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I'm backing Mansfield!

The Business Plan for  
MANSFIELD BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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Submitted on behalf of the Mansfield BID Steering Group

## **Words of welcome from the Chairman of the Mansfield BID Steering Group**

If you vote “Yes” to creating a Mansfield BID (Business Improvement District) in October this year, you will help unleash a powerful force, drawn from more than 500 businesses in the centre of Mansfield, fusing together with a common goal:

To build Mansfield's economic prosperity for the future by bringing zest and vitality to its steady improvement, resulting in increased sales for Mansfield businesses”.

Our goal is to help Mansfield realise its full potential as a traditional market town that draws an appreciative audience from its residents, surrounding communities and even further afield, all determined to enjoy it, have fun in it and probably snap a bargain while they are at it!

If the ballot is successful, from the beginning of June 2010, the Mansfield BID will deliver a five-year programme to increase visitors, footfall and spending, delivered through a series of actions designed to make the most of the town's natural assets and the strength and character of its people. We also hope to be able to save money for all our stakeholders, reducing business costs so that profitability is not compromised.

The new BID Company will be run by Mansfield businesses for Mansfield businesses. It will rely heavily on voluntary support from the sector BUT will be able to afford some executive resource to deliver the BID programme effectively.

It will be the first time that a significant budget – more than £1.25M over 5 years - will have been created for us to spend on what really matters to help lift Mansfield and boost business. The contribution has been set at a fair and modest 2% of rateable value, to reflect the relatively low rateable values in the town. For most businesses, the average cost per business is less than £10 a week and many of the very small ones will pay just £3 a week. The BID company will build on those funds by leveraging in contributions and securing support from other sources wherever possible. Already we have pledges that additional income will be forthcoming from sources other than the levy – this includes voluntary payments from landlords and managing agents.

We will be working closely with the public sector service providers to ensure they are totally accountable for the services they deliver and seek to drive up their performance across the town centre as well as

guaranteeing that they will be sustained at least at the current level of services, for the next five years. We know too that they want to work more closely with us and that together we will be a powerful force in lobbying for positive change – with every element of our plans designed to resolve issues raised by you. We want the town to be more pedestrian friendly, cleaner and more appealing to a broader spectrum of visitors.

So, if you are proud of Mansfield and want it to grow then vote 'Yes' for the creation of a Mansfield BID! Voting papers will be arriving in the middle of February 2010 ready for you to vote by the middle of March, with the result announced at the end of the same week.

### **Basic BID principles**

Following the pattern first established in the UK in 2002 with the launch of the research programme into setting up BIDs in the UK, a local steering group of interested businesses comes together and examines the fundamental issues that are causing business decline and failure. A tentative boundary is suggested and research commenced to explore more deeply the issues that have surfaced initially. A wider consultation exercise and further development then ensues to determine what sort of improvements businesses would like to see and would be prepared to contribute towards. Gradually the actions required become sufficiently refined for them to be priced up and the total cost shared across all the businesses in the BID area, spread across five years, the typical 'life' of a BID. This allows the percentage levy to be calculated, usually between 1 and 2% although the legislation allows up to 5% to be raised this way. Obviously, other additional forms of funding can be used to offset the total bill, where they are available.

With sufficient data to hand, the BID steering group can then call for a secret ballot, inviting the businesses that are liable for the levy to vote for or against their proposal. For the BID to go ahead, two voting 'hurdles' must be passed:

1. Over 50% of businesses that vote must be in favour
2. Of those businesses voting, the aggregate of the Rateable Values (RVs) of those voting yes must be greater than that of those recording a no

If both these conditions are fulfilled, payment of the levy becomes **mandatory for ALL eligible businesses regardless of how they voted.**

After five years, each BID is obliged to seek a rebalot if it wishes to continue for a further term. Patently, if the BID organisation has not delivered what it has promised, the businesses will simply vote against it

continuing, and it will stop. So, the BID starts only if a majority of businesses vote in its favour and will only continue if it proves that it can achieve its aims as promised.

### **The success of BIDs so far**

Growing evidence suggests that BID schemes are good news for city and town centres. In the last five years 95 (as at the end of September 2009) have already been set up in all manner of locations, including industrial parks. Examples of where they can be found include:

Nottingham (a leisure focused BID)

Derby Cathedral Quarter

Lincoln

Sleaford

Boston

Bedford

Rugby

Coventry

Liverpool

Bristol

Birmingham (four in very different formats)

London (17 to date and three more on the way)

There is hard, well-documented testimony that they are making positive differences to their businesses, generating increased footfall, higher spending and cleaner, safer and more vibrant centres. Indeed, seven of the earliest schemes (Plymouth, Kingston, Heart of London, Coventry, Bristol, the New West-End Company and Liverpool) have conducted renewal ballots to launch into a second term and all have seen increased turn-out and a greater majority in favour of them continuing.

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### **Why Mansfield needs a BID**

The town's businesses are under pressure as economic uncertainty continues to grip the country. We are also faced also with increasing competition from neighbours such as Meadowhall, McArthur Glen, Nottingham, Derby and Chesterfield, not to mention the myriad of supermarkets that surround us, selling virtually everything we do. Individually they are working hard to get their act together and see our customers as a very attractive source of income. The Internet also continues to tease sales from high street shops all over the country and despite a reasonably steady influx of customers into Mansfield, spending generally is declining as recession bites hard into disposable income.

Shoppers here complain about empty shops, a poorer market, parking charges and the shortage of spaces on busier days. Insensitive parking hampers deliveries and blocks access to those all-important on-street parking spaces that enable people to slip in and out of town easily. Once they have problems parking their cars, most people don't bother trying again. Theft, violence and intimidation are constant challenges too with anti-social behaviour and drug abuse high in people's perceptions, especially in the evening. Individually we are powerless to resolve these and other problems but by working closer together and co-operating we can promote Mansfield to residents and to a wider audience as an attractive place to live, work, shop, relax and do business in successfully.

There are many elements to the town's offer and they all need linking together more effectively through well-branded and attractive signage and marketing. Car parking too needs to be improved along with payment methods to encourage longer stays at a lower cost.

To compete with neighbouring shopping centres, Mansfield's main focus, the Four Seasons Centre requires substantial investment and remodelling to do justice to the current strong selection of national retailers that trade in it. The peripheral streets should be more pedestrian-friendly encouraging a café society culture with consistent street entertainment, events and floral displays.

However, it is Mansfield's primary draw, its historic and diversified market, that comes in for most criticism with many of the people we surveyed decrying its reduced frontage and declining stall numbers, its lack of prominence, signposting and general uncared for appearance. Similarly we have lots of specialist shops but their frontages and service still fall short of some people's expectation. Combine these facts with the growing number of empty units and the problems begin to look insurmountable, pushing the town into a spiral of decline and decay. True, the Council has done much to prevent this and has invested time, money and energy into reversing the trend that started when the local mines disappeared, but other pressing priorities across the district and a reticence for closer co-operation by some elements of the private sector has made the fight an uphill struggle.

Mansfield needs a new direction and drive to face up to and beat its competition. It is clear that through the BID, Mansfield has a great opportunity to capitalise on its wonderful assets and provide solutions to the challenges identified from our comprehensive research.

In the midst of recession, it might seem to be an inappropriate time to seek additional money from businesses, but the economic climate means that it is now even more important that we work together to promote Mansfield. If nothing is done, there is a real risk that most of us will lose out to competing town centres that have found the cash and are making strenuous efforts to appeal to our regular customers as well as their own. The loss of just a handful more specialist businesses that are only marginally profitable now could be enough to tip the balance and project the town into terminal decline, with a greater consequence on the local employment base and the well-being of families throughout the district.

### **Checks and balances**

The BID is designed to identify then deliver additional services, topping up existing provision or generating something totally new. It does not replace statutory activities or services already carried out by the local authorities and other agencies.

The BID Company has examined all relevant current services provided by the statutory authorities and has baselined them, recording the detail so that it can be referred to in the future to check that all activities are sustained at the existing (or better) level. The very act of examining them regularly in their own right will have a powerful effect on those providing them, helping us all to get even better value for money for the Uniform Business Rates that we all pay. The BID legislation puts an onus on the local authority and other statutory providers to sign up to a service level agreement covering all aspects assessed for BID purposes.

Mansfield District Council (MDC), Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottinghamshire Police have supplied baseline information. The following activity areas have been scrutinised:

- CCTV provision
- Graffiti and fly-posting
- Public conveniences
- Town centre operations including pedestrian street cleansing, car parking and the market
- Enviro-crime services
- Waste collection and management and some street cleaning
- Local authority street/market licensing and enforcement
- Events and marketing
- Highways maintenance

- Street lighting
- Planting and grounds maintenance
- Policing
- Town Centre Partnership

The full baseline data is available at [www.mansfieldbid.com](http://www.mansfieldbid.com)

A Business Improvement District (BID) scheme is a business led initiative supported by government legislation which gives local businesses the power to 'raise funds locally to be spent locally' on improving their trading environment. So, our BID is not a new kind of tax. Every penny that is collected (apart from the fee for doing so) is returned to the BID Board so that it can be spent on activities you want to see in town. It is better to view it as a small, individual investment in the future of the town, pooled with everyone else's contribution to make a sustainable fund to tackle the problems and challenges we all know need urgent attention.

### **The Mansfield BID programme**

We will seek to make a REAL and tangible difference by:

- Saving you money by reducing your business operating costs
- Marketing and promoting Mansfield to encourage more visitors and residents to come and spend more money in our market, shops, restaurants, bars and clubs
- Improving maps, signage, information, and interpretive panels explaining our history, heritage and environment to ensure that visitors see all that Mansfield has to offer
- Encouraging longer stays and improving access
- Supporting the development of a more substantial and extensive events, activities, entertainments and festivals programme to encourage people into the centre
- Lobbying the councils, government and service providers to ensure Mansfield's businesses get what they deserve and that we make the most of every opportunity that comes our way
- Bringing more funding to Mansfield by ensuring we capitalise on grant opportunities
- Using the BID scheme to improve co-operation and communication between Mansfield's businesses for the collective common good and to rebuild civic pride

### **Our planned projects:**

Here are the principal activities that your BID Company aspires to deliver over the next five years, commencing in April next year, provided a 'yes' vote is forthcoming:

**IT'S CLEAN, REALLY CLEAN!      Total additional spend over five years: £326,000**

Our main streets are kept fairly clean thanks to the efforts of Mansfield District Council. However, we all know standards could be higher with greater attention to detail so that a uniform high level of cleanliness becomes the norm. We will tackle this by:

- Rangers constantly monitoring existing statutory provision and prompting/delivering remedial action as required against reworked and renewed cleansing schedules
- Frequent removal of chewing gum
- A regular hot cleaning service for shop-fronts, doorways and entrances
- High-pressure hot washing of grot spots, graffiti and flyposting
- Better, more frequent regular cleaning with greater attention to detail
- Re-organising and improving the efficiency of trade-waste disposal, including more recycling
- Routine, quality maintenance of empty commercial properties to improve saleability

**EASY ACCESS ALL ROUND      Total additional spend over five years: £175,000**

Many shoppers, employees and visitors complain that parking is difficult and too expensive (long-term parking for staff being a particular problem). Abuse of on-street parking causes inconvenience, delivery problems and creates danger for pedestrians. We want to see more parking spaces at a realistic cost. We propose to do this by working with MDC and other providers, for example by:

- Addressing the issue of public and privately run car park charges and their management
- Installing real time electronic signage for selected local car parks
- Working with the Police and NSL to address inappropriate parking
- Consider with retailers a 'shop and refund' scheme
- Set up and operate a local, eco-friendly delivery service
- Assessing then reworking some of the local directional signs
- Refreshing and distributing the local parking map, shopping guides and information leaflets

## **SAFE & SECURE**

**Total additional spend over five years: £351,000**

We already have comprehensive CCTV and a network of security staff. However, pressure on policing keeps a regular uniformed presence to a minimum. **We want to improve security so that our businesses lose less through crime and our local environment is safer for businesses, employees, customers and the general public.** We propose to select from the following options:

- Employ our Rangers to act as the 'eyes and ears' for businesses, helping to reduce crime and assisting everyone to get the most out of our security network
- Employ the business crime co-ordinator within the BID to focus specifically on retail and evening-economy problems, extending the exclusion order scheme, administered through a powerful, regularly updated database
- Employ our own dedicated on-street police officers who can patrol across the full trading cycle
- Set up a shoppers crèche
- Establish a 'Child=Safe' zone to make Mansfield a more family-friendly shopping destination
- Organise a strategic marketing campaign that focuses on a safer Mansfield, including a dedicated educationally-based drive to reduce shoplifting, anti-social behaviour and drug abuse
- Install more, independent, digital, wireless CCTV cameras to cover areas not under current surveillance

## **MANSFIELD MATTERS**

**Total additional spend over five years: £210,000**

We want Mansfield to be a 'special place' that local residents instinctively prefer for their everyday purchases as well as for specialist services and a better outdoor food and drink experience. We know too, the town could have immense attraction to people from further afield. Some of the activities we are considering to give a quality local experience include:

- Improving the number of active stallholders to raise the variety and choice from the regular local markets with more frequent farmers' stalls, speciality markets, continental foods etc, all done in conjunction with the existing market traders
- More planting, hanging baskets with quality plants and flowers widespread across the town
- Creating and delivering an all year round decorative, 'mood' lighting scheme for the town centre while sustaining and building on the current Christmas decoration arrangement

- Introducing more public art and events, including regular street performers and live music
- Installing 'gateway' branding and information (especially at the proposed new transport interchange), making the most of BID branding around the town

### **MORE MANSFIELD**

**Total additional spend over five years: £200,000**

There is much to tackle in this aspect of the Mansfield business plan too, all designed to raise the quality and influence of the commercial scene so that it appeals to more people, as well as save you money:

- Create a unique 'Mansfield welcomes you' customer service standard, raising the overall 'trading format' and image
- Synchronise then promote consistent shop operating hours across the full trading week, with a regular late-night evening
- Run a hard-hitting campaign to attract new investors, especially retailers into the empty units
- Generate a 'development' fund to enable grants to businesses to help them improve and grow
- This could cover elements such as shop front enhancement or internal fittings, new IT support kit or display training
- Build in Key Performance Indicators and business/ footfall monitoring to help understand how Mansfield is performing against its competitors and how well the BID is delivering against its promised agenda
- Operate the Business Consultation Scheme to aid businesses with issues such as business rates and rents

### **MARKET MANSFIELD**

**Total additional spend over five years: £215,000**

We intend to promote Mansfield and its businesses through various media, including the Internet. We want to help local businesses to benefit from collective cheaper advertising and promotion at advantageous rates. We will attract inward investment too by working with key property owners, MDC and EMDA. We propose to bring more customers and more investment into Mansfield by:

- Working with local organisations to develop and extend a bespoke programme of special, leisure and entertainment events around the BID area, with our own cultural festival for local communities
- Sustaining the 'shop local' campaign to encourage residents and businesses to spend in the town centre

- Enhancing Mansfield information at key gateway locations to inform all travellers arriving in the town
- Liaising with the media (newspapers, magazines and radio) to promote Mansfield businesses and Mansfield activities to a wider, regional or national audience
- Developing a co-ordinated marketing strategy using generic branding that can be made available to all Mansfield businesses within the BID area, with advertising at advantageous, discounted rates
- Creating a strong, online presence for virtual Mansfield with a website that offers discounts to regular viewers

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## OUTLINE INCOME & EXPENDITURE TABLE

<u>INCOME (K£)</u>	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	5 Yr total
BID Levy	288	270	275	280	285	1,398
Landowners contributions	30	30	35	35	35	165
Voluntary levy & sponsorship	30	30	35	35	40	170
Grant generation (assumed)	0	25	50	100	110	285
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>2,018</b>
<u>EXPENDITURE K£</u>	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	5 Yr total
A cleaner environment	56	61	75	67	67	326
Safe & Secure	61	61	73	78	78	351
Access and parking	35	30	30	40	40	175
Mansfield Matters	20	35	25	60	70	210
More Mansfield	30	30	40	50	50	200
Market Mansfield	45	30	40	50	50	215
<b>Total Activity Costs</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>1,477</b>
<u>"HEAD OFFICE" COSTS (K£)</u>	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	5 Yr total
BID Support Team	65	68	70	72	74	349

Premises/admin/overheads	20	20	22	22	24	108
<b>Total Overhead Costs</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>457</b>
Contingency	15	15	15	15	15	75
<b>Grand Total Expenditure</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>2,009</b>

Notes on the above table:

1. *This illustration is given principally to demonstrate the level of income to be allocated to each activity strand over the five years. Inevitably there will be adjustments made within and across the strands by the BID Board when the fiscal picture becomes clearer*
2. *The amount of levy collected assumes a collection rate in excess of 96% and allows for the cost of its collection*
3. *A small reduction in RV levels for 2010 to 2015 in the five-yearly review has been assumed*
4. *An inflation factor of +2% has been added to each year's levy payment. This is to allow for the inflationary rise in costs. The impact on individual levy payments will be minimal - a small business paying the minimum £2.88 a week in year one will see its payment rise to £2.94 a week in year two*
5. *A contingency element has been built into each year's income figures, giving a £15K tolerance between anticipated receipts and predicted spend. Patently the BID will NOT be spending money it does not have!*
6. *Any annual surplus will carry over to be invested in subsequent years and the detailed expenditure plan has identified some projects commencing later in the five year period of BID operation*
7. *While total income just exceeds expenditure for this illustration, taken across the full five-year period, we expect to see an even greater surplus being generated by our efforts to extend further the level of non-levy income available. This will be reinvested back into the town via further additional initiatives*
8. *Ordinarily it is not usual practice to add into the income columns any estimate for grant procurement over the period. However, as Mansfield has a strong track-record of attracting such funds, it seems appropriate to include a modest estimate for this over the five years*

### **The background research**

With your help and participation the actions outlined earlier have been built up over the last nine months, following the initial feasibility study conducted in 2008 as part of the East Midlands BID Academy. Your views have been sought on what Mansfield needs and how the BID could help through a number of formal consultation processes including:

### March 2009

A substantial business survey was distributed to all trading organisations across Mansfield. Some 600 were handed out and 129 completed forms collected and collated into a comprehensive report that detailed many of the functions of local companies and highlighted their current obstacles to more successful operation. Detailed ideas to include in the BID business plan were offered in abundance.

### April 2009

A four-page questionnaire was prepared and 250 on-street users of Mansfield town centre were invited to complete it. Again the collated results provided a useful insight into the thinking of the many people who visit the town to work, shop or spend leisure time here. It became immediately obvious that there is significant shortfall in the expectations of our customers and what the town actually delivers.

### April 2009

The consultants brought in to help set up a BID here prepared an initial newsletter. This was distributed to all businesses in the town and it invited them to attend a BID workshop to discuss the results from the two sets of surveys and to hear about the basics of BIDs.

### April and May 2009

Various meetings were held with key personalities who trade in the town as well as three presentations to several of the local councilors from MDC.

Eventually more than 100 business managers and representatives participated, with the numbers of individuals expressing interest in a BID growing steadily as exposure to the mechanism increased. Collectively they put forward some very interesting project ideas. Several of their number were sufficiently enthused about the process to agree to form a Mansfield BID Steering Group, the constituents of which are given later.

### June 2009

The Steering Group began to meet on a regular basis, shaping up the identity of the BID, its branding and its core messages. Four of them made a day trip to Rugby to see a BID organisation in action. Rugby was one of the very first towns to adopt the concept and it has produced some excellent results in the first five years of its existence. Inevitably the four returned full of praise for what they had witnessed and even more determined to see the same experience repeated here.

### July 2009

A second newsletter was issued announcing the members of the steering group, the outcome of the Rugby visit and the intention to hold further consultations for all businesses in the coming month.

A dedicated website was launched in the same month with all current publications available for downloading as pdfs. Its URL is: [www.Mansfieldbid.com](http://www.Mansfieldbid.com)

### August 2009

A 'How would you spend it?' exhibition was held within the Four Seasons Shopping Centre, courtesy of its management team. More than 40 businesses attended over the two days, providing lively discussion and debate as the project priorities were identified for potential inclusion in the BID programme. A full-colour booklet called "The Mansfield BID – your questions answered" was published prior to the exhibition and it was also circulated to every business trading within the BID boundary, as defined by the Steering Group. Again this publication is available via the website.

### September 2009

The District Council's Cabinet is due to ratify this draft business plan at their September meeting. It is right to acknowledge at this juncture the excellent support and co-operation the BID consultants and the Steering Group have enjoyed from MDC. They have made it very plain, via their elected Mayor and senior cabinet members, that they fully endorse the BID process and will seek ways in which they and the new BID Company, once it is fully functioning, can work together to further enrich the unique partnership process that the BID embodies.

### October 2009

Building up to the vote itself, the BID Prospectus will be launched in early October with the Steering Group members and other BID Champions engaging directly with a further businesses across the BID boundary, concentrating particularly on the 'at a distance' voters who represent the larger, national multiples that trade in the town.

Consultations have also taken place with local members of the Federation of Small Businesses, with businesses drawn together to discuss the subject by the Mansfield Chamber of Trade, by face to face meetings and by telephone with individual ratepayers including business leaders at the headquarters of multi-nationals, with the County Council and with Town Centre Partnership members.

Explicit charts from the initial surveys undertaken can be found in Appendix One.

### **The BID Steering Group**

Business representatives who have helped develop this final proposal include the following:

John Sankey MBE	John Sankey Estate Agent
Rebekah O'Neill	Four Seasons Shopping Centre Manager
Paul Anderton	Co-owner, And Why Not bar and bistro
Diana Hobson	Mansfield Town Centre Manager
Barry Hibbert	Manager of the Rosemary Centre
John Henshaw	Local landlord and owner of the Bedrooms & Kitchens by Henshaw

Tracy Powell	The Editor of the Chad newspaper
Tracey Hollingworth	Owner of the Ace Pets Supplies, Handley Arcade
Jane Fletcher	Director, Keith Hall Hairdressing
Rachel French	Owner of the Ten Green Bottles café bar
Vijay Chadda	Owner of Collections of Regent Street

### **The future management of the BID Company and its activities**

In March 2009, a new not-for-profit limited company called The Mansfield BID Company was established, initially with two directors, John Sankey and Rebekah O'Neill. The Steering Group, under the chairmanship of John Sankey, will continue to support the development of the BID as it moves towards the ballot that will give the necessary mandate to start operating. With their agreement, they will remain in place as the interim Board of the BID Company to help it through its transition to an action delivery vehicle. Once it is functioning smoothly, you will have the opportunity as stakeholders in the Company to vote for your chosen chairman and directors and indeed, stand for election if you so wish. An election will be held in October 2010 where voters will have the opportunity to nominate a third of the Board constituents. Subsequently, a third of the Board will retire each year in rotation and be replaced by other candidates, although it will be possible for a retiring director to seek re-election.

A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 directors will be appointed to serve on the Board. It will always have a private sector chairperson. The directors will be drawn from the various sectors of the BID businesses, with the following representation:

Shopping centre management	2
Major, national retailers	2
Independent retail businesses	2
Pubs, clubs and restaurants	2
Financial and professional services	2
Cafés, bistros and takeaways	1
Local property interests	1
TOTAL	12

Invited attendees (observer status):	
Mansfield District Council	1
Nottinghamshire County Council	1
Nottinghamshire Police	1
Mansfield Town Centre Partnership	1
Mansfield 2020	1
Other community interests	1

\*The BID Operations Director will also be an ex-officio member of the Board

A position on the Board is voluntary and unpaid, with individuals expected to give their time and expertise to the cause of improving Mansfield as a trading destination. The Board is expected to meet at least quarterly with working groups coming together in between these meetings to progress actions.

Every year, an AGM will be held where the Company will report back on what has been delivered through the BID and share with you their proposals for the following year's programme for your comment. Key Performance Indicators for every action project and also for the BID business and Mansfield itself will be monitored on a regular basis and assessed by an independent, external auditor twice a year, with direct reporting to the levypayers rather than to the BID Board (See Appendix four for the detail of the KPI regime that will be set up).

Staff will be taken on to run the business (probably a BID Operations Director and administrative support) but the bulk of the work will be done by the Board who will establish volunteer working groups of business people to develop, advise and support the delivery of each aspect of the programme. These volunteers will be busy, successful business people whose time will be limited, but with careful management and direction their total commitment will be held to a few days a year but totally dedicated to achieving positive results under each action area heading. The Company will be mindful of finite resources and the need to direct as much of the income as possible into core projects.

Much the Mansfield BID programme requires good marketing and management skills and will be time intensive. We will also require the support of an individual who has considerable experience in seeking out public sector grant funding to enable us to match the substantial private sector contribution the BID can make to key projects. Match-funding on a pound for pound basis can hugely influence the money we have to spend while at the same time increasing enormously via leverage the impact of the end result of each project.

In addition, we are in negotiations with MDC to see if they will fund the office and communication overheads of the new BID team. The Council will also be paying the BID levy on property it owns within the BID boundary, adding a further £16,000 a year to the Company's income. In total the estimated Council contribution to the BID Company could be worth at least £20,000 a year for every one of the next five years if our discussions with them are fruitful.

## **Governance:**

The BID area, the BID levy percentage and the number of businesses called upon to pay the levy cannot be altered without an Alteration Ballot, in essence a re-run of the balloting process that creates the mandate for the operation of the BID in the first place. The budget headings and project costs of the Business Plan can be adjusted within the constraints of the revenue received through the levy by the BID Board, provided the overall essence of the Plan remains. Minor variations in the delivery of the Plan will be handled by the operational staff and reported routinely to the Board. More substantial changes will always be debated and ratified by the Board. Major deviations must be presented to the full membership of the Company and ratified by an Alternation Ballot, conducted in the same way as the earlier Ballot.

If there are substantial issues arising from the management of the BID process or stakeholders feel that the Board is failing to deliver the prescribed activities in this business plan then it would be appropriate for the concerned stakeholders to make the Chairman of the Board aware of their concerns. A written statement, again addressed to the Chairman, should follow up any verbal complaints, accompanied by substantial evidence of the problem(s) outlined. If there is no obvious, timely, satisfactory resolution to the matter then, on receipt of a second letter signed by more than 25% of the stakeholders paying the levy, the Chairman will arrange a formal ballot of all stakeholders to either ratify the change(s) from the announced programme or call for the cessation of the BID operation. Appeals can be made to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government; the detailed legislation governing the formation and operation of Business Improvement Districts explains the process in depth and can be downloaded from the Department's website.

## **How will I know the BID is doing what it supposed to?**

Hopefully you will witness an upturn in business and a renewed optimism amongst everyone trading in Mansfield. However, in the current economic climate, 'steady state' rather than gradual decline could be viewed as success.

Certainly you will see physical improvements such as new local signage and interpretation, more market stalls, empty shops being filled and more events rolled through the year. As indicated earlier, we intend to apply a very tangible Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for every project initiated. We will also seek out trader feedback and takings data, footfall counts, user satisfaction surveys and an annual survey of a sample of BID levy payers to gauge opinion about the efficacy of the BID.

### **What is the BID going to cost me and how much will be raised in total?**

If the BID scheme is approved at the close of ballot on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2010, a 2% levy applied to 505 businesses in the boundary will raise approximately £250,000 annually for the five-year period of the BID. There will be an automatic 2% increase in the levy each year to allow for inflation. From April 2010 we expect the rateable values of commercial property in the East Midlands to decline in the five-yearly valuation review and our billing for 2011 will reflect the new, lower rate. For the first bill only, the rate will be based on the rateable value of every hereditament as set at January 2010. With additional voluntary contributions and grants we hope to generate around £400,000 and ideally more, to spend each year.

The lowest contribution will be a £150 per year 'joining fee' that will be applied to all businesses with a rateable value below £5,000 pa. Businesses trading within the confines of the Four Seasons Shopping Centre will pay at a discounted rate of 1% of the applicable RV as they already pay substantial service charges to their managing agents.

Here are some typical contribution levels, assuming a levy rate of 2%:

<b>Rateable Value</b>	<b>Cost annually £</b>	<b>Cost monthly £</b>
200,000	4,000	333
100,000	2,000	167
50,000	1,000	83
25,000	500	42
10,000	200	17
Under 5,000	150	12

Taking the total levied raised over a year and sharing equally amongst all 505 businesses gives an average figure of £9.98 a week to be paid.

Under the BID legislation, the levy will be collected by Mansfield District Council and then transferred to Mansfield BID under a formal 'operating agreement' signed by both parties. There may be a small charge for this process.

### **How has the BID been developed and funded to date?**

As well as generating the grant from EMDA (via the sub-regional strategic partnership) and the County Council, Mansfield District Council has supported the development of this BID through staff time and a

budget to cover costs, such as the marketing of this final proposal and the running of the ballot. These costs are non-recoverable except if the turnout to vote by businesses is less than 20% of the total electorate.

**What is the BID’s boundary?**

This illustrated map at the end of this document in Appendix four defines the boundary. Overall, the following streets are included with premises on both sides of each street unless otherwise stated:

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Albert Street	Queen Street
Belvedere Street (one side)	Queen’s Walk
Bridge Street	Regent Street
Church Side	Rock Valley (part)
Church Street	The Rosemary Centre
Clerkson Street	Rosemary Street (one side)
Clumber Street	St John Street
Dame Flogan Street	St Peters Way (one side)
Exchange Row	St Peters Retail Park
Four Seasons Centre	Station Street
Handley Arcade	Station Road
Leeming Street	Stockwell Gate
Market House Place	Toothill Lane
Market Place	Toothill Road
Market Street	Union Street
Midworth Street	Walkden Street
Old Market Place	West Gate
Portland Street (part)	White Hart Street
Quaker Way	

For some streets on the margins of the BID boundary, only selected properties will be included within the defined area, for instance on the ‘town-side’ of the ring road.

All businesses will have a vote and all will be compelled by the BID legislation to contribute to the costs via the agreed levy, assuming a positive vote is forthcoming. If you are unsure whether your business falls within the boundary or want to know how much you will pay, please contact Pat Parkes, the BID local co-ordinator.

### **About the Mansfield postal ballot and how it will work**

Each business ratepayer will have a vote provided they are listed on the National Non Domestic Ratings List on the day the notice of ballot is given by Mansfield District Council, and sit within the BID boundary, as defined on the map in this document. This means that some organisations occupying more than one premises, will have more than one vote and it is important for them to return each form separately. In February 2010, the person with the authority to vote in your organisation will receive a ballot form from the Electoral Reform Services, the organisation who will independently conduct the ballot. **All votes must be returned by 5pm on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2010 to count.** Any not received by that time and date will automatically be discounted. Similarly any ballot paper which is not signed or unmarked or is otherwise considered void due to uncertainty will not be counted.

The ballot form will simply ask the question: "Are you in favour of the Business Improvement District proposal from **the Mansfield BID Company** for the following streets"? (a list of the streets involved then follows). You are required to complete the form by placing a cross in either a 'YES' or a 'NO' box. Only the person previously identified as the Uniform Business Rate Payer can complete and return the form in the pre-addressed postage-paid envelope, after signing it.

If the ratepayer or their proxy, if one has been appointed, do not receive a ballot paper by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March, he or she can apply to The Electoral Reform Society for a replacement, provided physical evidence as to identity is offered. Similarly if the ballot paper is spoilt for any reason then it may be returned to the Electoral Reform Society by the same date for a replacement.

All returned and valid ballot papers will be counted and the result declared by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010. It will be published on the District Council's web site shortly afterwards - [www.mansfield.gov.uk](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk) and on the BID Company's website [www.mansfieldbid.com](http://www.mansfieldbid.com) from the same date.

For the BID to go ahead, two conditions must be met:

- 1) More than 50% of businesses that vote must vote in favour

2) Of the 'yes' votes, they must represent more than 50% of the total ratable value of all votes cast  
Under the legislation, if these conditions are fulfilled, **payment of the 2% levy each year for five years until 2014 becomes mandatory for all eligible businesses, regardless of how they voted.**

A 'yes' vote for Mansfield will mean that the additional activities promised will start happening on the ground from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010 with sustained funding to deliver a comprehensive programme of benefits for the full five years available from that date.

### **BID levy arrangements and management of the finances**

The Mansfield BID Company will ask Mansfield District to raise an annual charge for the levy, applying very limited exemptions to those local businesses. Outside those exemptions, all rated businesses will be required to pay the full levy, apart from the tenants/ operators within the enclosed environment of the Four Seasons Shopping Centre who will be given a 1% reduction in the levy rate to acknowledge the existing services they already pay for through their service charges.

Generally, exemptions, relief or discounts prescribed in the Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1988, will not apply. Those responsible for unoccupied and part-occupied rateable properties, and BID levy payers who are charities or non profit-making organisations, will be liable for the full BID levy. Only charities in receipt of 100% relief or operating a 'head office' or voluntary, non-profit making advice service can apply to the Mansfield BID Board requesting an exemption.

The BID levy will not be affected by the small business rate relief scheme. Where a property is vacant, undergoing refurbishment or being demolished, the property owner will be entitled to vote and also be obliged to pay the levy with no void period.

Collection of the BID levy carries the same enforcement weight as collection of the non-domestic rates.

A 2% levy (with 2% for inflation applied on 1st March each year) will be charged to each qualifying ratepayer using the 2005 non-domestic ratings list as at the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 to calculate the amount payable for the first bill only, unless the new rateable value listing is available, in which case it will be applied. Thereafter the annual rate will be set using the latest applicable RV figures, assuming the revised RV listing for 2010 and after is lower than the 2005 listing. If it is not, the BID levy will be held at the 2005 level. The first BID levy due will be payable for a 12 month period (calculated on a daily basis)

in one lump sum from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010. The levy will then be due each year with the last payment due on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014. The BID programme will finish on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. When the ratings list on which charges are based is updated for any changes in ratepayer, appeals, additions or removals, the levy liability will be adjusted accordingly. It may be possible for smaller payments to be made by regular standing order. The BID levy will have to be paid by any new ratepayer occupying an existing ratable property within the BID area up until the end of the five year term on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 even though they did not vote on the initial proposal. Likewise, any new rateable property created during the lifetime of the BID will be obliged to pay the levy. If a business ratepayer occupies premises for less than one year, the amount of BID levy payable will be calculated on the number of days they occupy the property in that year. The charge for the remaining period of that year will revert to the owner or be passed to the incoming tenant (ie the BID charge is levied on a daily basis).

The Mansfield BID Company will endeavour to secure additional voluntary contributions to supplement the levy throughout the five-year lifetime of the BID. However, these contributions cannot be guaranteed and may be less than or more than the indicative amounts given in the budget table provided.

Under the BID regulations 2004, Mansfield District Council will be responsible for collection of the levy on behalf of Mansfield BID. The levy income will be kept in a separate ring-fenced account and transferred to Mansfield BID on a regular basis. This arrangement will be formalised in an operating agreement signed by both the BID Company and the local authority.

Mansfield BID will provide Mansfield District Council with quarterly updates detailing expenditure under the BID and cash flows.

### **So why should I vote 'YES' and will it really make a difference?**

There should be no hesitation about voting 'Yes' if:

- You want to see a greater return on your investment having given your precious time, energy and money to Mansfield already
- You are proud of Mansfield and want to make it a better place to live, work and spend time
- You want to seize the opportunity of creating a private sector-led company that is accountable to Mansfield businesses and will have a fund of at least one and a quarter million pounds to invest from now until 2015
- You want to ensure that Mansfield receives the highest quality and best value for money from our various public services

- You believe a real difference can be made by combining our strengths and working together to develop our town for future generations
- You want to have a say in the way in which the area develops in the coming years
- You want to see existing partnerships streamlined and focused to facilitate the development and direction of the town

Patently investing more than £250,000 of new money a year into the town has to make a difference, and this must appeal, especially if it typically only costs you £10 a week to do it.

#### **.... and what if I vote 'no'?**

In the current economic climate, no-one would blame you for considering the 'no' option. However, it's even more important to invest a little now to try and buck the national downward trend. With UK retail sales values shrinking by 3.8% in the last year alone, Mansfield needs to figure strongly in the minds of local people if it is to survive. Mansfield businesses are far more powerful when working in unison rather than working individually. Together we can make this happen.

If you vote 'no', say goodbye to the opportunity to raise £1,500,000 of new investment for the benefit of all businesses in Mansfield. Improvements such as new marketing initiatives and events designed to increase footfall simply will not happen unless we seize the moment to take control of the town's commercial destiny. Existing agencies will continue to run Mansfield for you but alone you will not have a strong voice to make a difference or even air your concerns effectively. These agencies are also under fiscal pressure and it will be increasingly hard for them to deliver everything they do now, never mind the extras we all know we need.

Simply consider how many sales or additional customers it would take to recoup the £10 a week most businesses will pay as their levy. Try and think of what else you can do to make the sort of difference we have planned and outlined here. The options are very limited and so is time.

A vote "yes" now will cost us all very little but the impact over five years could be enormous....and if it doesn't work we can switch it off more easily than starting it. The choice is yours.

For more general information on the national BIDs picture, click on:

[www.britishbids.co.uk](http://www.britishbids.co.uk)

[www.ukbids.org](http://www.ukbids.org)

[www.retailbids.org.uk](http://www.retailbids.org.uk)

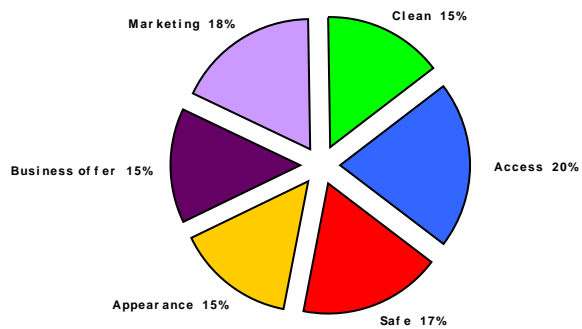
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## Appendix one Additional graphical information from the BID research programme

### Research undertaken to support the Mansfield BID proposition

Proportion of "spend" across BID activity areas



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**Appendix two:**

**The BID development and delivery timetable:**

May 2009	BID principles supported by the Cabinet of MDC
October 2009	Mansfield District Council approval of the draft business plan
December 2009	BID steering group ratifies the final business plan
21 <sup>st</sup> January 2010	Last day to publish Notice of Ballot
26 <sup>th</sup> January 2010	Mansfield BID prospectus launched
11 <sup>th</sup> February 2010	Ballot papers issued
11 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	The Day of the Ballot
12 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	Voting result announced
6 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	The BID Company commences trading
April 2010	Levy demands sent to all legible businesses for the first year of the BID
1 <sup>st</sup> June 2010	New services commence

### Appendix three Our expected Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Table of activities, timetable, related outputs and an appropriate KPI measurement:

BID activity	Action by *	Outcome	KPI
<b>It's clean!</b>			
Ranger operation	Summer 2010	Local monitoring and action	Visibility and records
Hot wash service	Autumn 2010	Cleanliness raised	Photographic evidence
Grot spot cleaning	Summer 2010	Ditto	Ditto
Trade waste recycling	2011	Cost-effective disposal	Business opinion sample
Chewing gum removal	2013	Clean surfaces all over	Photographic evidence
Increased attention to detail	2010	Consistently cleaner	Ditto
<b>Easy access all round</b>			
Car park charges adjusted	Autumn 2010	Car usage improved	Car parking stats
Electronic parking signs	2014	Car parking facilitated	Visible inspection
Local parking/ shopping guides	Spring 2011	Wider promotion of town	Market research
Shop local and delivery scheme	2011	Greater resident support	Business transaction log
Better local signage	2011	Visitors better informed	Photos & research
<b>Safe and secure</b>			
Ranger deployment	Summer 2010	Security cover enhanced	Reporting logs
Crime co-ordinator transferred	Autumn 2010	Database and liaison	On-screen evidence
Increased police presence	2011	Higher policing profile	Reporting logs
Child-safe	2012	Family friendlier	Perception study
More CCTV cameras	2013	Visitor reassurance	Ditto
<b>Mansfield matters</b>			
Local market improvements	2013	Improved local offer	On-street surveys
Public art and entertainment	2015	Improved visual appeal	Before and after photos
Decorative lighting	2012	Improved visual appeal	Ditto
Extend planting and baskets	Spring 2011	Cared-for mentality	Perception study & photos
Gateway branding	2014	Area designation	Ditto
<b>More Mansfield</b>			
The Mansfield welcome	2013	Universal customer service	Market research
Business development fund	2012	Small traders assistance	Grant award process
Attract new inward investment	Autumn 2010	Extend commercial appeal	Vacant unit count
KPI monitoring	Immediate	To monitor is to control	Annual report
Business advice scheme	Summer 2011	Business support generally	Uptake recorded
<b>Market Mansfield</b>			
Events & festival programme	2011 onwards	Building appeal	Footfall counts
Shop local campaign	2010	Better customer service	Business performance
Marketing strategy & discounts	2011	Broaden local support	Business uptake
Local info on approach roads	2012	Business support	Business performance
Marketing campaign	Autumn 2010	Business support	Uptake and exposure

Increased web presence	2011	Wider promotion	Web stats available
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Notes:

1. \* The 'Action by' detail is dependent on the decision of the BID Board once it is officially responsible for the forward programme of the Company
2. More explicit information/additional factors are available but do not feature here to help clarity
3. The KPIs usually centre round hard, material fact and written or photographic evidence
4. These activity KPIs are complemented by more generic, area-based assessments to help understand the economic health of the town centre against its direct competition. They will include market research, business surveys, crime stats, public transport usage figures, vacant premises monitor, car parking stats and regular footfall counts

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#### **Appendix four**

#### **The Mansfield BID boundary map:**

Pdf of the map to be inserted here: