



THE BID
FOUNDATION

COVID-19 toolkit

Planning for the recovery: Guidance for BIDs



May 2020



About The BID Foundation

The BID Foundation formed in 2018 following a UK-wide consultation within the industry, which revealed the need for an independent body to provide an authoritative voice for the industry and what is a critical juncture in BID's growth and development. The BID Foundation is operated by the Institute of Place Management at Manchester Metropolitan University.

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Foreword

Bill Addy

Chair, The BID Foundation

The COVID-19 crisis has impacted on every place in the UK and as place managers we have reacted in a range of ways to mitigate the economic and public health implications of the coronavirus on behalf of our levy payers.

As BIDs at the sharp end of this effort, the work we do to absorb the shock of the crisis continues, but we are also beginning to look ahead at the longer-term effects of the virus. None of our towns and cities will remain unchanged.

Alongside the tragic loss of lives, our places will undoubtedly suffer from the loss of key attractions, cherished anchors, independent businesses and individual livelihoods.

We have to work as quickly as possible now with our communities to reduce the length of the recovery and plan the long-term vision for our places. With the help of the High Streets Task Force, colleagues at the Institute for Place Management, Local Authorities and our many local champions, there is an opportunity among all this to be innovative.

We know we cannot go back to how things were – we have long been aware that habits have changed and our centres must adapt to survive. I believe – and I know that many BIDs agree – that something positive can come from this, and BIDs are in a good position to help deliver the new vision for our places.

This document will be useful as it will help you think about the action you need take to plan for the recovery. We have attempted to distil the avalanche of guidance out there at the moment, but this guide doesn't replace that. Should you need any help or further information, The BID Foundation is a great place to start.

I look forward to seeing many of you in person when we are able and in the meantime, best of luck and stay positive.



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i. Planning for economic recovery after COVID-19

Introduction

Business Improvement Districts will play an important role in delivering economic recovery in towns and city centres, tourist resorts and industrial estates across the UK following the gradual easing of restrictions brought about to protect the public from coronavirus. They will also contribute to keeping people safe as they return to the high street.

Every area of BID operation will have to be reconsidered and planned in accordance with guidance from a range of sources and covering an array of topics.

This document is published as a companion to the COVID-19 Recovery Framework published by the Institute for Place Management, which sets out a series of phases – crisis, pre-recovery, recovery and transformation. Following the immediate crisis phase, in which BIDs have been working to deliver immediate help to levy payers, we now enter pre-recovery, which is focused on planning for the recovery, building networks, capacity and local structure.

What is the toolkit for?

The aim of the toolkit is to help BIDs understand the context around which products and services will need to be revised to aid recovery, including:

1. **How to plan for the reintroduction of BID operations**
2. **How to redesign existing services to support local recovery**
3. **How to advise levy payers on return to operations as restrictions are lifted**

It will be published both as a stand-alone document and on The BID Foundation Website, where it will be updated regularly as advice changes. As a living document, the intention is that BIDs will contribute to it with best practice and areas of guidance that are not yet covered.

How to use the toolkit

The document is arranged by service areas typically delivered by BIDs. Each of these contains guidance on relevant issues, useful links to official sources of advice and examples of best practice from BIDs.

This guidance does not replace official guidelines and summarises some of these for the BID audience. Where possible, links to official sources of guidance have been provided and BIDs should refer to these. Be aware that some of the guidance being issued is for only one of the four countries (England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland). Each of these countries may move forward at a different pace and at times their guidance may conflict. We have tried to indicate where guidance or legislation is for only one country.

Although every effort has been made to ensure links and guidance are up to date, The BID Foundation would be glad to hear from BIDs where updates are needed. Please contact Project Manager Ben Stephenson on ben@bidfoundation.co.uk

1. Reopening your office

The BID Resilience Fund is supporting core costs and BIDs are planning to reopen offices, return staff from furlough and begin to ramp up service delivery. A Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) document [Working safely in offices and contact centres](#) (correct as of 11 May, with updates [here](#)) covers the issues that all employers need to consider in order to keep staff safe in office environments, including their journeys to and from work.

It may be that staff are able to continue working from home and as of 11 May 2020 this is advised where possible. Where this is not possible, employers are responsible for ensuring that workplaces are prepared according to the published guidelines, and employees who must attend the workplace are assured of the steps you are taking. There may be separate guidance published for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Risk assessment

As with all areas of BID delivery, the assessment, reduction and ongoing management of risk is a vital part of fulfilling your obligations as an employer and to keep the public and your levy payers safe. The Health and Safety Executive, whose mandate covers the whole of the UK, provides [interactive tools](#) which can help you assess the risks in your office environment, accommodating changes in guidelines as a result of coronavirus.

COVID-19 Secure

The following resources and links will help BIDs to respond to requirements regarding health and safety, specifically being 'COVID-19 Secure' compliant. BIDs should distribute these to levy payers also – the COVID-19 Secure poster and accompanying risk assessment guidance are particularly crucial to ensure a uniform and safe approach that is recognised by the public.

- **'Working safely during coronavirus' (GOV 8 guide covering different types of work) - [LINK](#)**
- **COVID-19 Secure poster for display (including a 5-point checklist) - [LINK](#)**
- **Putting in place plans to work safely (HSE guidance) - [LINK](#)**
(including 'Talking with your workers about working safely')
- **HSE guide to risk assessments at work - [LINK](#)**

2. Managing public space

BIDs may find themselves in a coordinating position and should work with other agencies to ensure public space is managed safely and with a view to the medium and even long term. Government guidance (for England only) on managing urban and green spaces was published on 13 May 2020 and can be found [here](#).

Identifying issues

[Government guidance](#) on managing public places provides the following checklist for identifying issues that need addressing in the public realm:

1. Identify your public spaces that are more likely to be focal zones and require interventions:

These could be transport hubs, high streets, shopping centres, areas for employment and commercial uses, and parks.

Typically characterised by:

- o High footfall
- o Constrained areas for transport modes, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular

2. Consider your user groups, levels of footfall and activity in spaces with intensive usage

3. Assess the key social distancing issues, potential conflicts and risks.

4. Consider the interventions that can be made to mitigate and reduce the social distancing issues, level of conflict, and risk. This should be assessed against existing risks including security

5. Consider the statutory and legal implications and liaise with statutory bodies

6. Consider the implementation of temporary physical interventions, timings and procurement implications that will be suitable in the public realm

7. Consider the management of spaces and interventions including:

- o guiding movement through the spaces
- o the potential need for any enforcement measures such as at entrance areas, to supervise and assist

8. Consider the maintenance issues such as cleaning and repairing.

9. Monitor use, management and maintenance, and effectiveness of measures

10. Review and consider the phasing in and out of interventions.

Partnership working

BIDs will need to develop a partnership approach with highways authorities to deliver an agreed strategy for managing queues and the flow of people. Local authorities will not necessarily have considered the issue in detail nor have the capacity to deliver appropriate measures, and BIDs can help develop a positive plan, which includes sustainable and forward-thinking approaches to public space management. Where possible, representatives of local community and civic groups should be invited to help develop the thinking.

BIDs should take steps to ensure they are aware of public liabilities and duties of care when taking any action to change public space.

Maintaining social distancing

Government guidance for England is [here](#). Many high streets consist of parades of shops and when all are open this may create operational difficulties for retailers in managing queues, and wider problems relating to the management of centres. The problem is exacerbated in more complex centres with multiple uses, including healthcare, pavement cafes and transport hubs, all of which have their own space requirements and social distancing protocols. Patterns of movement across various transport modes change at different times of day and in different areas and this should figure in planning.

BIDs should develop a strategy to address these issues, including helping to distil existing guidance for businesses. This should include:

- **Calculating space requirements**

The IPM has developed guidance which can be used as a consistent way of calculating space requirements both inside and outside shops. This is available on the IPM website.

- **Reallocating public space**

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to reallocate space according to need and following a full risk assessment. This could include the use of temporary dividers to mark a lane in the highway for pedestrians to bypass queues, marking out a runners' or cyclists' lane, or even allocating extra space for parking where there is a particular demand.

Where BIDs are aware of the need to reallocate public space, they should develop a holistic plan and clear this with the highways authority using agreed principles and temporary traffic regulation orders (TTROs). [Guidance from Sustrans](#) contains more detail. Place managers should consider how plans can be made in a positive and inclusive way, enhance the town centre experience for those accessing centres for the first time in a while, and act as a pilot for longer-term transformation in favour of sustainable forms of transport.

- **Queue management**

Helping multiple businesses manage queues in limited space

BIDs should work with businesses to develop a consistent and fair approach to queue management, agreeing the principles collectively and asking each participating premises to commit to using it. Wardens and ambassadors can be used to monitor the situation and plans must be quickly revised where they are not working.

- **Sector based guidance**

Specific guidance has been, or is being developed by the sectors, including UK Hospitality, The Association of Leading Visitor attractions, The British Independent Retailers Association and The British Retail Consortium. See *useful links* for further information.

Hygiene

BIDs should consider how they can contribute to providing a hygienic environment for those visiting centres.

Handwashing

[Government guidance](#) on managing public places states the following precautions should be considered:

- Sufficient provision of automated hand sanitising dispensers in public places
- Where possible, providing hand towels as an alternative to hand dryers in handwashing facilities
- Using signs and messages to build awareness of good handwashing technique and other respiratory hygiene behaviours, e.g. around coughing and sneezing in public places
- Configuration of toilet facilities to ensure they are kept clean, with social distancing achieved as far as possible and with best practice handwashing followed
- Provision of more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection in public places
- Minimising use of portable toilets
- Enhanced cleaning for facilities that are heavily used.

Fomite transmission: cleaning public areas and advice for businesses

In addition to the risk of transmission from person to person, since the virus can live on different surfaces for [differing lengths of time](#), place managers should consider how cleaning regimes can be revised to reduce the risk of fomite (object to person) transmission.

Audit surfaces that are likely to be touched by people (cashpoints, pedestrian crossing buttons, barriers, public touchscreens, handrails, doors and gates etc) and consider with the local authority how to address the threat. This could include providing hand sanitiser in situ, changing button operated mechanisms to automatic or regular [virucidal cleaning](#) for instance.

Managing modes of transport

Public transport authorities will develop plans and BIDs should understand how these will operate in practice as more people return to work in centres. BIDs should liaise with authorities to understand how the BID can provide support to aid workers on their journey between transport hubs and workplaces, including with signage, reallocated public space, or coordination of bike facilities.

It is likely that people will travel to work in their cars in greater numbers and workplaces may be providing parking in addition to city centre multi-storeys. Additional congestion may present problems where the allocation of space on streets has to accommodate queuing for shops and services. Public safety (including the threat of vehicular pollution to public health) must be first priority in developing

plans, and retail or hospitality streets may need to be closed to traffic where all modes cannot be managed safely.

Networks of streets for different modes have been considered in various places, which reduces the problems of modal conflict, except at intersections. BIDs may be in a position to consider whether the separation of walking, cycling and vehicle routes is feasible.

New duties for wardens and ambassadors

BIDs should consider prioritising different tasks for wardens and ambassadors as the management of centres changes. Tasks might include:

- Monitoring and assisting in agreeing queueing arrangements
- Mediating conflict between businesses and/or patrons
- Providing directions for pedestrians where routes are modified
- Developing plans for the allocation of space based on real-time observations of movement patterns
- Counting footfall
- Distributing information

See *Wardens and ambassadors* for further details.

Joint procurement and storage

There will be a need for PPE, screens, floor decals etc, and BIDs can achieve economies of scale by bulk-procuring these on behalf of levy payers. This approach will also help achieve a consistent appearance to the measures in place. Furthermore, there may also be an opportunity to demonstrate value and sustainability by providing a central storage unit and distribution mechanism if levy payers are unable to store equipment.

Positive planning for a more desirable future high street

The planning stage provides BIDs with an opportunity to work with levy payers to consider how the place should transform in the long term, particularly given the existing lack of resilience in the UK retail market in recent years. Immediate changes may be considered as a pilot for longer term efforts to achieve, for instance, modal shift, greater use of the public realm for pavement cafes, or community volunteering schemes.

Consideration should be given to issues of sustainability – e.g. where single use food packaging has become more prevalent again, can businesses be encouraged to switch to recyclable materials?

3. Environmental services

Planning for the recovery - aims

Environmental services should remain a priority. A well-maintained public realm is a strong reflection on the surrounding business community and important to the health & safety of staff and visitors. Responding immediately to incidents of rubbish dumping or graffiti will provide vital reassurance that public space is being managed.

Begin discussions with Local Authorities about ensuring that the public realm cleaning service is proportionate to demand (i.e. footfall and waste generated). This may entail shifting traditional public realm cleaning such as litter picks and sweeping to regularly disinfecting common use surfaces such as street furniture, handrails and bus stops. Ensure contractors can return to pre-lockdown work schedules whilst maintaining social distancing and hygiene guidance.

Continue to lead on maintaining and increasing public green spaces. Anticipate a greater use of parks/gardens by the public and also a strong desire for more such spaces to be created.

Define the BID's Role

- During the pre-recovery planning phase, with low footfall volumes and businesses closed, BIDs can focus on planning for recovery
- Continue to address any ad hoc issues such as fly-tipping and graffiti.
- Provide a basic level of maintenance to public green spaces
- As businesses return services will need to re-start rapidly with additional public realm management and cleansing / virucidal measures in place (streets, pavements, bus stops, street furniture etc)
- BID contractors will need the capacity to increase services as lockdown is reduced.

Enlist Partners

BIDs will need to work in partnership with others to develop the strategy for recovery and agree roles and responsibilities. Partners could include private facilities, security teams and the Local Authority.

Resource mapping

- Coordinate with businesses to understand the staffing levels required to maintain the BID area
- Share planned changes and achievements with levy payers.
- Map priority areas and hot spots that will need particular attention as foot traffic increases
- Work with suppliers to understand levels of delivery and cost. Factor in sickness due to Covid-19.

Communication

Work with businesses and landlords to see how you can assist in communicating messaging around new health and safety measures in the public realm.

- o Providing reassurance is essential
- o Communications should be digitised as much as possible
- o Look to increase social media communication
- o Engage in daily liaison with contractors
- o Start a facilities managers group, allowing the exchange of best practice

4. Security

Planning for the recovery - aims

A visible yet friendly security presence provides reassurance and lowers anxiety which will be of particular importance during the Recovery stage. Ensuring the safety of employees and visitors remains a key priority and security service provisions should be well placed to respond to emergencies where they occur.

Define the BID's Role

The BID may act as a mediator for members, their security teams and the emergency services and to share best practice with one another. Maintain the BID as a central exchange for:

- o BID Funded Police officers (e.g. MetPlus)
- o Pub/shop watch
- o CCTV
- o Business Crime Reduction Partnership
- o Wardens

Enlist Partners to develop strategy

Partners could include Police (including British Transport Police), private security teams, Local Authority Emergency Planning & Resilience Team. Partners should work together to deliver a crime reduction strategy with clearly defined aims and roles.

Resource mapping

- o Coordinate with businesses to develop patrolling routes and the levels of public-facing security staffing required, share best practice, map priority areas and hot spots
- o Work with suppliers to understand service levels, times of delivery and cost implications, factor in sickness due to COVID-19
- o Shift working hours to closely match business trading times and to cover the NHS staff safety issues in the evenings.

Communication

- o Providing reassurance is essential. Security communications should be digitised, using the warning and informing system and subsidised radio schemes
- o Look to increase social media comms around security and policing.
- o Undertake regular liaison with service providers, BID officers and facilities management in a regular online security forum.

Crime/disorder types

- o Anticipate increased peak-hour issues such as disorder on trains etc as people get tense/nervous/aggravated trying to use public transport whilst social distancing
- o Anticipate similar arguments in queues or on-street where frustrations around social distancing are vented
- o Robbery/snatch theft will likely rise again as the footfall increases, Police are keen to avoid a return to prior levels and want to capitalise on the current low crime stats. At the moment total call volume to the police is down so it should mean police resources can be more easily allocated to this. There is a concern that people distracted with their phones whilst standing in queues along pavements/roads which make for easy snatch theft targets.
- o Bike theft is very likely to go up as bikes are in high demand at present – opportunity for BIDs to run weekly bike marking sessions and make the bike racks a priority for patrols.
- o We will very likely see shoplifting rise again as new retailers open with less surveillance. BIDs should plan for shoplifters to come into conflict with these door staff.

Counter terrorism

Our 'crowded places' are no longer concerts, sports matches etc but queues on the pavement for shops. Social distancing means these 'crowds' are small, however their location alongside roads does make them vulnerable to vehicle attacks. BID staff should remain vigilant to the threat of terror attacks.

Radio schemes

Radios will be particularly useful for retailers as staff may come into conflict more often with customers; managing queues and social distancing, and more likely to notice shoplifting which they'll be tempted to challenge. BIDs should advise retailers that staff members manning the door/queue that should be in control of the radio rather than retaining it behind the till.

Street population issues

- o A national rise in instances of street drinking and associated antisocial behaviour has been recorded and BIDs should anticipate this trend continuing. Some BID areas are covered by an Alcohol Control Area which allows wardens and police to confiscate alcohol and issue fines to those engaging in ASB with drinking. Ensure signage is in place which allows enforcement to take place.
- o Local Authorities have made good progress on getting many rough sleepers into temporary accommodation. This changes the patterns of movement among those that would normally sleep rough and BIDs should familiarise themselves with this to ensure support services are in touch with them
- o BIDs have reported that begging in queues for shops is occurring in some areas. Security teams should strongly discourage this due to the health risks associated with physical contact and the intimidation that some may experience.

5. Wardens and Ambassadors

BIDs that employ wardens or ambassadors to manage public realm will need to consider redesigning the service to meet the emerging needs of levy payers and the public. They will play a significant reassurance role in recovery and may also be involved in helping retailers arrange their queuing systems, wayfinding and disseminating information.

Planning for the recovery – aims

The BID will run warden services to ensure the high street remains safe, clean and welcoming. The warden service is the eyes and ears for a range of different partners. Patterns of movement will change dramatically and wardens will be an invaluable resource in ensuring people are able to navigate the high street safely.

Ensuring the safety of wardens, businesses and visitors remains the central focus of the service. A visible yet friendly presence provides reassurance and lowers anxiety which will be of particular importance during the recovery stage.

Enlist Partners

Partners with whom wardens will work could include police, private security teams, Local Authority Emergency Planning & Resilience Team, Local Authority waste/cleaning services, retailers, bus and rail service operatives and all local businesses in the BID area.

Prepare Equipment

- o Ensure deep clean of equipment used by wardens
- o Establish rotas for use of equipment or assign to individual wardens
- o Ensure PPE is correct
- o Personal hand sanitizer
- o Arrange shift patterns and observe social distancing

Resource mapping

Consider undertaking the following tasks:

- o Coordinating with businesses to understand their needs and challenges, share best practice
- o Map priority areas for maintenance/cleaning/safety and patrolling
- o Identify hotspots for routes/social gathering
- o Co-ordinate PPE equipment for Wardens and/or other enforcement personnel (traffic wardens etc)

- o Work with partners to understand place management issues, flow of pedestrians in the City Centre and business-related issues.

Communication

- o Providing reassurance is essential.
- o Wardens must have a clear script and consistent information to pass to local businesses and visitors.
- o Look to increase social media comms around the role of Wardens (they are not police)
- o Daily liaison with service providers to ensure town centre management issues recorded and reported
- o Ongoing daily communications with BID teams and Police and Local Authority to continue.

6. Event management

Where retail vacancy rates may be on the increase, public events will be a key tool in enlivening commercial centres during the recovery phase. Events can also bring business networks back together and help the reintroduction of commercial life. These will need to be run safely in a climate of heightened anxiety and BIDs need to be aware of the risks. Issues to consider include:

Health advice on running safe events

The information for safe management of events is likely to remain under constant review for the foreseeable future. Government guidance is regularly updated and specific guidance must be observed for food markets etc. Attendees at events want to feel that the event is being well-managed and all precautions have been taken into account.

Social distancing & people management

- o Consider controlling numbers in advance by requiring pre-booking
- o Ensure you can provide social distancing for all concerned
- o Provide very clear signage at eye level and floor vinyls, particularly where queuing is anticipated
- o Consider installing one-way pedestrian pathways to avoid congestion
- o Consider having a closed area so the number of visitors can be limited at any one time to prevent overcrowding
- o Manage the queue at entry and exit points.

Hygiene

- o Provide sufficient anti-bacterial hand lotion and/or handwashing facilities
- o Market stalls and any public-facing customer activities must minimise contact and PPE must be worn, particularly face masks and gloves
- o Sneeze guards and cellophane barriers should be considered to prevent public contamination of food.

Running online events

- o Online networking events and webinars are growing in popularity and acceptance of these is now high
- o Ensure the Chair is well acquainted with the software being used and they are located in a quiet, private environment where they will not be disturbed and background noise is kept to a minimum



- o Consider having an administrator alongside the Chair of the meeting to manage attendees, thereby allowing the Chair of the meeting to concentrate on the presentation
- o Practice sharing the screen and the administration of muting microphones, starting the recording as well as managing the chat/Q&A function – don't underestimate how much management this takes for the meeting to run smoothly
- o Keep to time and try and involve your audience with showing of hands or active Q&A sessions
- o Follow up with relevant documents and a link to the recording of the webinar where relevant

7. Marketing and communications

BID communication is often one of the most challenging areas of BIDs to ensure that the right amount of time and effort is spent on communicating key messages to promote BID members alongside direct communication to BID members focusing on the value of the BID investment. This is an area that resource needs to be channelled into and regularly reviewed in order to give good value to BID members.

BIDs will need to review their existing marketing and comms objectives and activities for their place and to consider how best they focus their resources to maximum effect. Resources will need to consider BID finances, people and skills available, partnerships and potential investors, as well as ensuring short term activity supports longer term objectives.

Planning for the recovery – aims

- o Use the pre-recovery planning phase to work with levy payers and others to develop the long-term vision for your place
- o Be clear on target audiences including levy payers, residents, visitors
- o Consider the key message for each group and how the message may need to change to adapt to local environment in the short, medium and long term. Much of the initial messaging will need to be around reassurance and managing footfall safely in town centres.
- o Consider the frequency of message and ultimately be clear of the objective of the comms

Define the BIDs Role

The BID will always need to have effective comms with its levy payers and needs to understand the local needs and how best to achieve this. Some of the comms to levy payers will need to be relaying guidance information as efficiently as possible and some of the comms to levy payers will need to be confirming the activity of the BID making sure this is regularly sense-checked with levy payers and meets their needs.

The BID will play an important role in all stages of recovery in relaying information to levy payers and given the wealth of guidance being released, may have to distil some of this for levy payer to make sense of it. A number of links to extant advice and guidance have been provided at the end of this guide to help, but BIDs should ensure they are across the guidance as it is released. The BID Foundation website hosts a document cache and publishes regular updates.

This may be a good time to review the existing comms role of the BID, consider what needs to change and is now the right time to make those changes in preparation for the recovery delivery period.

Resource mapping

- o What are the existing resources – do they allow you to meet your short-term objectives?
- o What other resources are needed – make sure this is realistic

- o Whilst digital comms is often the most efficient – is it always the most effective, make sure other comms channels are considered such as print/radio/local media/local community groups etc
- o What other schemes may be available to assist, e.g. apps/loyalty/reward schemes etc

Enlisting partners

- o Where recovery will need a cohesive vision, strengthen existing partnerships and form new relationships in the community to begin to discuss this.
- o Consider what other place stakeholders could/should be involved (e.g. DMO/Council/cultural organisations/local community groups)
- o Consider what overlap of objectives stakeholders have to allow for effective collaboration.

8. Data management

BIDs should use the pre-recovery phase to plan immediate, medium and longer-term data requirements, not only as a way to monitor the recovery, but to help manage inclusive economic, social and environmental change into the future. Issues to consider under this theme include:

Revising BID KPIs

If services are being redesigned, BID and service managers should consider how KPIs should change and how this should be reported and agreed at board level. When BIDs seek renewal, they will be accountable to levy payers and a clear explanation of the transparent decisions taken during the crisis and pre-recovery stages will be important.

Measuring broader economic, social and environmental success

The BID Foundation is currently in discussions with the High Streets Task Force and other partners to develop a broader programme of measurement that will provide a national standard of measurement. Consistent data will be important for agencies at all levels, from BIDs to central government, to enable a clear understanding of the recovery and longer-term transformation of the high street. Measures such as pollution, footfall, spend, vacancy, sentiment, property values, offer etc may be included in the mix.

Data partnerships, sources and uses of data

BIDs will need to be included in a wide partnership of active practitioners involved in both collecting and interpreting data for their own needs and to develop the regional and national picture. International examples have demonstrated that a top down imposition of new data partnerships, particularly where they harvest the data of individuals, however anonymised, can be publicly opposed. GDPR legislation makes it necessary for all partners to consider how data is collected, used and stored. In addition, involving citizens in designing the partnership and the uses data can be put to will be important.

9. Governance and partnerships

Strong partnerships will be essential to planning and delivering the recovery. BIDs should review their governance and partnerships arrangements now to ensure they are fit for purpose

Identifying local capacity

Strong and innovative leadership is clearly important through these uncertain times. BIDs provide an opportunity to be a critical conduit between businesses and with their respective local authorities and other local partners.

Governance – Board Meetings of Directors

BID Boards must recognise their responsibility with the respect to their obligations of running the BID company, managing the BID finances and their responsibilities as employers of the BID staff. For the time being these obligations will need to be run remotely either via virtual board meetings and/or via email dialogue and decisions. BIDs should be aware of all rules relating to BID Directors and their meetings, as specified in the Company Articles, still apply even if the meeting is held in a different format and this includes quorum for decisions and minute taking.

Governance – General Meetings of Members

Many BIDs will have an annual meeting to consider in the coming weeks or months. Whilst there is not a legal obligation in the Companies Act 2006 to run an AGM, BIDs should check their own BID Company Articles to be clear whether they have an obligation for an AGM or just an annual meeting. If an AGM is required, take steps to understand the full implications through your own Articles and be clear whether this provides for a virtual AGM.

For the purposes of an AGM, consider how many registered company members the BID has and whether it is practical to call a full AGM at this time. If no legal obligation exists for an AGM you may wish to postpone a 'meeting' and simply provide a light touch annual review online (alongside your annual accounts) at this stage and allow for feedback/dialogue with levy payers if applicable.

10. Billing and balloting

Guidance for BIDs is developed in line with BID legislation and legal advice. Issues to consider include:

Billing

TBF advice is to continue issuing bills as usual but with an accompanying note explaining your intended collection and enforcement activity. This would need to include any deferral of first payment; ability to pay in instalments; access to the BIDs resilience fund (and other local grants) that is reducing their levy liability etc.

Ballots

On balloting, TBF advice is to review any planned ballot dates in 2020 and consider postponement to 2021. If this takes your BID beyond the term of its current BID arrangements, review your company articles in the first instance to ensure your company can continue beyond your term without BID arrangements.

As a last resort, consider extending your BID term in line with article 79 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (note – this only enables extension to 31 March 2021 and is for England only. Section 80 of the Act enables BIDs in Northern Ireland to do likewise).

Levy collection rates may remain low for some time, and in recognition of this, Governments in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have announced support measures for BIDs including extension of terms and financial support.

Operating agreements and relationship with collection authority

The BID legislation in s44 (part 4) of the Local Government Act 2003 states that the billing authority has a 'duty to comply' with the BID arrangements. This Act applies in England and Wales. BIDs should have an operating agreement in place with their respective billing authority to define the obligations in relation to the collection and enforcement of the BID levy in line with these BID arrangements.

The consequence of this is that it is up to the BID to set and agree their BID arrangements (which includes the levy rules and collection regime) therefore in the context of COVID-19 the BID Board must take the responsibility to decide when and if any adaptations are made to these arrangements. Note the scope for any adaptations are very limited and are fully detailed in our full TBF Guidance Note.

Complete BID Foundation advice document can be found [HERE](#).

11. Other useful links

[The UK Government's recovery strategy](#)

[WHO: Returning to the workplace](#)

[HM Govt: Safe working in offices and contact centres](#)

[HM Govt: Working safely during coronavirus](#)

[HM Govt: Business support pages](#)

[British Retail Consortium: Guide for non-food retail stores to plan social distancing measures](#)

[UK Hospitality: advice and resources](#)

[ABI: Insurance advice for businesses](#)

[VisitBritain: Advice pages](#)

[HSE Risk assessment interactive tools](#)

[High Streets Task Force resource pages](#)

12. Authors

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