



## **Winchester BID Accreditation Feedback**

**June 2021**

### **Meets requirements for accreditation award**

Winchester BID is an established BID in its third term serving a high number of levy payers. It is well-managed by a team of professionals who apply robust governance and staffing arrangements, financial management, performance management and excellent communication processes to the delivery of the BID.

Particularly impressive is how open and transparent the BID is with all information published virtually to be accessible to levy payers. The information available is comprehensive and includes research data, performance information and tips for businesses as well as important governance documentation, a great resource for businesses.

The work of the team is overseen by a Board who clearly play a strong role in overseeing delivery and influencing projects evidenced by the paperwork presented. Winchester BID ensures that all sectors of the BID are covered by categories that replicate the levy area and levy payers have access to key knowledge and skills within HR, legal and finance.

In terms of recruitment of Directors, there is a good open and transparent process to encourage potential Board Directors to join the Board and an excellent induction process.

Winchester BID has a sub-group that specifically looks after the interests of independents which works well and gives smaller businesses a 'voice' and some influence. There is a very clear terms of reference document for the sub-group; one recommendation is that a terms of reference is also created for the main Board too. To engage with all levy payers, Winchester BID also holds a quarterly BID Forum meeting which is really well attended.

The Board have a conflicts of interest policy and register to protect the Company and the Board and declarations of interest form part of every Board meeting.

In terms of staff management, the resource is appropriate for the size and scope of the BID with circa 900 levy payers to serve. Good staff management practices include clear staff contracts, job descriptions, annual appraisal process and induction checklists. There is also a comprehensive staff handbook that staff confirm they agree to.

In terms of procurement, Winchester BID has very clear policies and processes with sensible threshold limits; there is board director involvement when it comes to contract selection. Good briefs and contracts are part of the process.

Good data and GDPR protection/privacy policies are in place and Winchester BID is registered with the Information Commissioner.

Clear financial management protocols are in place with appropriate rules for staff and board oversight and sign off procedures. Commitments outside agreed budgets are discussed before being agreed. A finance officer supports the BID team with annual budgeting, monthly Board reports and annual accounts which are independently audited. All information about the BID's accounts and budgets is available to view online demonstrating good transparency and are accompanied by an excellent annual review.

Particularly good is the process for agreeing budgets in that all of the BID team are consulted, levy payers have the opportunity to comment on expenditure lines as part of the AGM and there is a ring-fenced budget assigned to the independents sub-group allowing them to influence how these funds are spent in line with their priorities.

The Winchester BID levy collection rate is good particularly given the high number of hereditaments and the BID keeps costs to a minimum through free local authority levy collection. Their costs on delivery and overheads, at 16% is well under the usual levels. There are good contingencies for levy collection and healthy reserves; these are being reduced through increased project expenditure and offsetting the impact of reduced levy due to the pandemic.

Excellent KPI Board reports cover footfall, marketing and BCRP stats and a whole host of other data is collected to track performance which is very comprehensive and detailed. Winchester BID also carries out a review every year.

Excellent independent surveys are undertaken with good sample sizes covering various subjects and very thorough. Winchester BID uses the results to make changes to the services they deliver to meet levy payer needs so acts upon the feedback given.

In terms of levy payer communications, there is evidence of excellent levy payer interaction via a wide variety of methods including an open-door policy at the BID offices. It is clear that the BID team are responsive to levy payers who get in touch or who have issues to raise. High attendance figures at AGMs and BID Forums also demonstrate the interest and participation in the BID from levy payers. Winchester BID has adapted its communications well during the pandemic including recording meetings. There is also a good welcome pack and process for welcoming new businesses to the BID.

Winchester BID keeps good marketing and communications plans with clear calendars and costs, objectives and target audiences for particular campaigns.

This is a BID that has clearly maintained an excellent relationship with its Local Authority with participation and collaboration on both sides as well as good monitoring. The LA is represented on the Board, there are senior quarterly meetings between both parties and there is a service level agreement between the BID and LA.

Overall, Winchester BID is very well-managed, mature BID with some excellent processes both internal and external and is a BID that puts its levy payers at the heart of its operations. The Advisory Panel noted how well the BID was performing with strong evidence and performance data supporting their good work.

There are very few recommendations given how well Winchester BID is running its operation.

**Recommendation:** Terms of reference to be written and adopted for the Board, covering how often they meet, quorum, how decisions are made, what's on a standard agenda etc, similar to the one for the independents group- this is required for full compliance

**Recommendation:** Explore further opportunities to attract external funding

**Recommendation:** gather testimonials and evidence of return on investment in terms of statistics for individual levy payers e.g. how BID projects or services have led to additional consumer spend for businesses, cost reductions, stock loss savings etc. The advisory panel thought that Winchester BID would have many advocates who would give testimonials.