

2025-2030

BID Proposal & Business Plan



**Bracknell
BID**

Bracknell Investment Group



www.bracknellbid.co.uk

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Bracknell Business Improvement District (BID) Proposal and Business Plan 2025 – 2030

1. Foreword

Message from the Chair of Bracknell BID

Over the last five years, Bracknell Business Improvement District has delivered a diverse, comprehensive and successful programme of projects across the Southern and Western Bracknell Business Areas.

The last five years have been extremely challenging for businesses with the COVID pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis to contend with. Besides providing whatever support we can today, we need to look to the future to what can be achieved in the next five-year term of the BID.

I'm delighted to share with you our BID Proposal for 2025-2030 covering the second term of the BID, which is committed to using the strengths of this area to provide a place where businesses can invest and develop with confidence and the support of a BID.

Following surveys, consultations and meetings, the BID Board have established clear objectives and identified how the BID will deliver these objectives, through ambitious initiatives and careful investment. In this proposal, you will find out how Bracknell BID plans to build on the many successes of the first five years of the BID but also provide support which, we believe from the business input into this plan, will be appropriate for the next five years.

Your support is crucial in helping the Bracknell BID area to reach its full potential. With your involvement we will be able to provide the projects and support you need now more than ever. We urge you to look carefully at this proposal and give it your full support.

Please look out for the ballot papers which will be in the post in October and make sure to vote YES to ensure that we continue to shape the future of the Southern and Western Business Areas of Bracknell together.

Maria Sabey
Chair of Bracknell BID

2. Bracknell Investment Group Ltd

BID Board Members and Directors

The BID Company, Bracknell Investment Group Ltd is a company limited by guarantee, is the body which has proposed the BID for the purposes of the BID Statutory Provisions and is responsible for the implementation of the BID plan.

The membership of the board of the company is open to all business levy payers in the BID area. Membership of the company is open to all BID Levy payers, and also to Voluntary Members. The Members of the Company control the membership of the Board, through their Articles of Association and votes at General Meetings of Members.

The current members of the Bracknell BID Board are as follows:

Name	Business Name
Maria Sabey (Chair)	Fujitsu
Bob Collis (Vice Chair)	Economic and Skills Development Partnership
Andrew Smith	Waitrose
Daniel Baker	Fujitsu
David English	Panasonic
Louise Welland	The Lightbox
Nick Phillips	Cadence
Nicola Webb	Segro
Cllr Paul Bidwell	Bracknell Forest Council
Peter Smith	UK Business Advisors (UKBA)

3. Executive Summary

3.1. BID background

Business Improvement Districts are created by businesses and organisations which come together to collaborate on initiatives that improve the location where they trade or do business. Business Improvement Districts are driven by participating businesses who work together to draw up a business plan which is voted on and, if agreed, is then funded through a levy based on business rateable values, as well as trying to lever in additional funding where possible for investment into the delivery of projects for the benefit of businesses.

This levy is collected by Bracknell Forest Council and paid directly to the Business Improvement District company. This is a not-for-profit company set up by the businesses and is accountable to the businesses in the Bracknell BID area to manage the delivery of the Business Improvement District business plan.

3.2. The benefits of Bracknell BID

The Bracknell BID has been operating for 5 years supporting businesses and starting to recreate a sense of identity for the area, attracting new businesses and encouraging and supporting new investment into the area. The BID has worked closely with key partners and stakeholders to represent the interests of levy-paying businesses, influence key decisions, encouraging investment and development and developing a great working environment for businesses now and into the future.

With the economic challenges of COVID, soaring energy costs and high inflation and the dynamic change of the commercial world impacting on the way we live and work, the need for businesses to work together for a better future has never been greater.

There are many opportunities which the BID can exploit to the benefit of businesses and organisations across all sectors and industries. This new BID Proposal and Business Plan has a clear goal to support businesses enabling businesses to thrive.

The BID can work to help attract new businesses and investment to the business areas to increase the overall commercial attractiveness, and to create a place that is a great place to work for both business owners, employees and clients.

The benefits of a BID do not just come from the ability to deliver projects and services from a guaranteed budget but come from the collective influence of the businesses in the BID area. It will have the influence to change key issues which impact upon the operation and success of our businesses such as transport, attractiveness of the area for our clients and customers, the ability to recruit and maintain the right people and protect our businesses from crime.

The collective voice of businesses working together also translates into productive relationships and outcomes, and when working with other organisations and public bodies, the ability to influence more strategic issues, such as the work currently being carried out by Bracknell Forest Council on the Economic Strategy.

The plan has been developed to ensure that it:

- is balanced to cover all business sectors
- builds on the success to date
- clearly defines the role of the BID
- seeks to create and take advantage of new opportunities
- has focussed activity but remains relevant for next five years
- has deliverable and achievable objectives

It takes account of the changes which have occurred over the last five years and clearly lays out a business-led programme of investment to tackle issues identified by businesses with the aim of creating a positive and more profitable trading environment to potentially benefit all business sectors.

3.3. Finance

This levy will be collected on behalf of the Business Improvement District (BID) by the 'Billing Authority' Bracknell Forest Council, which has responsibility for the public administration and collection of business rates of the area covered by the BID. The levy will then be paid directly to the BID Company in its entirety. This charge is payable by non-domestic rate payers in the defined BID area, regardless of whether or not they voted in the BID ballot, or how they actually voted. It is collected by the 'Billing Authority' in much the same way as business rates.

The budgeted income over the five-year period of the BID is planned to be of the order of £3.7 million. The income will be made up of some £3.5 million from the levy revenues and a sum averaging around £200,000 from other sources such as grants, voluntary private and public sector contributions (see income and expenditure tables in Section 16).

The BID Company for Bracknell BID, Bracknell Investment Group Ltd is a not-for-profit company, directed and controlled by nominated business people who manage the Business Improvement District business plan and are directly accountable to the businesses trading in the Southern and Western Business Areas.

The manner in which the BID Levy charge is calculated is defined in Section 17.

3.4. The Area

The Bracknell Southern and Western areas comprise of some 400 acres of retail, trade counters, industrial, warehousing and office space and are located to the west of Bracknell town centre. The area is home to approximately 300 businesses, many are key, not to just Bracknell and the county, but also nationally and internationally.

3.5. The Vision

Through a business-led programme of investment our vision is for:

'The Bracknell BID area to be recognised as the place where businesses develop and grow through collaboration and investment.

3.6. Strategic Objectives

The BID investment programme will be delivered through the two key strategic objectives and their related activities:

Objective 1 –Business Growth and Investment

Support businesses in the Bracknell BID area to grow, develop and invest by creating a great working environment which enables effective operation and attracts and retains the best people.

Objective 2 – Carbon Reduction and Sustainability

Support business in benefiting from sustainable growth through carbon reduction policies and sustainable working practices.

3.7. BID Term

Subject to a successful vote in October 2024, it is proposed that the new BID will start on 1st April 2025 and operate until 31st March 2030.

4. How a BID works

4.1. Background

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a precisely defined geographical area within which the businesses have voted to invest collectively in local improvements to enhance their trading environment.

BIDs were enabled by parliament through the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004. This legislation was based on the experience of some twenty years of successful BID activity in America and Canada. Since 2004, over 320 BIDs have been proposed and approved by business communities in England and Wales. These include Reading, Guildford, Slough and many London boroughs.

There are more than 250 BID areas which have been operating for more than five years and have gone through a renewal ballot and more than 120 have now entered their third term having gone through a third ballot and 40 into their third term. In most cases BIDs going on to a second term and further terms have received an even greater endorsement in the vote than they did the first time. BIDs have brought significant improvements to the trading environment of the businesses based in these locations. Further information about BIDs is available on the BID Foundation website <https://www.placemanagement.org/the-bid-foundation/>.

The lifetime of the BID is prescribed by the Regulations and is set at no more than 5 years. It is possible for a BID to be extended by proposing a new Business Plan at the end of the BID lifetime for a fresh formal vote by the businesses.

The purposes of a BID are to provide new or expanded works and services or environmental enhancements within the prescribed BID area, funded via a BID Levy charge. All services/improvements will be additional to those already provided by Bracknell Forest Council. This charge is payable by non-domestic rate payers and is collected by the Council in much the same way as business rates. The manner in which the BID Levy charge is calculated is defined in Section 17.

All works and services will be contracted by the Bracknell Investment Group Ltd, the BID body for the BID area. The objectives and aspirations of Bracknell BID are set out in this BID Proposal and Business Plan.

This business plan has been prepared in line with best practice and with reference to the 'Industry Criteria and Guidance' prepared for Revo in association with: Association of Town and City Management, the Association of Convenience Stores, the British Retail Consortium and the British Property Federation.

A set of definitions for terms used throughout this document is contained in Appendix 1.

4.2. The vote

To succeed the ballot has to pass two tests: A simple majority vote of those who vote must register a 'YES' and the aggregate rateable value of those who vote 'YES' must be greater than that of those that vote 'NO'.

If these two criteria are met, the Business Plan is activated and all businesses in the area concerned will be required to pay the levy.

The persons entitled to vote, and be liable for the levy, are the ratepayers of non-domestic premises in the Business Improvement District. Properties with a rateable value of less than £12,001 will be excluded from the vote and levy.

Susan Halliwell will be the Bracknell Forest Council's Returning Officer for the Ballot Holder of the Business Improvement District. For details of voting procedures and how you can confirm persons entitled to vote, contact Electoral Services on 01344 352000 or by e mailing voting@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

4.3. Alteration of arrangements

The Business Improvement District, its boundaries, business plan and the levy percentage cannot be altered without an alteration ballot, although its board can adjust projects and spend as they feel appropriate, provided the basic tenets and budgets are not compromised. This is explained in more detail in Section 16.5.

4.4. The levy

A levy of 1.61% of a premises' rateable value is proposed for businesses with a rateable value (RV) of £12,001 or more which fall within the levy criteria laid down in Section 17.

This levy arrangement will generate over just over £3.5 million of ring-fenced funding over the five-year life of the BID and will also be used to lever in additional funds where possible. This will be used to fund the projects identified in this Business Plan.

4.5. Duration and commencement of BID Arrangements

Subject to the successful ballot in October 2024 our proposal is for the Arrangements for the Bracknell Business Improvement District Proposal and Business Plan to operate for five years and to commence, on the 1st April 2025. After five years, in 2030, it can be extended or renewed – but only after being subject to a renewal ballot.

5. Timescales

BID Ballot – Ballot Date INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Action Point	Action	Day and Date
1	Notice by BID Proposer to Billing Authority & Secretary of State of intention to hold ballot (at least 84 days before Ballot Holder requested to hold ballot Action Point 4)	Fri 24 May 2024
2	Voluntary stage - issue voter nomination letter to check voter list	Fri 09 August 2024
	Receive voter nominations back from potential levy payers	Wed 28 August 2024
3	Establish Register of Businesses as specified in BID proposal	Target Date: Thu 12 September 2024 Latest Date: Thu 19 September 2024
4	BID Proposer requests Billing Authority to instruct Ballot Holder to hold a Ballot (BID proposals need to be completed)	Target Date: Thu 29 August 2024 Latest Date: Thu 19 September 2024
5	Billing Authority formally requests Ballot Holder to hold ballot	Target Date: Mon 09 September 2024 Latest Date: Thu 19 September 2024
6	Ballot Holder publishes Notice of Ballot (latest date = 42 days before ballot day) also to send copy to Secretary of State, a copy of the published notice of ballot, as per Schedule 2 3(d) of the 2004 Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations	Target Date: Thu 12 September 2024 Latest Date: Thu 19 September 2024
7	BID Proposer or Ballot Holder mail out copies of the BID Prospectus to potential levy payers	Target Date: Thu 12 September 2024 Latest Date: Thu 19 September 2024
9	Ballot Holder issues Letter to Business Ratepayers to give information about the ballot and identify named person to receive ballot paper (latest date is 42 days before Ballot Day)	Target Date: Thu 12 September 2024 Latest Date: Thu 19 September 2024
9	Ballot Holder Issues ballot papers (at least 28 days before Ballot Day)	Thu 03 October 2024
10	Last day to appoint a proxy (tenth day before Ballot Day)	Mon 21 October 2024
11	Lost ballot papers – earliest date for issuing a replacement for a lost ballot paper (where papers not received by the 4th working day before the ballot)	Fri 25 October 2024
12	Spoilt ballot papers – last day/deadline to apply for a replacement ballot paper for a spoilt ballot paper (not later than 3 working days before the ballot)	Mon 28 October 2024
13	Ballot Day (up to 5pm)	Thu 31 October 2024
14	Count and announcement of result	Fri 01 November 2024
15	Disposal of ballot papers	Sat 03 May 2025

6. BID Delivery and benefits

6.1. The last five years

Over the last five years, we have achieved a lot together and the BID team have delivered on the objectives laid out in the BID business plan for 2020-2025, which was based on the priorities raised by the businesses in the BID area (Western and Southern Business Areas) in 2019. Since then the world and business trading and operating environment has been subject to significant change. The first month of the BID happened within a week of the first COVID pandemic lockdown, and businesses have been faced with the challenge of rapidly rising energy costs and a major shift in working practises such as working from home. As a result the BID adapted its delivery to meet the changing priorities of businesses and has delivered massive support and benefits which would not have been achieved without the BID.

A summary of projects and activities the BID has delivered during the first five-year term can be seen below:

6.1.1. Infrastructure

- a) Working with Bracknell Forest Council and others, identify and influence the delivery where possible of short and longer-term solutions to ease congestion and improve traffic management onto, off and around the BID area.
 - The BID has worked closely with Bracknell Forest Council over the last 5 years to improve traffic management into the BID, including introducing anti-illegal parking deterrents, commissioning consultants to develop solutions to improve crossings and road junctions particularly at Western Road and Downshire Way. The BID has also introduced additional means of transport into the BID including a shuttle bus, shared bicycle scheme and improved foot and bicycle paths to increase active travel.
- b) Increase the availability of cost-effective travel options for all, and work with others to develop innovative and attractive solutions for public and shared transport on, off and around the BID area.
 - The BID has fully funded a shuttle bus service to and from Bracknell Train Station, which stops at several stops throughout the BID area serving businesses and their staff. This service runs five journeys in the morning and five journeys in the evening, coordinating with arriving and departing London trains. The bus is free to use for everyone who works within the BID area.
 - The BID has also funded a shared cycle scheme, which allows anyone who works within the BID area to rent an electric or pedal bike free of charge.
- c) Work with others to manage and improve parking across the BID area to maintain and improve traffic flow and access to businesses and provide or facilitate alternative safe and secure parking.
 - The BID has worked with businesses and partners to facilitate additional parking for businesses through leases or temporary arrangements, particularly in Western Road, Downmill Road and Lovelace Road.
- d) Improve navigation around the BID area for all road users, cyclists and pedestrians through information, signage and other innovative methods.
 - The BID has delivered a comprehensive wayfinding scheme throughout the BID, this is made up of over 40 signs including Welcome Signage at the periphery of the BID, wayfinding totems which includes a key destination directory and colour coded map, wall signs throughout the

pedestrian subway system, fingerpost signs at new locations and replacing old out of date fingerposts.

- The BID has also updated several outdated road signs from 'Industrial Area' to 'Business Area' highlighting the contemporary commercial environment.
 - Working with Bracknell Forest Council, the BID also updated cycle maps covering the town and BID area and helped distribute these to businesses.
- e) Working with partners to maintain and improve where necessary, the general condition and appearance of roads, footpaths, cycle ways and verges throughout the BID area including the additional gritting of roads where needed.
- The BID has worked closely with Bracknell Forest Council to ensure that their service levels to the area were maintained and even enhanced before identifying what additional work the BID should undertake.

The following activity was in addition to and where possible complementary to the work of Bracknell Forest Council:

- Landscape improvements including maintenance to ensure the BID's appearance is of a high standard for businesses. The BID funded hedge and bulb planting, cutting, grass edging, verge repairs and grass cutting along the public highways in the BID area.
 - Seasonal planting in planters along Western Road, including their maintenance.
 - Pothole repairs on private unadopted roads, specifically in Kiln Lane.
 - Weed and bramble removal and spraying along highways and pedestrian paths.
 - Hedge and bulb planting and wildflower seeding on the roundabouts at Cain Road, Western Road and Easthampstead Road.
 - New footpath surfacing along a public right of way connecting to Longshot Lane and vegetation clearance and cutbacks.
 - An artist designed and painted a mural in the subway that connects the Western and Southern Business Area that runs underneath the A329. The BID funded the mural and organised local volunteers to help the artist paint.
 - Regular litter cleansing and picking, graffiti removal, and bollard jet washing.
 - Volunteer tidy days where business staff volunteered to carry out litter picking throughout the BID area.
- f) Improve lighting where possible on roads and footpaths generally and in particular at vulnerable junctions and places of more frequent pedestrian activity to ensure safety of all road and footpath users.
- The BID funded four new lighting columns on footpath and cycleway adjacent to Mill Lane – a key pedestrian route for workers in the Southern Business Area to the town centre and train station.
 - The BID funded two new lighting columns at the northern end of Easthampstead Road.
 - The BID lobbied the local authority to rectify existing defective lighting particularly at Longshot Lane, and Doncastle Road.
 - The BID funded tree branch lighting at Farleymoor Lake on the Western Road side. 13 trees were wrapped with LED lighting to improve safety and the attractiveness of the area during dark winter months.
- g) Work with others to ensure broadband, digital communication and the IT infrastructure meets the needs of businesses across the BID area.
- The BID met with high-speed internet providers and shared survey data, and recommended areas that needed improved broadband connectivity.

6.1.2. Business Growth and Investment

1. Develop a sense of identity for Bracknell's Western and Southern business areas

a) Work with partners, landlords and occupiers towards creating a coherent identity which is visible and reflects the high standards and values of the businesses in the BID area.

- The BID implemented the wayfinding scheme which addressed the disparity of having multiple premises and estates in one area and brought these under one identity – the Bracknell BID.
- The BID ensured the area keeps a high standard in appearance, and through promotion in media and events.

2. Facilities and benefits

a) Encourage the development of more facilities and amenities in pleasant surroundings where people who work across the areas can eat, meet or relax.

- The BID has funded some significant work at Farley Moor Lake on Western Road to develop it as an amenity for staff to enjoy and benefit from. The Lake has also been developed to attract additional investment and reflect the high standards of the surrounding businesses.
- The BID installed seven new lakeside benches, bins, informational signs, and a bike rack at the Lake. The BID funded vegetation cutbacks, planting and litter and fly tipping removal. The BID funded graffiti removal, brickwork cleansing and repairs at the Lake.
- The BID developed a 5K walking route for BID area workers, taking in the 3 major green spaces in the BID, with accompanying signage along the route.

b) Develop schemes, benefits and events for those who work in businesses in the BID area which promote the feeling of community, a sense of well-being and encourages staff retention and productivity.

- The BID has funded and organised a BID Loyalty Card, exclusive and available to everyone who works within the BID area. The BID team has sourced and set up exclusive offers and discounts for card users with up to 55 offers available from businesses based in the BID area and The Lexicon.
- The BID has funded weekly fitness bootcamp sessions with a personal trainer open to everyone who works within the BID area.
- The BID has organised weekly spin class sessions open to everyone who works within the BID area.
- The BID organised weekly 'Walks for Wellbeing' for BID area workers.
- The BID has organised Dr. Bike sessions in partnership with Bracknell Forest Council, for BID bike users to avail of free bike repairs and maintenance.
- The BID has installed seven publicly accessible defibrillators and their cabinets throughout the BID area, with 3 partly funded through grants. The BID maintains these defibrillators and host companies provide electricity to the cabinets.
- The BID developed a defib map of all publicly accessible defibrillators and distributed it to businesses.
- The BID funded a number of lifesaving awareness courses for businesses.
- The BID compiled an Electric Vehicle resource for businesses on its website, highlighting available grants and information on how to obtain chargers for businesses.
- The BID provided an EV charge point grant for businesses.
- The BID supported several local charities during Christmas time, through direct donations, promotion, and giving tree initiatives.
- The BID worked with Eco Rewards to extend their rewards scheme for green and carbon saving behaviours for BID area workers.

- The BID held several business support webinars in partnership with the LEP for businesses and also promoted business supports and grants to businesses.
- The BID held an Energy Crisis Event with panel discussions on how businesses could reduce their energy costs.
- The BID has supported 'Pride of Bracknell' Awards through sponsoring the Young Person in Business Award Category.

3. Maintain a safe and secure working environment

a) Work with partners to create coverage, monitoring and maintenance of a CCTV and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) infrastructure which provides a deterrent to crime, a strong evidence-based record and an effective crime solving tool.

- The BID is funding ANPR and CCTV coverage for the BID area, with up to 20 cameras, covering vehicular entrances and exits as well as vulnerable paths and junctions. The BID is funding monitoring of the system as well as security patrols.

b) Maintain and develop schemes which share and provide information and intelligence between partners and business security teams involved in the prevention of crime and the creation of a safe environment for all who work and use Bracknell BID area.

- The BID funded a DISC system for businesses to report suspicious incidents and crime amongst one another.
- The BID actively shares alerts of any suspicious activity that is raised to businesses, ensuring that businesses remain alert, vigilant and aware of what is happening in the area.
- The BID secured PSCOs to monitor the BID and has acted as a conduit between the business community and the Police, including PSCOs, Sergeants and Inspectors.
- The BID has conducted business visits with the Police to improve relationships between the business community and Police.
- The BID has built relationships with businesses' security and facilities teams to ensure relevant information is shared.

4. Business trading

a) Working with businesses in the BID area across all sectors to encourage inter-trading and the development of working relationships to achieve tangible improvements in business performance and drive business development.

- The BID introduced the BID Loyalty Card which promotes BID area businesses' services and products.
- The BID organised and funded up to 20 'Meet Your Neighbour' Business Breakfasts for businesses to network, develop new relationships and promote their products and services.
- The BID organised and funded Trade Exhibition events with talks and presentations and promotion of BID businesses' products and services.
- The BID organised and funded Inward Investment events and conferences with presentations, moderated panel discussions and supporting informational documentation to attract further investment in the BID area.
- The BID funded and composed a promotional video to showcase Bracknell as a premier business destination.
- The BID actively promotes BID area business accomplishments and activities and composes regular business profiles which are promoted through the BID's social media and email marketing channels.
- The BID has gained regional and national coverage for businesses profiled.

5. Recruitment, training and development

a) Encourage and support relationships between businesses and organisations which seek to improve training, develop skills and assist with staff recruitment.

- The BID supported the Government's Kickstart Scheme and provided information about the scheme to businesses.
- The BID held several Jobs Fairs to promote BID business vacancies to suitable candidates and to aid their recruitment. The BID secured the fair location in The Lexicon, composed promotional materials, and funded paid social media campaigns to get the right candidates for businesses.
- The BID has secured discounts for employee training for businesses.
- The BID has funded a wide range of training courses for businesses.

7. Working together will make a difference

The last few years have been challenging for businesses and industries across the UK with many left with the scars of the COVID-19 pandemic, high energy costs and high inflation. The national economy is in uncertain times and whatever happens, many challenges lie ahead, and the commercial world continues to change at an ever-increasing pace. Technology continues to develop and change the way we live and work as individuals and operate as businesses.

There are important business sectors located here ranging from distribution and manufacturing, to communications, logistics and pharmaceuticals. Many are national and international brands but there are also a considerable number of specialist small and medium sized businesses which have national and international reputations.

Whatever the size of the business, each one must be able to operate profitably and in an environment that ideally aligns with its ideals and brand values. Smaller businesses also need to secure the support necessary for development and growth in a challenging economic market while maintaining focus on their core operations.

In this very uncertain world, it is difficult to make any predictions for the long term. We need to think about ways in which we can work together to take advantage of these new opportunities and create a business environment which is able to adapt, grow, and develop. There is a strong business community within Bracknell BID with people keen to improve the area even further and continue the work that has already been done over the last 5 years to create a great working environment which enables effective operation and attracts and retains the best people.

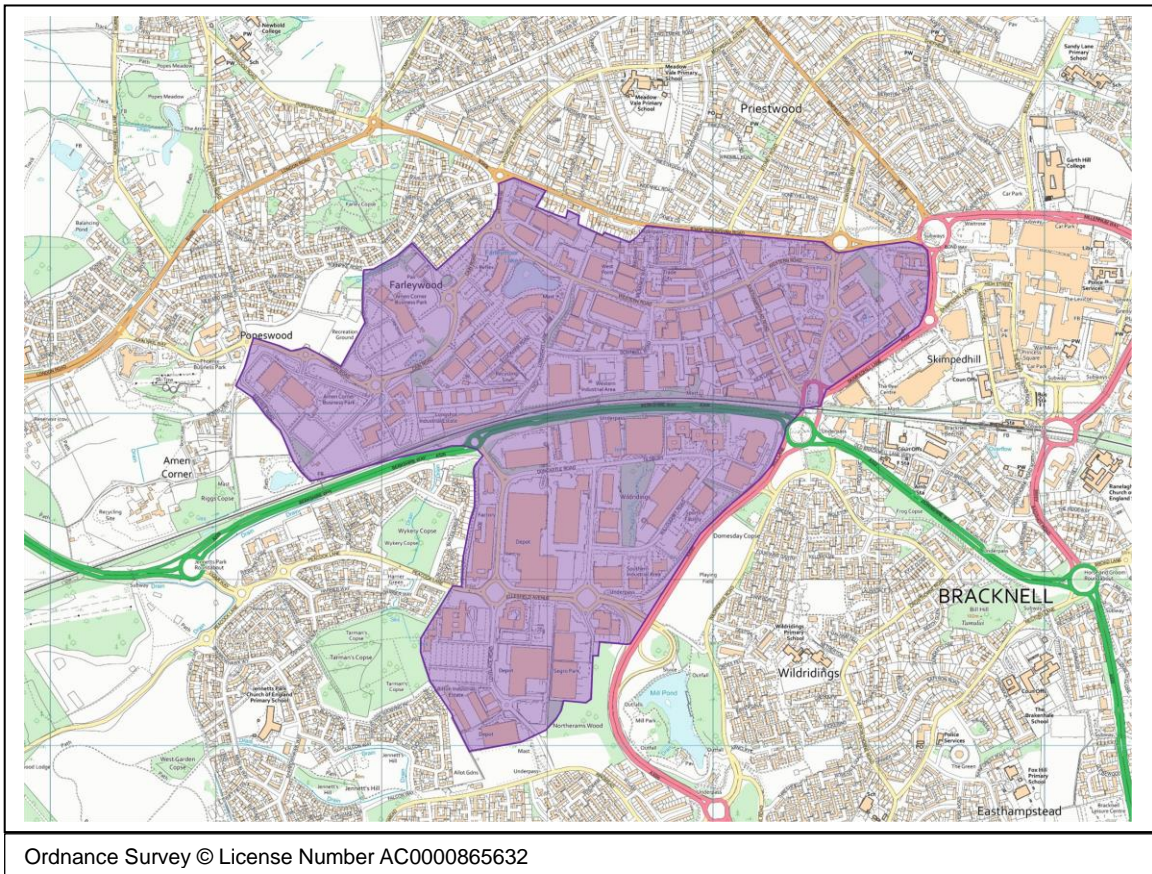
The extensive surveys, discussions with key stakeholders and working groups undertaken to develop this BID Proposal identified a clear desire expressed by businesses and organisations from Bracknell to work closely together and with Bracknell Forest Council and other key stakeholders to raise the area's profile and improve the appeal to businesses, investors, customers and clients. This collective and focused approach will serve to improve the trading and operating environment and allow existing businesses to flourish and grow and attract new business investment.

Both the Western and Southern business areas have a lot to offer, with a great cross section of businesses covering a multitude of businesses, it has great connections to London which enables it to offer an alternative to those who work and live there. Bracknell is within easy reach of large audiences and business markets but does not currently fully tap into the great potential of its own assets by working together as a cohesive business community and promoting its collective strength.

Taking on board all of the above, this Business Plan has identified opportunities and taken account of the needs and challenges faced by all business sectors across the BID area. By working together and with strategic partners including the Council and key stakeholders through a Business Improvement District there is huge potential to continue the momentum and the work that has already taken place to make Bracknell a great place to work and grow a business.

8. Bracknell BID Area

The shaded area represents the full extent of the Bracknell Business Improvement District. A full list of roads and streets within the BID area is shown in Appendix 2.



The BID area is made up of the Southern and Western areas which comprises of some 400 acres of retail, trade counters, industrial, warehousing and office space and are located to the west of Bracknell town centre.

All non-domestic hereditaments listed on the Rating List within the BID area will, (if the BID is approved, subject to the detailed levy criteria in Section 17), be liable for the BID levy and contribute to the BID's collective funding and activities flowing from the combined budget for five years, from April 2025. The BID covers those businesses, whose rateable value is £12,001 or greater.

The BID Area includes any smaller business areas located off these roads or streets that are located within the boundary of the BID area defined by the shaded area illustrated on the map and any other road or street, even if they are not listed in Appendix 2 and will include any new non-domestic property, road or street which is developed or created during the life of the BID which is within the BID area.

9. Services provided by the Public Bodies

9.1. Council's Support for Bracknell BID

Bracknell Forest Council fully supports Bracknell BID. In particular, it endorses the fundamental principle of additionality within the BID by providing baseline service statements outlining the provision of existing services from the Council to businesses at their current level (subject to budgetary constraints) across the Bracknell BID area.

Thus, in line with BID legislation, BID services within Bracknell BID will be additional to (not in substitution for) those provided by the Council. If there is a need for any change in service levels provided by the Council these will not be disproportionate to other parts of Bracknell outside the BID area.

The Council's commitment to Bracknell BID and the working relationships between the Council and the Bracknell BID Company will be set out in complementary documents agreed between the two parties:

- An Operating Agreement which sets out the Council's Operational Support to the BID on a number of specific issues.
- A set of Baseline Service Statements, each defining the benchmark for a specific service provided by the Council and other agencies within the BID area.

9.2. Council's Vision for the BID

Beyond its clear commitments set out in the Operating Agreement, the Council welcomes the opportunity offered by the BID disciplines to continue to develop the strong and dynamic partnership between them and Bracknell's businesses. Over the next five years of the next BID, the Council intend that this forward-looking evolution of their relationship with businesses should:

- Develop a serious dialogue with businesses within Bracknell through the BID Board and its management team on issues that can promote a stronger trading environment conducive to investment, business development and growth and a stronger community of businesses serving the businesses themselves and all those who live and work in the area.
- Work collaboratively and in partnership with the BID to ensure that the opportunities offered through the BID can be maximised and any investment or joint initiatives are as effective as possible.

9.3. Council Services for Business

Businesses will continue to benefit from all the standard Council services provided from Bracknell Forest Council for the benefit of all stakeholders in the BID area (cleaning, access, safety, maintenance and public amenities). In addition, the Council delivers a wide range of services either directly or indirectly specifically for businesses, these include:

- Commercial Properties and Council land use
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Grants, help and Economic support
- Licensing
- Trading Standards
- Business Rates
- Tendering for council business

Details of these services can be found on the Council's website www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/business-information

9.4. Individual Baseline Statements

In full support of the above commitments, Heads of Service within the Council will continue to have in place Baseline Statements on the specific services they are responsible for. These documents define the benchmarks for the provision of these services and the fact that any change will not disproportionately impact upon the BID area more than any other area outside the BID within the Borough's administrative boundary.

They also cover how the services will be measured. The Council attaches particular importance to the incorporation of value for money principles and measures within all the Baseline Statements.

The Baseline Services from Bracknell Forest Council are defined below:

- Arboriculture services
- Community Safety
- CCTV
- Economic Development
- Environmental Health
- Grounds Maintenance Street Cleansing
- Highways Maintenance
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Parking Management
- Public Transport
- Regeneration
- Street Management
- Traffic Management
- Walking and Cycling
- Waste Services
- Public Protection Partnership

Other authorities

- Police

The process of creating the baseline agreements proves valuable to both the service providers and the BID company. The development of these partnerships and the additional focus on the services provided in the area, gives tangible benefits over and above those derived from the projects outlined below.

9.5. Council's Operational Support for Bracknell BID

The Council's support for the BID will take practical shape in the following specific ways:

- Conducting, through the Council's Democratic Services, the formal BID vote in accordance with current BID legislation and procedures.
- Assuming a positive outcome to the BID vote, collecting the BID levy defined in the BID Business Plan from Bracknell businesses and transferring the levy sums direct to the Bracknell BID Company. The Council will pay the gross levy sums to the Bracknell BID Company within 30 days of collecting it.
- Nominate a Councillor to sit as a Director on the BID Company Board.
- Provide a senior Council officer to provide a business-focused dynamic link on all BID matters with senior Council staff.
- Paying the appropriate BID levy set out in the Business Plan in respect of all its own hereditaments within the Bracknell BID area.

9.6. Monitoring and Review

The Council is committed to the regular monitoring of the operation of the BID Operating Agreement and reviewing its effectiveness in conjunction with the Bracknell BID Company. This will be carried out as follows:

- The Council monitors performance of key services through the Council's Business Plan with monitoring reported to the Cabinet. Where there is a specific issue with service delivery within the BID area the respective Head of Service will discuss this with the Bracknell BID Company.
- There will be annual reviews of each of the specific services for which a Baseline Statement is shown above. This will be led by the Bracknell Forest Council that will discuss with the Bracknell BID how the service commitments have been actually delivered during the period, and if necessary update the service levels to reflect the services each will be provided in the following year. These reviews will be scheduled to best effect for the Bracknell Forest Council and the Bracknell BID Company's yearly budgeting cycles.

9.7. Monitoring of basic service provision

The Baseline Service Statements from Bracknell Forest Council set out the discretionary and statutory services which are delivered to and relevant to the BID area so that it is clear that the BID's activities are totally additional and complementary.

Provision of Baseline Statements will allow the BID Company to regularly appraise the delivery of core services and compare them with the details in the statements. From experience elsewhere we know this has an impact on delivery and helps to guarantee that money provided to the authorities via the business rates mechanism is targeted appropriately and well spent. This means that local businesses have some influence over business rates investment in their area and the effectiveness of local authority service provision.

10. The Research and Consultation Process

10.1. Background

The BID has undertaken extensive research across a wide range of businesses, organisations and stakeholders to ensure that the plan which has emerged has an in depth understanding of the views and aspirations of the businesses in the area as well as an appreciation of the perceptions of those who visit and work in the Bracknell BID area.

Research and findings from the surveys and interactions with businesses and organisations from across the Bracknell BID area has been considered, in shaping the ultimate vision, objectives and their associated activities.

10.2. Aim of the research

The aims of the research were to:

- Identify the key issues which impact upon all businesses in the area across all business sectors and to develop solutions to address them which will help businesses achieve their own internal objectives
- Review and assess any related strategies and plans for the area which potentially impact upon and complement the aims and objectives of the BID proposal
- Identify and assess the impact and the relative importance of different potential initiatives on businesses
- Ensure that the Vision, Objectives and their associated activities reflect the business challenges and opportunities for the immediate term and the next five years.

10.3. Research and consultation activity

The research encouraged participation from all businesses across the Bracknell BID area and involved the following activity:

- In January 2024, a detailed survey was produced to get the views of businesses in the BID area. A condensed version of the survey was also produced in May 2024.
- All potential levy paying businesses in the BID area were mailed both survey forms and asked to complete them seeking their opinions on a variety of issues, through ebulletins, during a visit from a BID representative and via the BID website. All businesses were also provided with the opportunity to meet with a member of the BID team in person, via telephone or video call.
- All potential levy paying businesses were included in mail shots and publicity including newsletters and e-bulletins where e-mail addresses were available.
- 314 personal business visits were made in total, with 127 of these being unique visits which represents 38% of the 331 occupied and trading businesses which meet the levy criteria having had a visit to discuss the BID.
- Detailed four-page surveys were conducted with businesses which covered 34% of the hereditaments which met the levy criteria.
- A number of meetings were carried out over the renewal period where all businesses were invited to discuss their challenges, opportunities and vision for the future of the BID area. These included two discussion events for all businesses in the BID area and six workshops for different clusters of businesses within the Bracknell BID area.
- The BID website and e-bulletins were used to invite feedback and opportunities for businesses to contact the BID team to discuss renewal.
- Active participation and decision making by the business representatives from the Bracknell BID Board in the development of this plan.

11. Strategies and plans

In determining the focus of the BID Business Plan it is important to ensure that it complements existing strategies and plans to ensure that the BID can deliver as much value as possible for the levy payer and contribute towards the development and continued investment in the Western and Southern business areas. This also enables the BID to bring different parties together more easily and to make efficient use of the BID budget and resources available.

Besides the business feedback and priorities we have taken account of other key plans and strategies for Bracknell to inform how best to meet the needs of businesses, build on the work of the BID to date and ensure that it can contribute towards the long term sustainability and growth potential of this area.

Two key plans are: the 'Bracknell Forest Economic Strategy 2024 -2034' and the 'BFC Climate Change Strategy 2020-2024'.

The Economic Strategy states that 'The Economic Strategy and its accompanying Action Plan will be delivered by the Council's economic development service in conjunction with public and private sector partners'. It goes on to specifically mention the BID as a key partner in the delivery of the strategy saying that, 'Working with the BID, the ESDP and the Chamber of Commerce will increase the available resource and effort, as would taking full advantage of government funding aimed at achieving business growth, increasing skills and implementing climate change action'.

The strategy goes on to say that, 'The role and standing of the BID are critical to the future success of the local economy. The strategy will actively support the BID to deliver its business plan and to secure another term'. Clearly the recognition of the BID in this regard is significant and it is important that the BID can work to support the delivery of this strategy. In particular one of the key objectives of the economic strategy is:

'B.C.2. Business creation and survival'

'Increase business start-up support. Work with large companies and the Bracknell Business Improvement District BID to support new businesses in supply chains where there are local gaps.'

As part of the development of this BID Proposal and Business Plan, consideration of this has been given to this, and the aims of the BID in Objective 1 – see Section 14 below – complement and support this and other aspects of the economic strategy.

Although Bracknell Forest Council is in the process of developing a new Climate Change Strategy this is not complete but we have anticipated that the new plan will be an evolution of the existing one: 'Bracknell Forest Council Climate Change Strategy 2020-2024' which had an ambition to reach net zero by 2050. The key objectives which are set out in this strategy are:

- protect our highly valued green spaces and strategic green gaps
- promote recycling and diverting waste from landfill, including introducing food waste recycling
- protect green spaces, the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and maintain strategic gaps between communities
- enhance facilities and customer experience at Horseshoe Lake and maintain other council open spaces
- address the impact of man-made climate change on our local communities by putting in place actions that work towards meeting the government target of eradication its net contribution to climate change by 2050
- promote greater use of public transport and cycleways

As part of the development of this BID Proposal and Business Plan, consideration of this has been given to this and the aims of the BID in Objective 2 – see Section 14 below complement and support this and this and other aspects of the climate change strategy.

We believe that this BID Proposal and Business Plan complements both these strategies and working together with all businesses, key stakeholders and partners we will ensure that businesses can capitalise on the opportunities all these plans present.

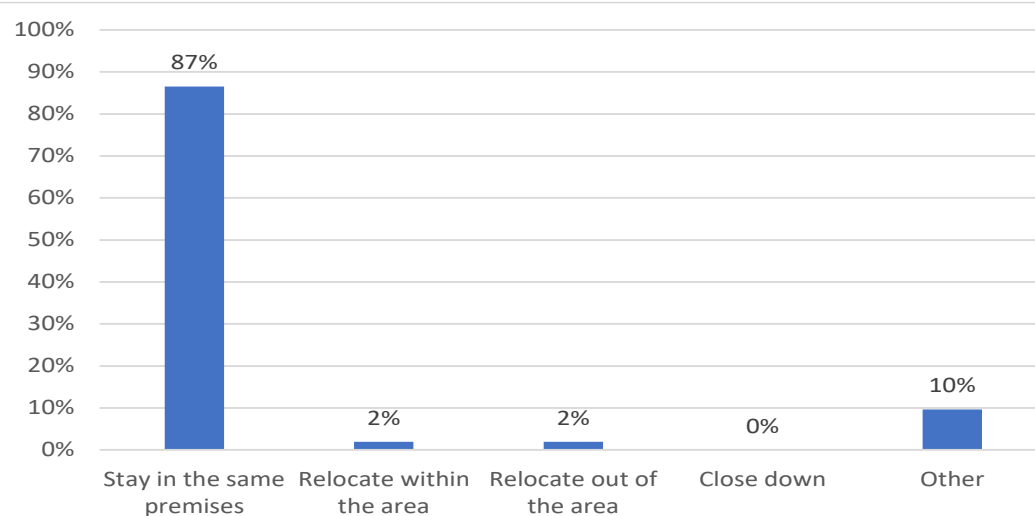
12. Research results

12.1. Business feedback

Surveys were carried out across a range of businesses from all sectors and sizes of Bracknell BID area.

Despite the economic uncertainty and cost of living challenges, the confidence to remain trading in the Bracknell BID area is strong. 87% of businesses surveyed anticipate that they will stay in the same premises. None of the businesses surveyed stated that they planned to close down.

Fig 1: Anticipated business location



12.2. Business Growth and Investment

An important part of this objective is encouraging good relationships between businesses and with other organisations and also providing support for businesses. In the survey, the aspect that ranked the second highest for importance was 'Support from the BID', with 75% of businesses surveyed saying that this was important to them. Also in the cluster workshops, 'Business Support' was the third most discussed topic, with comments such as trusted trader recommendations for BID businesses would be good, more support for small businesses and more marketing from the BID.

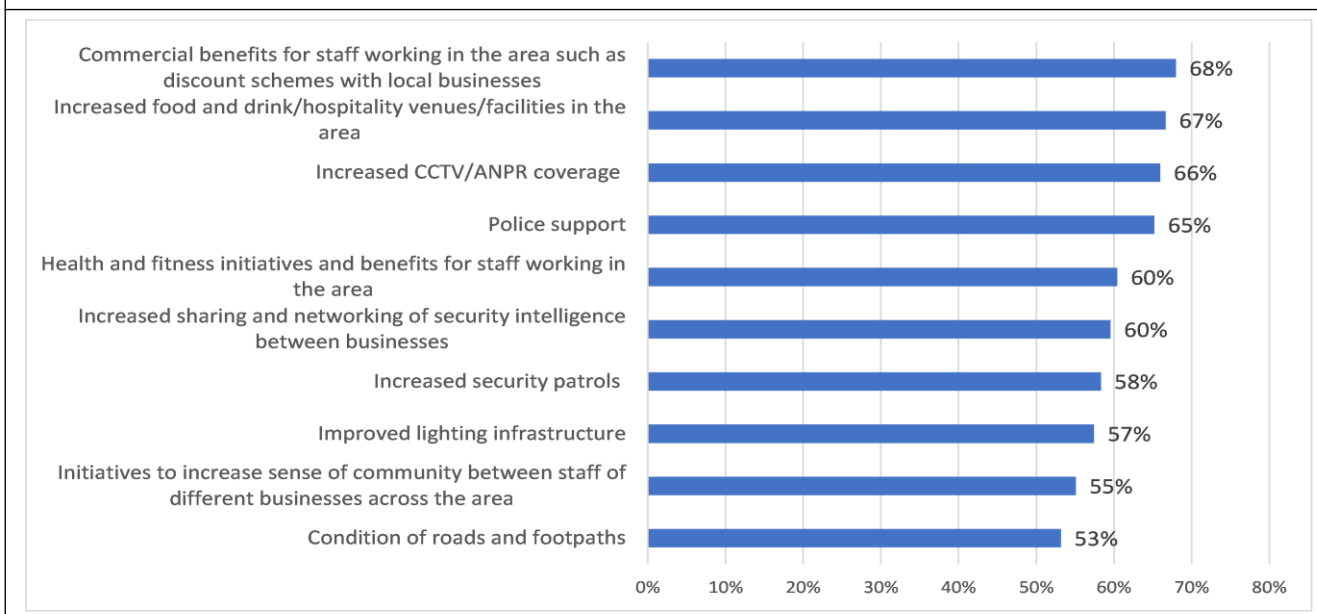
Also included within this objective is facilities and benefits for employees in the area and in the survey, the future project that businesses said would be the most beneficial to them was 'Commercial benefits for staff working in the area such as discount schemes with local businesses', with 68%. This was closely followed in second by another project that relates to improving employee experience in the Bracknell BID area which is 'Increased food and drink/hospitality venues/facilities in the area', with 67%. Also scoring within the top five was 'Health and fitness initiatives and benefits for staff working in the area' with 60% of businesses surveyed saying this would be beneficial. Also in the survey, 'Amenities and facilities for workers in the area' ranked third for being important to businesses, with 74% saying it was important to them.

A safe and secure working environment is also an important part of this objective and current crime and safety related projects scored highly in the survey for being beneficial to businesses. 'Security Patrols' were at the top of the list, with 88% of businesses surveyed saying this was beneficial to them. In joint second place was 'Security alert ebuletins and regular security updates' with 84%, followed by 'CCTV and ANPR scheme' at 80%. Crime and safety related projects were also important

to businesses for the future, with 'Increased CCTV/ANPR coverage' and 'Police support' both in the top five for future projects, with 66% and 65% of businesses respectively saying this would be beneficial to them.

In the cluster workshops, the most discussed topic overall was 'Security, Crime and Safety' and comments were made such as lighting being poor and not bright enough at that some people feel intimidated late at night and that increased security and CCTV would help, and possibly a method of intelligence sharing set up between businesses and organisations to alert each other about issues, incidents or useful intelligence.

Fig 2: Top ten future projects ranked by businesses as beneficial



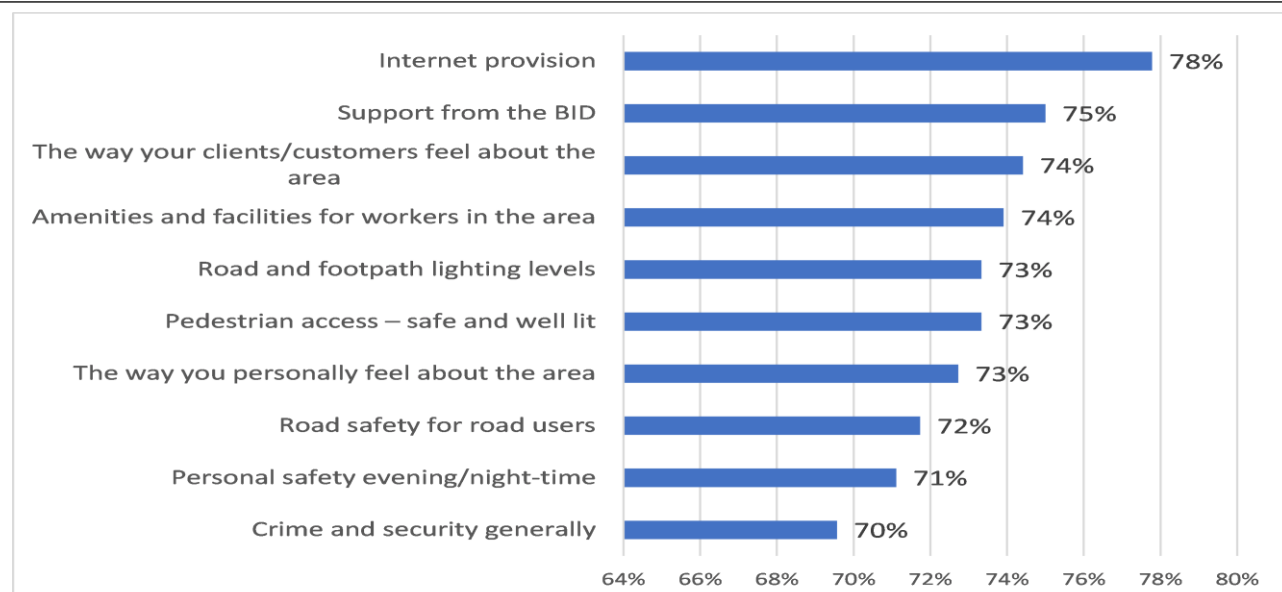
12.3. Carbon reduction and sustainability

In the workshop, the most discussed topic was around access in and around the Bracknell BID area with suggestions that the transport links could be better as there are currently slow and infrequent train services, having a better local bus service and possibly a park and ride, and that this could be a green bus service. Also in the cluster workshops, the second most discussed topic overall was access, with comments such as there being potholes and road surface issues, issues with parking including lack of spaces and delivery drivers causing problems.

Additionally, in the survey the aspect that came out on top for being either very poor or quite poor was 'Condition of roads and footpaths', with 40% of businesses surveyed giving it one of these rankings. Another access related aspect that was third in the list for being either very poor or quite poor was 'Availability of parking' with 35%.

Another important part of this objective is carbon reduction and biodiversity, and the second most discussed topic in the workshop was around 'Environment', with comments and suggestions such as introducing more shared environmental initiatives, providing better understanding for environmentally friendly practices, more green spaces in and around the BID area and BID charging support and shared cycle scheme.

Fig 3: Top ten aspects ranked by businesses as important



13. The BID's response

Following our extensive research two key project areas for Bracknell BID have emerged reflecting the key issues and opportunities identified by the businesses and key stakeholders. The activities within each of the project areas have been specifically designed to address and take advantage of these.

The BID will continue to act as a catalyst for businesses and organisations to come together and play a key role in this new and exciting era in the life of the BID area. The BID's ability to influence has increased significantly and it is now starting to lead and drive key initiatives working closely with the local authority and other key businesses and organisations on plans which will shape the future of the Southern and Western Business Areas.

The BID will continue to work with all stakeholders to define, develop and promote the identity of the Bracknell BID area which reflects its strengths and characteristics and is a sustainable and vibrant place which generates pride for its businesses and employees.

This BID Proposal and Business Plan has been designed to ensure that the activities benefit as wide a range of businesses as possible. It will do this by being recognised as the place where businesses develop and grow through collaboration and investment.

13.1. The role of the BID

All businesses and organisations stand to benefit from these additional projects and activities which have been identified by businesses across the Bracknell BID area as crucial to their future:

- To act as the voice for businesses in the Bracknell BID area and represent their interests within the context and framework of this BID Proposal and Business Plan
- To position Bracknell BID area and build its profile as a destination of choice for businesses and investors
- To work collaboratively and strategically, representing business interests to encourage growth, development and investment of businesses in the Bracknell BID area

13.2. How delivery will be monitored

Monitoring and measuring the performance and effectiveness of the BID activities is an integral and essential part of the plan. Businesses need to be confident that their levy money is being invested as productively as possible to maximise results.

The effectiveness of the measures undertaken will be gauged by key performance indicators monitored and relevant for each project area, including business surveys and photographic evidence. These measures and key performance indicators are identified for each objective and need to be monitored on a regular basis throughout the life of the BID.

14. Vision and Objectives

Assuming a positive BID vote by a majority of businesses by both rateable value and number of hereditaments, BID operations will start on 1st April 2025 and will continue for a total of 5 years.

14.1. The Vision

Through a business-led programme of investment our vision is for:

‘The Bracknell BID area to be recognised as the place where businesses develop and grow through collaboration and investment.’

14.2. Objectives

The BID investment programme will be delivered through the two key strategic objectives and their related activities:

Objective 1 –Business Growth and Investment

Support businesses in the Bracknell BID area to grow, develop and invest by creating a great working environment which enables effective operation and attracts and retains the best people.

Objective 2 – Carbon Reduction and Sustainability

Support business in benefiting from sustainable growth through carbon reduction policies and sustainable working practices.

14.3. Objectives, Activities, Measures and Results

Objective 1 – Business Growth and Investment

Support businesses in the Bracknell BID area to grow, develop and invest by creating a great working environment which enables effective operation and attracts and retains the best people.

Expenditure

A budget averaging £210,000 per year with a total expenditure of approximately £1 million over the five-year period. Additional grant and/or match funding will be pursued where appropriate and possible.

Activities

1. A sense of identity and communication
 - a. Work with partners, landlords and occupiers to create and promote a coherent identity for the area which benefits the businesses and organisations which operate in the BID area and reflects their high standards and values.
 - b. Develop communications with and between businesses to promote awareness of BID activities and issues and opportunities which may affect trading conditions and the local environment.
2. Facilities and Benefits
 - a. Encourage the development of facilities and amenities in pleasant surroundings where people who work across the areas can eat, meet or relax away from their place of work.
 - b. Develop schemes, benefits and events for those who work in businesses in Bracknell business areas which promote the feeling of a community, a sense of well-being and encourage staff retention and productivity.

3. A safe and secure working environment
 - a. Work with partners to maintain coverage by a CCTV and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) infrastructure to provide a deterrent to crime, enhance personal safety, help protect property and create a strong evidence-base and an effective crime solving tool.
 - b. Maintain and develop schemes and initiatives which support the prevention of crime and the creation of a safe environment for all who work in and use the BID area.
4. Business trading
 - a. Work with businesses in the BID area across all sectors to encourage inter-trading and the development of working relationships to achieve tangible improvements in business performance and business development.
 - b. Promote and profile businesses to increase business opportunities.
 - c. Encourage and support potential investors, start-ups and business development.
5. Recruitment, training, personal development, health and well-being
 - a. Encourage and support relationships between businesses and organisations which seek to improve training, develop skills and assist with staff recruitment and retention.
 - b. Support businesses and organisations in providing initiatives which maintain the health and well-being of the people who work for them.

Measuring and Monitoring

These will include but are not limited to:

- Increased numbers and use of facilities and amenities in the Bracknell BID area for eating, meeting and relaxing.
- The view of people working in Bracknell BID area as a place to work measured through perception surveys.
- Positive media exposure locally, regionally measured through numbers of articles, publications, click-throughs on digital media.
- Lower than average crime rate for comparable locations, in the Bracknell BID area.
- Increased demand for commercial property in the Bracknell BID area.
- Identifying data which reflects an increasing appeal of this area for employment.

Objective 2 – Carbon reduction and sustainability

Support business in benefiting from sustainable growth through carbon reduction policies and sustainable working practices.

Expenditure

A budget averaging £360,000 a year with a total expenditure of approximately £1.8 million over the five-year period. Additional grant and/or match funding will be pursued where appropriate and possible.

Activities

1. Transport and moving around
 - a. Increase the availability of cost-effective travel options for all and work with others to develop innovative and attractive solutions for public and shared transport into and around the BID area.
 - b. Encourage walking and cycling throughout the BID area through signage, creating a safe environment and other innovative methods.
 - c. Work with partners to maintain and improve the general condition and appearance of roads, footpaths and cycle ways throughout the BID area.

2. Carbon reduction
 - a. Support businesses in increasing awareness and education in sustainability and carbon management.
 - b. Consider and develop, where possible, shared energy resources which enable businesses to reduce their own carbon emissions.
 - c. Support businesses in finding innovative solutions to reduce their carbon footprint.
 - d. Support businesses in finding effective and sustainable solutions for resource and waste management.
 - e. Support businesses to obtain, where possible and appropriate, government and other grants to support decarbonisation initiatives.
3. Biodiversity
 - a. Work with partners and other stakeholders to protect and manage the green spaces and the urban environment across the BID area in a way which encourages biodiversity.
 - b. Support businesses in developing awareness of and adopting biodiversity strategies which generate meaningful and measurable benefits.

Measuring and Monitoring

These will include but are not limited to:

- Create a baseline and monitor and manage the BID's operation in respect of carbon emission and sustainability
- Number of businesses which have adopted carbon reduction policies
- Numbers of businesses holding formal carbon reduction accreditation
- Identify and baseline appropriate sources of data to monitor the carbon outputs and biodiversity of the BID area and its businesses as a whole where businesses are willing to share this data
- Identify and baseline other sources of data which will be able to monitor the success of this objective.

15. Organisation, Resources and Delivery

The preparation of this BID Proposal has been managed by Bracknell Investment Group Ltd which is a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee. It is legally and operationally responsible to the businesses in the BID area for all BID activities and acts on their behalf.

The Board is elected by the members of the Bracknell Investment Group Ltd, drawn predominantly from those paying a levy in the area and made up of a representative cross-section of the businesses and stakeholders of the area and key agencies associated with the successful delivery of the BID projects. It will continue to be driven by the private sector and includes a Councillor from Bracknell Forest Council as a Director and one Council Officer who will act as a key operational link, but not as a Director.

All businesses will be encouraged to be actively involved in the Board and associated working groups to represent the levy payers. Through specific working groups, the Board will be instrumental in prioritising the requirements of the levy payers into deliverable projects which address their needs, within the framework of the business plan.

The main role of the Board is to safeguard the interests of levy payers by ensuring that the business operates in line with the BID plan, is professional and offers consistent value for money in line with its targets. The Board will ensure that the implementation of the BID will be monitored and delivered cost effectively, through keeping overheads to a minimum and using methods which will optimise the use of the revenue budget and add real value to the delivery of the plan.

The Board will continue to provide a consistent, collective and effective voice for the businesses and organisations in the Bracknell BID area. All roles on the Board, and any working groups are voluntary and are undertaken with a commitment to represent the interests of all businesses in the area.

In support of its vision and objectives, the BID will encourage collaboration with all key stakeholders involved in the BID area. Collaborative working between businesses and other organisations in the BID area will also be encouraged to build upon the sense of the business community and ensure that the skills and resources available for delivery of the BID are enhanced and deliver best value.

There will continue to be hands-on dedicated Project and Contract Management to support the initiatives from any working groups. This management role will also provide administrative support and project delivery for the BID Company as well as coordinating activity with partner organisations and ensuring cost-effective delivery of projects through tendering and careful management of contracts.

The effectiveness of the measures undertaken will be gauged by Key Performance Indicators for each project area, employee surveys, business surveys, photographic evidence, bus and bicycle usage and other specific measurements appropriate for monitoring carbon reduction.

Besides regular newsletters and other forms of bulletins, there will be an annual report providing details on activities and performance of the company against the objectives of the delivery plan for the previous year.

All Levy payers are entitled, on application, to become members of the Bracknell BID. There will be an Annual General Meeting at which all members of the company are invited to attend and vote and at which Directors will be retired by rotation and new Directors elected in accordance with the articles of the company.

16. Bracknell BID Budget and Finances

16.1. Balancing the Budget

The last few years have presented the businesses and organisations of the Bracknell BID area and across the UK with unprecedented and significant challenges. March 2020 saw the start of the COVID lockdown, since then, rising energy costs and general inflation has presented further challenges just as businesses were hoping for recovery. The economy appears to have stabilised but confidence is still fragile and everyone is having to adjust to rapidly changing lifestyles which mean that there is a need for constant evolution of business.

Many businesses have also seen a significant increase in rateable value in the 2023 valuations. This increase was not reflected in the levy as the BID wanted to provide budgetary certainty to the businesses throughout the life of the BID and so the basis for calculating the levy was fixed at the 2017 rateable values for the life of the BID.

Given these economic challenges the BID Board have tried to balance the costs to businesses with the requirement to generate sufficient funds to provide support and make a tangible difference to the business environment in Bracknell.

The investment being sought from businesses in the BID area is modest in relation to what can be achieved. For the smallest business in the Business Improvement District, the cost is equivalent to less than a bar of chocolate a day.

The BID will seek to leverage in additional cash funding, grants and value in kind, to support the delivery of this plan and add to the investment made by the businesses in the Bracknell BID area through the BID.

The percentage being applied to the levy in year one of the next BID term is less than that applied in the final year of the existing BID. At 1.61% of rateable value the indicative costs to businesses would be:

Rateable Value	Levy Rate	Annual	This equates to: Weekly	This equates to: Daily
£1 - £12,000	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero
£12,001	1.61%	£193	£3.72	£0.53
£15,000	1.61%	£242	£4.64	£0.66
£25,000	1.61%	£403	£7.74	£1.10
£50,000	1.61%	£805	£15.48	£2.21
£100,000	1.61%	£1,610	£30.96	£4.41
£200,000	1.61%	£3,220	£61.92	£8.82

16.2. Bracknell BID 5 year Budget: 2025-2030

Income Based on Levy at 1.61%							% to total
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total	
BID levy revenue (Note 1)	£ 671,358	£ 684,785	£ 698,481	£ 712,450	£ 726,699	£ 3,493,774	94%
Other Income (Note 2)	£ 40,000	£ 40,800	£ 41,616	£ 42,448	£ 43,297	£ 208,162	6%
Total Income	£ 711,358	£ 725,585	£ 740,097	£ 754,899	£ 769,997	£ 3,701,936	100%
Expenditure							
Objective 1 - Business Growth and Investment	£ 205,048	£ 209,149	£ 213,332	£ 217,599	£ 221,951	£ 1,067,078	29%
Objective 2 - Carbon reduction and Sustainability	£ 344,939	£ 351,838	£ 358,875	£ 366,052	£ 373,373	£ 1,795,076	49%
Central Management Costs, Administration, Office (Note 3)	£ 93,662	£ 95,535	£ 97,446	£ 99,395	£ 101,383	£ 487,421	13%
Levy Collection costs from Council	£ 20,141	£ 20,544	£ 20,954	£ 21,374	£ 21,801	£ 104,813	3%
Contingency (Note 4)	£ 33,568	£ 34,239	£ 34,924	£ 35,623	£ 36,335	£ 174,689	5%
Total Expenditure	£ 697,358	£ 711,305	£ 725,531	£ 740,042	£ 754,842	£ 3,629,077	100%
Accrual for Renewal and end of BID (Note 5)	£ 14,000	£ 14,280	£ 14,566	£ 14,857	£ 15,154	£ 72,857	

Notes

1. Assumes a 95% collection rate and 2% per annum inflation
2. Including income from landlords, associate members of the BID and other sources (including in-kind)
3. Central admin, office and fixed overheads
4. Calculated as 5% of total levy billed
5. Accrual retained from levy revenue to provide for costs of renewal of the BID for any additional term, and managing end of BID term, otherwise they will be spent on additional projects in the final year

16.3. Costs of Developing the BID Proposal

The costs incurred in undertaking the research and development of the new BID Proposal and Business plan have been built into the budget of the current BID. The costs for holding the renewal ballot have been met by Bracknell Forest Council, for which we give sincere thanks.

16.4. Sources of Additional Funding

The BID Company intends to seek additional funding where possible to increase the benefits that can be delivered by the BID to businesses. Other possible income sources will include grants where the criteria match the aims of the business plan, voluntary contributions from property owners, companies and organisations outside the BID area and those not liable for the levy. It is estimated that this could be around £200,000 over the five-year period.

Through discussion, developers, property owners and other stakeholders in the area will be invited to participate in the Business Improvement District and improve delivery against the business plan objectives even further.

16.5. Application of BID Funds

The BID funds will be ring-fenced and will be controlled by participating businesses. Details of the BID Company's accountability to businesses are given in Section 13. The BID's Response.

As part of the Alteration of BID Arrangements (also see Section 16), the budget headings and the project costs can be altered within the constraints of the revenue received through the levy. The Bracknell BID Company (Bracknell Investment Group Ltd) is empowered to move funds between budget headings and between financial years to provide the services which best meet the

requirements of the BID area within the framework of the BID Proposal and Business Plan's objectives. Such adjustments will be fully accountable to the businesses through the performance monitoring arrangements as per the 'measures and results' identified against each Objective set out in Section 14.

16.6. Governance and management of the BID Budget

In order to ensure that the projects remain relevant and continue to address needs and priorities of the businesses in the Bracknell BID area during its five-year life, the Board of the Bracknell BID Company may from time to time make modifications to the budget allocations for each of the main projects and the management and administration of the BID.

It will be the responsibility of the Board to make adjustments to the allocations of expenditure budget as and when they deem appropriate and to ensure that all the main aims of the BID, stated in Section 14 continue to be addressed and that all BID activity contributes towards the achievement of the vision. The Board will also monitor and gauge the effectiveness of the BID operations and activities.

17. BID Levy Criteria for Bracknell BID

Every BID must establish its own levy rules. Reference has been made to the 'Industry Criteria and Guidance Notes' prepared for Revo in association with; ATCM, ACS, BRC and BPF in developing the rules which will apply to the Bracknell BID.

Business Improvement Districts use rateable values of businesses as a means of calculating levy and determining the associated criteria. This provides the basis for an equitable approach to charging to reflect the value which businesses will receive in services and support from the activities of the BID.

The Board of Bracknell Investment Group Ltd has tried to balance the ambitions of businesses in the BID plan against the affordability of the levy and the requirement to ensure that the BID is able to deliver best value.

A hereditament is defined in Section 115 (1) of the General Rate Act 1967 (the 1967 Act) as: 'property which is or may become liable to a rate, being a unit of such property which is, or would fall to be, shown as a separate item in the valuation list'. For the purposes of this levy criteria the words, 'land, 'properties' and 'premises' will also be interpreted as a hereditament.

1. Assuming a positive BID vote by a majority of businesses by number and rateable value (R.V) of those who vote, the BID levy will be charged on all hereditaments listed in the local Non-Domestic Rating List located within the BID area. This applies irrespective of whether or how a business has voted in the formal BID ballot. Legislation within the Local Government Finance Act (2003) enables the local authority to issue a bill for the levy to any property which meets the levy criteria at any time, during the life of the BID. The levy is collected by the Billing Authority, Bracknell Forest Council. The Bracknell BID Company will invoice the Billing Authority, Bracknell Forest Council, for the levy collected for exclusive use of the BID.
2. All businesses shown on the Bracknell Forest Council's (the Billing Authority) NNDR billing system on the day the ballot holder publishes the notice of the ballot at least 42 days before the day of the ballot shown as the liable party (for the purposes of this Ballot taken as the 19th September 2024, subject to final check and audit, will be entitled to vote for the BID proposal in a 28 day postal ballot which will commence on 3rd October 2024, with the close of ballot at 5pm on 31st October 2024. The result will be announced as soon as possible thereafter.
3. If successful at the ballot, the BID will be fixed for a term of 5 years. The BID will commence operation on 1st April 2025 and will run until 31st March 2030. Levy bills will be issued for the first payment due 1st April 2025 and thereafter on the 1st April each year.
4. The levy amounts will be applied as follows:
 - a. The BID levy will be 1.61% of the rateable value shown on Valuation Office Agency's 2023 Non-Domestic Rating List for the existing Billing Authority, Bracknell Forest Council on 19th September 2024 and for and for the Billing Authority each year thereafter and only subject to the changes as stated in the clauses below, for each defined business within the scope of the BID, with the exception of those premises with a rateable value of less than £12,001.
 - b. The total levy payable in any one chargeable period by any one ratepayer for any single hereditament with a rateable value of £ 2,300,000 or more, as shown on billing authority's NNDR billing system as at 19th September 2024 will be no more than £37,030 in year 1 as defined in paragraph 10 of this criteria. The levy for future years for any single hereditament with a rateable value of £2,300,000 or more will be based upon the £37,030 payment in year 1 and index linked as per the inflationary increases outlined in Section 17 paragraph 7.

- c. Ratepayers with an RV of less than £12,001 will not pay a levy for these properties and will not have a vote for these properties although they will enjoy the benefits that come with trading in the BID area.
5. The levy will be due from all businesses that are liable that have an entry on the Non-Domestic Rating List, including empty properties other than those that are exempt within the stated criteria (this section 17).
6. The liable person is the ratepayer liable for occupied or unoccupied premises in accordance with the levy criteria outlined in this Section 17. In accordance with the Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989 (S.I. 1989/1058) and the Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 1989 (S.I. 1989/1060), The Billing Authority, Bracknell Forest Council will be responsible for the imposition, administration, collection, recovery and application of the BID levy. The Billing Authority will also be responsible for any enforcement action that may be appropriate in case of non-payment of the levy.
7. There will be an annual inflationary increase of all levy charges year on year for the duration of the Business Improvement District. This will be a minimum of 2% increase year on year or the inflation percentage as determined by the Consumer Price Index as at the 1st November of the year before the next billing process, whichever is the greater, rounded to the nearest hundredth of one percent. (e.g. if a levy bill is £322 based on 1.61% of a rateable value of £20,000, if inflation is applied to this at a level of 2% then the new levy percentage would be 1.64% giving a levy of £328). Negative inflation will not apply. Inflation will not apply for the first full 12 month billing cycle in 2025 i.e. commencing 1st April 2025.
8. The BID financial year will last for 365 days (366 in a leap year) between 1st April and 31st March.
9. The BID's chargeable period is a year or part of a year, broken down into daily charges based on the rateable value as at 19th September 2024. The chargeable period will normally last for 365 days (366 in a leap year). The daily BID levy charge for each individual ratepayer is to be calculated by multiplying its rateable value by the BID percentage levy and dividing the result by the number of days in the financial year or part year of the chargeable period.
10. The first billing period of the new BID will run from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 and then from 1st April for each year thereafter.
11. The only other exceptions to the due date of the 1st April each year as stated in paragraph 10 above, is where a proportional liability exists due to any change in circumstances identified in this Section 17 'Levy Criteria for Bracknell BID', in which case, the levy charge will fall due 14 days after the demand is issued. The BID Levy liability is calculated on a daily basis based on the position as at the "end of the day" - midnight. If there is a change of occupier part way through the chargeable period the BID Levy liability will be recalculated for the outgoing occupier on this basis (so for example: if someone moves out on, 1st June 2025, then their liability ceases on 31st May 2025 and they do not pay a levy for 1st June 2025). The BID levy liability will then fall to whoever qualifies under this levy criteria and any levy calculated on a pro-rata basis.
12. The levy will be charged for each chargeable period in advance and is to be paid in full by the due date. At the start of the chargeable period, the bill is issued based on the assumption that the levy payer remains in occupation throughout the course of the financial year. Any business which ceases to become the liable party during the period must apply to Bracknell Forest Council, the Billing Authority for a refund for the remainder of the period.

13. The BID levy is payable in one installment. This installment date will be specified on the Demand Notice. The notice will be served as soon as practicable after the Billing Authority becomes aware of a BID levy liability and the liability will be calculated from the effective date of any of the following changes being recorded on the Rating List.
14. The BID levy is payable in one installment. This installment date will be specified on the Demand Notice. The notice will be served as soon as practicable after the Billing Authority becomes aware of a BID levy liability and the liability will be calculated from the effective date of any of the following changes being recorded on the Rating List:
- a. **New premises**, or properties which were not on the rate valuation list at the 19th September 2024 but become subject to rates in the BID area or new streets raised in the BID area since that date will be expected to pay a BID Levy based on the % criteria for that year, in relation to its new/current rateable value with effect from the date at which it becomes subject to a business rates charge.
 - b. **Where property is split**, two or more BID levies should be charged at the appropriate levy rate % of the new/current rateable values of the revised premises from the effective date of the split valuation.
 - c. **Where premises are merged** the BID Levy should be charged at the appropriate levy rate % of the new/current rateable value of the merged property from the effective date of the merged valuation.
 - d. **Any change of use or ownership** (or the creation of a new business within the BID boundary) will be liable to the levy rate % current at the time of the change.
 - e. **Adjustments** will be made for changes in occupation or if a property is deleted from the Rating List or is relisted on the Rating List or where a rateable value is applied to a zero-rated property, revised bills or credits will be issued. The charge or refund amount will be calculated pro rata between the date of the change in occupation, deletion or value applied and the date of the financial year end.
 - f. **No amendments** will be made to the rateable value of any property in the BID area as a result of any general or property specific re-valuation other than for the criteria listed above whether or not it is applied retrospectively to a point in time prior to the 19th September 2024.
15. No other relief will be given to any class of non-domestic ratepayer and there is no distinction made between occupied or unoccupied hereditaments, both occupancy status attracting the full BID levy, unless it is a hereditament: -
- a. whose owner or occupier is prohibited by law from using it for the primary purpose for which it was originally intended, for clarity and for the purposes of this levy criteria it will only cover a property where the prohibition by law results in no 'value or benefit' to the possessor and at the discretion of the BID;
 - b. which is kept vacant by reason of action taken by or on behalf of the Crown or any local or public authority with a view to prohibiting the occupation of the hereditament or to acquiring it;
 - c. which is included in the Schedule of monuments compiled under section 1 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979(b). For clarity a hereditament which is the subject of a building preservation notice within the meaning of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990(a) or is included in a list compiled under Section 1 of that Act will be subject to levy unless its use is covered by any of the other exemptions listed in Section 17 of the business plan (this Section);
 - d. where, in respect of the owner's estate, there subsists a bankruptcy order within the meaning of section 381(2) of the Insolvency Act 1986(c);
 - e. whose owner is entitled to possession of the hereditament in his capacity as trustee under a deed of arrangement to which the Deeds of Arrangement Act 1914(d) applies;
 - f. whose owner is a company which is subject to a winding-up order made under the Insolvency Act 1986 or which is being wound up voluntarily under that Act;

- g. whose owner is a company in administration within the meaning of paragraph 1 of Schedule B1 to the Insolvency Act 1986 or is subject to an administration order made under the former administration provisions within the meaning of article 3 of the Enterprise Act 2002 (Commencement No. 4 and Transitional Provisions and Savings) Order 2003;
- h. whose owner is entitled to possession of the hereditament in his capacity as liquidator by virtue of an order made under section 112 or section 145 of the Insolvency Act 1986.
- i. where the property is occupied by a charity or a Community Amateur Sports club, and is wholly or mainly used for the charitable purposes of the charity (or of that and other charities), or for the purposes of the club (or of that and other clubs), the charity (either registered or of charitable status) or the registered Community Amateur Sports Club will not pay a levy and will not be permitted to vote in the ballot.
- j. where it is a building registered for religious worship.

in which case the hereditament will be exempt for the period of time where any one of these criteria apply.

16. The levy will be due from businesses or individuals who are liable to pay business rates, from any hereditaments on any roads which have not yet been constructed or named at the time of the ballot and any new hereditaments built or created within the shaded area of the map shown in Section 8 in this Proposal and Business Plan which fall within the levy criteria, from the 19th September 2024 at any time during the life of the BID but which are not specifically identified on the map in Section 8, with effect from the date at which their rateable value takes effect.
17. The BID levy contribution will not be reassessed if the rateable value is amended after the end of the BID. New or altered properties entered into the Rating List will become liable for the levy and will be charged pro-rata for the remainder of the billing year at the appropriate % and at the new rateable value.
18. Businesses with a rateable value of less than £12,001 will be exempt from the levy and will not be permitted to vote in the ballot. Any business with a rateable value which falls below this threshold will be encouraged to enter into a voluntary arrangement direct with the BID Company so that they can benefit from the full range of services provided by the BID.
19. Subject to this criteria stated above and within the BID boundary as defined in this document, the BID levy is a statutorily compulsory payment regardless of whether the business exercised its vote or voted against the BID.

18. Risk analysis

18.1. The responsibilities of the BID Company

Bracknell Investment Group Ltd (The BID Company) is a company limited by guarantee, and a significant business in its own right. It not only has all the attendant risks and responsibilities that go with this but also, subject to the vote in favour of the BID, will have a mandate from the businesses in the area to deliver the BID Business Plan. This is a significant responsibility which has an influence over the commercial prosperity of Bracknell BID area, the businesses in the area and everyone who rely upon it for their living.

It is important therefore, to articulate some of the external and internal issues that have a direct bearing on the ability of the Company to trade successfully, as well as highlight the consequences of not adopting the principles of the BID and the benefits that accrue from the delivery of the plan.

18.2. BIDs in other places

BIDs have been proving their worth and commercial value across the UK over the last twenty years as effective mechanisms to improve trading environments for all sorts and types of businesses. Over the last few years, during the challenges faced by businesses during the pandemic and cost of living crisis, BIDs have stepped up to provide whatever support they can to their businesses.

Where BIDs have reached the end of their first term many have seen even greater votes in favour and larger turn-outs than the first time of voting. They are seen as providing businesses with very effective returns on investment.

Many BIDs are in towns and cities but there are some in industrial estates including Manor Royal, Gatwick which gained BID status in April 2013 and has since been renewed through ballot in both 2018 and 2023. Brackmills Industrial Estate BID in Northampton is another significant industrial/commercial BID which is home to more than 180 businesses and 11,000 employees and entered its fourth term this June.

18.3. The Importance of Voting ‘YES’

If you want the BID, its collective influence and all its associated benefits to continue and support your business, you will need to vote for it. If the vote does not get sufficient votes in favour both by number and rateable value, the BID and all its associated activities will stop as of 31st March 2025.

There will be no collective voice or mechanism through which you can shape or control the support you receive, and businesses will be left to face the challenges and uncertainties of the future alone.

18.4. Working with key partners

In order to deliver exceptional value for money within the framework of the aims and objectives of the plan, the BID will continue to work closely with other key stakeholders such as property owners, developers, the Local Authorities and the Police. It will seek, wherever possible to influence larger projects to the benefit of its own aims while supporting others to achieve their own objectives.

In working with others, the over-riding principle of the BID should not be compromised i.e. that the BID is providing services and benefits additional to those which would have happened if the BID had not been in existence.

18.5. Sustainable mechanism for the development of Bracknell

The BID is a unique mechanism which combines solid business support with a compulsory payment scheme which creates benefit for all on an equitable basis. It also guarantees constant cash flow to deliver the projects and priorities identified by the businesses. It provides a solid platform for the BID Company to control costs, plan over the longer term and rise to the expectations of its stakeholders.

A contingency is contained within each of the project areas, meaning, that should the income from the additional voluntary contributions fall short of those budgeted for any period, costs can be adjusted accordingly.

In the unlikely event that circumstances beyond the control of the BID Company mean that it fails to bring about the benefits envisaged, the businesses and organisations which pay a levy will have the final say. At the end of the 5 years, if no discernible difference is detected then a vote against renewal can simply “switch off” the BID and with it all business contributions.

There is no plan to rely upon bank or other financial support other than the levy and so there is no prospect of financial insecurity. In any event, the Company will produce monthly management accounts and financial forecasts for information for the Board, nominated by the levy payers. Appointed auditors will produce end-of-year accounts, made available to all contributors and the local authority and these will be filed at Companies House in the normal way.

Bracknell Investment Group Ltd is VAT registered to ensure that the tax can be reclaimed on expenditure. It is also benefits from mutual trading status meaning that it is exempt from any Corporation Tax liability on the levy and grants revenue received.

19. Final thoughts

Throughout the period of the BID being in operation we have continued to do all we can to support businesses and give them the confidence to continue to grow and invest in the area. Your feedback has highlighted just how valuable this has been and how important it is that this work continues.

The renewal of Bracknell Business Improvement District and working closely with the local authority and other key organisations, will provide us with an opportunity to drive key projects and plans which will shape the future of the Bracknell BID area.

The BID has created a distinct area where businesses know they can grow and develop with the support of an organisation, the BID, which is not only looking after their wider interests but also providing direct support in reducing costs, providing new trading and business opportunities, supporting them in retaining and developing staff and reflecting their values to potential clients and investors.

Without the BID, there will be no collective voice or mechanism through which you can shape or influence other support you may receive from the local authority or even government and businesses will be left to face the challenges and uncertainties of the future alone.

To continue and build on the great work we have done so far, we need your support and the first step in making this happen is to vote YES in the ballot in October.

Maria Sabey
Chair of Bracknell BID

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Definitions

The following terms, used throughout this Proposal document, shall have the same meaning as provided in the Local Government Act 2003 and the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004.

- “BID” means Business Improvement District.
- This document is a BID proposal for the purposes of the Act. If approved it will become the BID arrangements which govern the way in which the BID levy can be used.
- “the 2003 Act” means the Local Government Act 2003.
- “the 1988 Act” means the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- “the COVID Act” means the 2020 Coronavirus Act, Chapter 7, Part 1, Section 79.
- “BID ballot” means a ballot under Section 49(1) of the Local Government Act, 2003.
- “BID body” means, the body (whether corporate or not corporate) responsible for the implementation of the arrangements in this case defined in the plan as the ‘Bracknell Investment Group Ltd’.
- “BID Company” is the ‘Bracknell Investment Group Ltd’ and is accountable for the budget and delivery of the BID Arrangements in accordance with this BID Proposal and Business Plan.
- “BID proposer” means the person or body who draws up BID proposals as defined by the BID Regulations, in this plan it is the ‘Bracknell Investment Group Ltd’.
- “commencement date” subject to regulation 9(12) of the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004, means the day, pursuant to Section 53 of the 2003 Act, the BID arrangements are to come into force.
- “hereditament” means anything which is or is treated as being a hereditament by virtue of the provisions of or any provisions made under Section 64 of the 1988 Act including any hereditament to which regulation 6 of the Non-Domestic Rating (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 1989 applies but otherwise excluding any hereditament to which regulations made under Section 64(3)(b) of the 1988 Act apply.
- “renewal ballot” means a ballot under Section 54(2) of the 2003 Act.
- “BID Levy” means a charge imposed on the non-domestic ratepayers, or a class of such ratepayers in the district.

Appendix 2 – Streets included in the BID Area listed alphabetically

Street name	Limitation
Arlington Square	None
Cain Road	None
Cookham Road	None
Doncastle Road	None
Downmill Road	None
Downshire Way	Between the Wokingham Rd B3408 and the Twin Bridges Roundabout A322
Easthampstead Road	None
Ellesfield Avenue	None
Kiln Lane	None
Longshot Lane	None
Lovelace Road	None
Milbanke Way	None
Oldbury	None
Peacock Lane	Small section, on the Southern side of the road from junction with Lovelace Rd up to the border of 'Tarman's Copse'
Skimped Hill Lane	North Western side of the road only
Turnpike Road	Southern side of the road between a point west of Challis Place to a point level with Tippitts Mead to the north
Western Road	None
Willoughby Road	None
Wokingham Road	Southern side of the road only, not including area between Milbanke Way and the eastern boundary of the last hereditament on the junction of Wokingham Rd and Western Rd

Acknowledgements

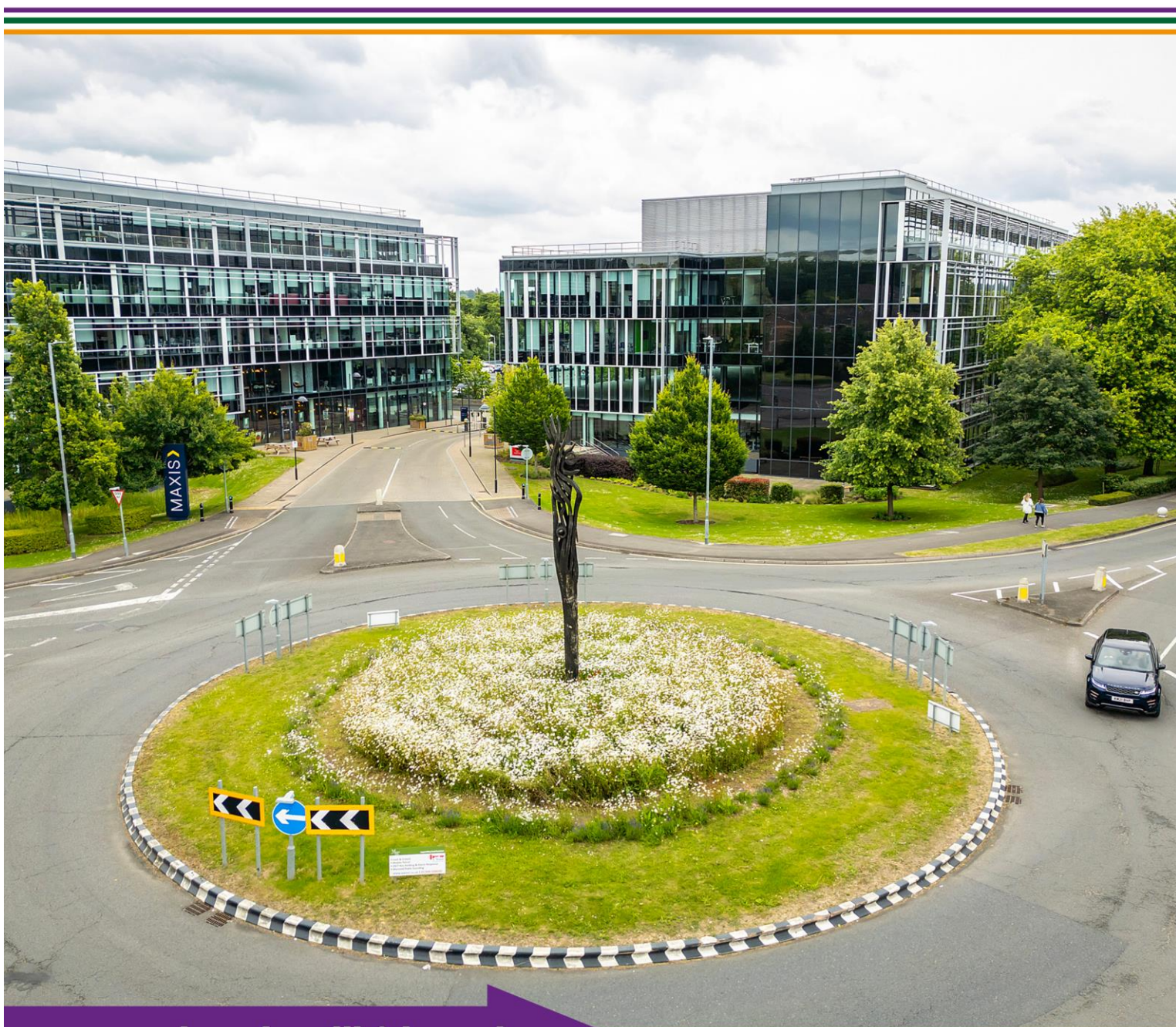
The Board of the Bracknell BID Company, Bracknell Investment Group Ltd, would like to acknowledge the support of the following in preparing this Business Plan:

Partnerships for Better Business Ltd

Everyone from businesses and organisations who have spent time and energy supporting the Board or providing input into surveys, workshops and interviews.

Further information

For more information about the BID or to discuss any aspect of this business plan please contact the Bracknell BID Manager, Sean Griffin on 01344 949080 or email enquiries@bracknellbid.co.uk



www.bracknellbid.co.uk