

Committee:	Delegated Authority lies with Cabinet Member	Date:
Title:	Saffron Walden Business Improvement District	10 July 2018
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Howard Ryles – Economic Development Portfolio Holder	
Report Author:	Roger Harborough Director of Public Services 01799 510457	Key decision: No

Summary

1. The Saffron Walden Business Improvement District (SWBID) Steering Group, established in 2017 has been leading the development of a BID in the town centre of Saffron Walden.
2. Recently the SWBID proposal was put to a ballot of the businesses that would be eligible to pay a BID Levy if a BID company was established in the town. The positive result was announced on Monday 2nd July 2018.
3. The Council has responsibilities relating to the conduct of any BID Ballot held in its local area. The previous report covered the Veto / Submission and Contents of the BID Proposals and the Council's decision-making process regarding the actual vote in the ballot. This report covers the outcome of the BID Ballot, the notification of the result and consideration of whether there was any material irregularity in the conduct of the ballot.

Recommendations to Cabinet Member

- 4a. Agreement that the conduct of the SWBID Ballot met with the BID Regulations and that there were no material irregularities in the ballot process.
- 4b. Agreement that the Council, as Ballot Holder, fulfilled its duty to notify the result of the BID Ballot
- 4c. To note the result of the SWBID Ballot, see Appendix 1.

Reason

5. According to the Government's Technical Guidance for Local Authorities, the local authority has a number of responsibilities regarding the BID Ballot including:
 - a. The Council is required to ensure that the ballot is operated, either in-house or outsourced, in line with the BID Regulations. Irrespective of whether the ballot is run in-house or outsourced, the local authority remains legally responsible for the ballot process.
 - b. The timetable is defined within the BID Regulations and includes:
 - i. A Notice of Ballot be sent to notify all voters.

- ii. A minimum ballot period of 28 calendar days.
 - iii. The ballot is run as a secret ballot.
 - iv. The ballot must be won on two counts – both a majority by number of votes; and a majority by rateable value of those that turnout to vote.
 - v. No turnout threshold is required.
- c. The Count and Announcement to be as soon as practicable after the Ballot Day, which is the last day of the ballot period.
- d. Four specific matters make up the notification of the BID result. These are:
- i. the total number of votes cast excluding any votes given on rejected ballot papers;
 - ii. The aggregate rateable value of each hereditament in respect of which a person voted in the ballot;
 - iii. The total number of votes cast in favour of the question asked in the ballot; and
 - iv. 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.

Financial Implications

6. The Council commissioned Electoral Reform Services to conduct the BID Ballot at a cost of £2,560.36, which is being funded from Economic Development Team budgets.

Background Papers

7. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
- Technical Guidance for Local Authorities
 - The 2018 National BID Criteria
 - The Saffron Walden BID Business Plan

Impact

8.

Communication/Consultation	Businesses were widely consulted in the preparation of the BID Proposals.
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Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	UK Government legislation covers BID development.
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	The defined SWBID area lies within Saffron Walden Audley ward.
Workforce/Workplace	Officers from the Economic Development Team provided support to the SWBID Steering Group throughout the development process and ballot period. Officers in Legal provided advice and support for the ballot period including the notification of the result. Officers from Democratic Services and Communications provided support with the notification of the result.

Situation

BID Ballot in Saffron Walden

9. Electoral Reform Services are independent scrutineers and have conducted many BID ballots across the UK.
10. The Notice of Ballot was sent to all voters in 18th May 2018, in line with the BID Regulations.
11. The SWBID was conducted as a postal ballot between 1st June 2018 and 29th June 2018. Friday 29th June was Ballot Day.
12. The Ballot Result was announced at a public event on Monday 2nd July 2018. Rebecca Dobson, Democratic & Electoral Services Manager, was appointed as Deputy Returning Officer to deliver the notification of the result.
13. The Council published the official notification of the result on its website, and retweeted the result across social media.
14. The result was positive on both counts, as outlined in Appendix 1.
15. 279 businesses were eligible to vote with 134 ballot papers being returned, a turnout of 48.03%.
16. A public event was held on Monday 2nd July 2018 to announce the result.

Risk Analysis

17.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
1	1	1	1

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.