quality of floral displays currently on offer in Skipton

To tidy up areas of Skipton which have become an eyesore, in particular alleyways leading into the town centre, overgrown areas of Eller and Waller Beck and any other areas which are brought to the attention of the BID company

To investigate the quality of signposts and street maps within the town and, with partners, adopt a uniform style and approach.

Partners and agents: Skipton in Bloom Committee; Skipton Renaissance Town Team; Skipton Town Council, British Waterways, Skipton Civic Society

Budget Allocation over five years: £109,195

Outcomes: Residents and visitors will notice a significant increase in the floral decorations of Skipton shops and businesses making it a more pleasant place to trade. Skipton's performance in the annual Yorkshire in Bloom competitions will be greatly improved

Graffiti strewn alleyways leading off the High Street are tidied up and painted to prevent a negative visual impact upon residents and visitors. Streets are safer and more welcoming

Overgrown and weed strewn areas of the town are eliminated, such as the high profile Mill Bridge area of town.

A review of street signage is undertaken throughout the BID zone and outdated and unnecessary signs are removed. Various agencies involved in signposts, street maps etc are consulted to draw up a common themed standard. Investigations are made into adapting such furniture in car parks and in sensitive spots to the use of GPS and wi-fi technology to enable mobile phone users to locate attractions and individual businesses.

Potential additional funding: Yorkshire Forward, Craven District Council

Objective Three: To improve resident and visitor satisfaction of Skipton's car parks

Description: Transform car parking system in Skipton's three main parks (Town Hall, Coach Street and Cavendish Street) to eliminate the customer unfriendly 'pay and display' method of payment. This objective requires additional funding and co-operation from Craven District Council, which has indicated its willingness to part fund the exercise. Access to shops and businesses within the car parks will be maintained.

Partners and agents: Craven District Council, North Yorkshire County Council Highways

Budget allocation over five year: £136,496

Outcomes: Skipton has a more driver-friendly car parking scheme within the town, encouraging longer stays and removing the threat of excess parking fines. There is also scope for improving the appearance of town centre car parks, with walling and planting schemes at exits and entrances, for introducing "herring bone" parking. Pay on exit parking would also enable car parks to be designed so they are not used at night for anti-social behaviour by drivers. Dependent upon additional funding, electronic signs could be used to advise motorists in advance of the availability of car parking spaces and direct them to alternative parking if necessary.

Potential additional funding: Craven District Council and Yorkshire Forward

Objective Four: To help finance and develop existing and new festivals and initiatives which add to the cultural activity of Skipton

Description: To promote and help fund a “Sheep Town” festival which would attract publicity and focus media attention upon Skipton.

To encourage, help promote and financially support new and existing festivals and events which provide an attraction for both residents and visitors and which will assist in the promotion of Skipton as a centre for culture and entertainment in the Dales.

Partners and agents: Skipton Chamber of Trade, Skipton Town Council, Festival committees, Skipton Auction Mart Theatre, Skipton Castle, British Waterways

Budget allocation over five years: £136,496

Outcomes: Sheep Town Festival provides a beneficial short term impact upon the town’s economy by an influx of visitors and secures long term promotion of the town and its attraction.

The Skipton Yuletide festival is able to continue and develop better attractions in the knowledge that its activities are underwritten in the event of adverse weather conditions. Again, there will be significant longer term benefits from positive customer feedback.

With the addition of existing activities (such as the Waterways Festival, Transport Festival) and the encouragement of new ones it may be possible to have a full fixture list of activities in Skipton which can be promoted to a wider area (see marketing strategy above).

Potential additional funding: Skipton Town Council, Private enterprise

Objective Five: To expand Skipton’s provision of Christmas lights and underwrite provision of Christmas festivals

Description: To help underwrite festivals such as the Christmas festival which bring thousands of visitors to Skipton but whose financial success may be subject to outside factors such as the weather. To assist financially in the provision and improvement of Christmas lights on both the High Street and surrounding areas. The town’s Christmas lights, which have come perilously close to not appearing in previous years, will be improved and extended in area, preventing the town being “dark” in the run-up to Christmas

Partners and agents: Skipton Chamber of Trade and Commerce; Skipton Town Council

Budget allocation over five years: £54,595

Outcomes: Skipton Yuletide festival continues with subsequent fillip to local businesses; Skipton centre is not “dark” over Christmas but portrays a vibrant, successful image to residents and visitors

Potential further funding: Skipton Town Council

6.2 Key Delivery risks

The following have been identified as potential risks for consideration by Skipton BID

Risk	Risk minimisation
Lack of support from the business community and partners resulting in an unsuccessful vote	If businesses do not vote to support the business improvement district, then the opportunity for business owners to have a positive impact and say on commercial conditions of the town will be lost. If, as some maintain, Skipton is on a spiral of decline, then that spiral will continue. The vision for the Skipton BID and each of the accompanying objectives have been formulated to address issues raised by the business community of Skipton. The BID has also been advised by other partners working in the tourism, economic development and community sectors who have given their support for the BID. Soundings taken among business rate payers indicate a good level of support for a Skipton BID, however the BID vote will come at a time of extreme turbulence in the national and international economy
Building a partnership with the strength and commitment to deliver the BID	The Skipton BID will be managed by a company limited by guarantee established to deliver the projects. Its board members will be drawn from the business community in an open election. This inclusive and transparent process will be vital in ensuring the strength and commitment to deliver the BID. Organisations such as the local authority, Yorkshire Forward (the regional development agency) and town council have given their backing to the BID.
Securing the funding package to deliver the BID business plan	There is considerable opportunity for the BID process to attract additional funding. Yorkshire Forward has indicated that it will look more favourably upon providing additional funding for the projects because a positive BID vote demonstrates they have widespread support within the business community. Additional funding is vital for the improvements proposed for Skipton's car parks and Craven District Council has indicated that it will be willing to contribute to this project but is unable to finance it wholly itself.
Controlling capital and revenue costs within budget	Each strategic objective element will be managed as a separate project within its own budget. Careful project monitoring by Skipton BID Ltd will ensure that the project costs do not overrun. This regular monitoring will ensure that any potential overruns are identified early and changes made to that particular element of the Business Plan. The BID's spending will be independently audited.
Managing expectations	The ability to deliver has been a fundamental consideration throughout the consultation process and there is a need to manage expectations with regard to how quickly projects can be delivered as some initiatives require the support of other agencies before they can be implemented. However, discussions with those agencies indicate a high level of support for the BID projects.

7 Consultation Process

Summary of the Skipton BID consultation process

7.1 Donaldson report

Conducted in March 2004 and commissioned by Craven District Council to undertake a "Skipton Town Centre Health Check". Three types of survey were used: a Retailer/Business operator survey; a visitor survey/a household (telephone) survey.

The report can be viewed at Craven District Council

7.2 Chamber of Trade report

Conducted April 2007. Survey form sent out to every member of Skipton Chamber of Trade and Commerce soliciting views on the commercial environment and suggestions as to what improvements could be made. The report can be viewed from Skipton Chamber of Trade

7.3 Following investigations conducted by Chris Aldred (former Skipton Town Centre Manager) and visits to Keswick, one of the first towns to achieve a successful BID vote, Skipton Chamber of Trade voted at a meeting to proceed with a BID application

7.4 First meeting of Skipton Business Reference Group in December 2007 (see below)

7.5 Start of direct consultation process

First letter sent out to Skipton Business ratepayers informing them of BID process and seeking suggestions for projects they would like to see included in a Skipton BID in February 2009. Letter also contained details of website with "click" button sending comments directly to BID co-ordinator. Subsequently list of BID projects established.

7.6 Public meeting to officially launch BID

Public meeting held April 1 2008 in Skipton Town Hall. Personal letters of invitation were sent to all business rate payers of more than £3,000 in the Skipton BID zone and adverts placed on the front page of the local newspaper, the Craven Herald (addresses were obtained from the Craven District Council list of responsible parties for payment of business rates). Articles within the editorial columns of the newspaper also highlighted the process and informed readers of date and time of meeting.

7.7 Face to face meetings with businesses in town and telephone contact with those outside

In June 2008, 121 businesses were contacted to ascertain opinion and seek any feedback. Tone of feedback was supportive with general approval of BID projects.

7.8 Letter setting out the exact amount each individual business would pay were sent in August 2008

Feedback and comments were invited and the BID co-ordinator responded to any questions

7.9 Business Reference Group

The Skipton Business Reference Group was formed to advise, guide and decide upon the direction of the BID. It fixed the amount of the levy, the allocation of BID funds from the levy and approved the schedule of projects.

Its members are:

Ian Lockwood – Skipton BID co-ordinator, former editor Craven Herald

Sebastian Fattorini – Skipton Castle

Lesley Gould – Local Accountant

Steve Finch – Craven College

Andy Barton – Business Link

Christine Hodgson – Wholesale Distributor

David Goldie – Retailer

Chris Aldred – Former Town Centre Manager

Bob Wright – Skipton Chamber of Trade and Commerce (resigned Spring 2008)

Joan Evans – Skipton Chamber of Trade and Commerce (appointed Spring 2008)

A managerial representative of Boots the Chemist was involved in initial discussions but was moved to another branch shortly before the first meeting. The company was unable to send a replacement. In addition David Smurthwaite of Craven District Council's economic development unit was given a standing invitation to attend. Discussions have also been held with officers and members of Craven District Council

7.10 Group talks

In addition the business co-ordinator has given presentations to groups in the town and answered their questions. These include:

Skipton Branch of the Federation of Small Businesses

Skipton Chamber of Trade and Commerce

Board of Craven Auction Mart

Skipton Town Council

Leaders of all three political groups on Craven District Council

Craven College

8 Income and expenditure plans

8.1 The levy

THE BID levy will be collected by Craven District Council based on the rules for non-domestic rates for which they will charge the Skipton BID up to £25 per hereditament. A service level agreement between the Skipton BID and Craven District Council will govern this.

The BID will be fixed at one per cent of the current rateable value of each property. For more than half the properties within the Skipton BID zone, this would mean a cost of less than £2 per week.

There will be no annual inflation increase.

No development or ballot costs will be recovered through the levy.

New premises will pay a levy based on the rateable value at the time of occupation.

Occupants in receipt of charitable relief: Charity shops will be charged at one per cent of the rateable levy as the charity shops will benefit from marketing and an improved retail environment, enabling them to play an equal role in the local community in which they trade.

Voluntary organisations: All voluntary organisations with premises in the BID zone but operating on a non-retail or non-commercial basis will not be charged the BID levy.

8.2 Income and expenditure

THE Skipton BID as drawn up above would affect 570 qualifying hereditaments (according to the list of rateable values supplied by Craven District Council as of August 2008) with a total rateable value of £12,344,875, which would therefore raise £123,448 gross per annum.

The cost of collection would be £25 per hereditament, a total of (570x25) £14,250 per annum

Therefore the nett income from the BID would be £109,198 per annum.

The BID proposal is to spend the following amounts on its objectives:

Project and activity	% of total spend	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Car parking	25	£27,299	£27,299	£27,299	£27,299	£27,299	£136,496
Marketing campaign	15	£16,379	£16,379	£16,379	£16,379	£16,379	£81,895
Christmas celebrations	10	£10,919	£10,919	£10,919	£10,919	£10,919	£54,595
Festivals	15	£16,379	£16,379	£16,379	£16,379	£16,379	£81,895
Environmental improvements	20	£21,839	£21,839	£21,839	£21,839	£21,839	£109,195
Training	5	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£27,295
Research	5	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£27,295
Contingencies	5	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£5,459	£27,295
Total	100	109,192	109,192	109,192	109,192	109,192	545,960

The Skipton BID Company directors may decide to reduce or increase the expenditure on each project dependent upon the circumstances.

8.3 Further funding

Discussions have been held with various potential partners and agencies and positive indications of further funding has been given. The regional development agency, Yorkshire Forward, has expressed its support for the Skipton BID and provided funding to bring the BID to a vote. If a yes vote is delivered, it has indicated that it will be in a stronger position to look favourably on additional financial support for the projects outlined in

the BID because those projects have the support of the business community. Similarly, the leaders of the political groups on both Craven District and Skipton Town councils have expressed their support for the BID. The delivery of 'pay on exit' car parking is dependent upon the financial support of Craven District Council who would also supervise the carrying out of the work. All three group leaders on the council have pledged their support for such a scheme.

9 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

9.1 Skipton BID Limited

The Skipton BID is promoted by the Skipton Chamber of Trade and Commerce and its progress to a vote has been funded by Yorkshire Forward. The project has been delivered through a Business Reference Group made up of representatives of the Chamber of Trade and Commerce, interested business people, Craven District Council and Business Link.

Subject to a successful vote, the Skipton BID will be delivered by an independent company limited by guarantee – The Skipton BID Limited. This will ensure that the control, delivery and responsibility for the business improvement district sits with the business community itself.

All businesses in the business improvement district will be eligible to join the Skipton BID company and appoint its directors. The board of this company will control the funding and activities of the business improvement district. The directors of the Skipton BID company will be elected at a public meeting of representatives from those properties which are included in the BID zone. The board will consist of up to 8 members and will elect a chairman from within.

Skipton BID Ltd will not employ any person but will need to pay some costs for administration of accounts, audit etc. This shall be met out of the £5,459 set aside for contingencies as outlined in 7.2 above.

All businesses contributing to the levy will be shareholders, with a share each of £1.

The articles of association of the company are included in Appendix 1

9.2 Monitoring and evaluation

The Skipton BID will follow the standard evaluation system set up by British BIDS (Bb) and recognised by the British Retail Consortium and the Inter Bank Rating Forum .

The evaluation system was set up to collect data from BIDS on an annual basis in a standardised way to provide levy payers and stakeholders with the information they are interested in. The annual evaluation process can be linked into the Bb accreditation system. This provides a mid term review to ensure that a BID is on track. This process covers a much wider range of quantitative and qualitative measures which fully assess the robustness of the BID organisation and its delivery. Skipton BID Ltd will decide whether it wishes to join the Bb accreditation system