



# Barrow BID

*Working together for our Town Centre*

Business Improvement District  
Proposal 2016 - 2021



**VOTE  
YES!**  
1st - 28th April 2016



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

**VOTE YES!** 1st- 28th April 2016

## 6 Good reasons to support the BID:

- 1 Led by businesses for the benefit of businesses
- 2 Gives businesses a voice with real influence
- 3 Your money is used to address your priorities
- 4 Pooling resources can make mean potential cost savings
- 5 In addition to existing public services and expenditure
- 6 Investing in the future of the town centre



## This summary of the BID Proposal outlines:

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## Want to know more?

The Barrow BID Business Plan is available at: [www.barrowbid.co.uk](http://www.barrowbid.co.uk)

“With unprecedented levels of investment coming the way of Furness over the next few years, I believe it is vital that Barrow has a lively and energetic town centre both in terms of retail and the evening/night-time sector. We need to attract people to the town to live, work and play and we will not do this without developing a vibrant and exciting town centre. A town centre that is accessible to everyone in the area – and beyond. A town centre that encourages people to visit and to want to come back for more!

We need, therefore, to be encouraging new businesses in to the town centre. We need to ensure that, first and foremost, we attract our local residents in to the heart of the town to shop and to enjoy their experience without being hurried back to their cars. We need to be innovative in developing new ways for people to shop, new ways for them to enjoy their experience in the town centre. How can we make this happen? By investing in the town ourselves. By using our own funds to deliver our own projects. To me, the BID is a ‘no brainer’ so I urge you to vote YES.”



PHIL COLLIER

*Chair of Barrow BID Steering Group and local representative of Federation of Small Businesses*



## What a Business Improvement District would deliver

The Barrow BID will deliver on 5 objectives. These are:

- 1** To **market and promote Barrow** as a sub-regional service centre and shopping destination offering distinctive choice of shops, festivals & events, as well as some of the best entertainment, leisure and recreation in Cumbria.
- 2** To make **access to Barrow** town centre easier and more attractive for residents, visitors and workers throughout the day.
- 3** To take **pride in Barrow**, filling empty units with new or expanding businesses and growing the town's offer.
- 4** To establish Barrow town centre's **evening and night-time economy** as a welcoming, safe environment for people of all ages to enjoy food, drink & entertainment.
- 5** To build, through the BID, **an effective partnership** between the town's businesses, organisations and local authorities for the benefit of Barrow's businesses and wider community.

The Barrow BID will implement a Programme for Improvement that includes projects and activities designed to meet these five objectives. These can be summarised as:

- A comprehensive multi-media campaign to publicise and promote the shops and services in Barrow town centre.
- A package of offers and incentives to make Barrow town centre an easier, more accessible place to visit.
- Improvements to the appearance of the town centre, filling vacant premises and extending the town centre's retail and services offer.
- Promotion of a welcoming, safe and accessible town centre in the evenings.

# Barrow BID's boost for business

The priorities and programme for the delivery of Barrow's Business Improvement District can be summarised as 4 'B's': Better, Busier, Brighter and a Boost for the evening economy.

## 1 Better Brand and Promotion

A comprehensive marketing & promotion campaign that's confident and fearless, including specific activities such as digital marketing and support for events that deliver commercial benefits. It will assert all that is good about Barrow, spreading the word and ensuring that town centre businesses benefit from a clearer brand and identity, a raised profile, a greater awareness of the town centre's offer. It will be tailored to deliver increased footfall, custom and sales. This will impact positively on business and customer confidence, projecting a positive image of Barrow as an economically dynamic, culturally vibrant, friendly town with a thriving and distinctive town centre.

This project will be delivered in 4 parts:

### 1 A Barrow Town Centre Brand

Commission work to create a distinctive identity and brand for Barrow town centre.

### 2 Barrow Online

Commission the design, build and maintenance of a consumer website and dedicated town centre App including directory of shops, services and live promotions, incentives, discount vouchers, etc.

### 3 Digital Marketing Strategy

Commission the preparation and implementation of a co-ordinated social media campaign including promotions, incentives & discounts, to make Barrow more appealing to customers and visitors.

### 4 Festival and Events

A modest budget to sponsor specific events where these have potential to deliver commercial benefits to BID members and raise the public profile of Barrow town centre.

## 2 Busier Shops and Services

The BID will enable the town centre to compete on more of a level playing field with the supermarkets and the retail parks where customers can typically access up to 3 hours of free parking.

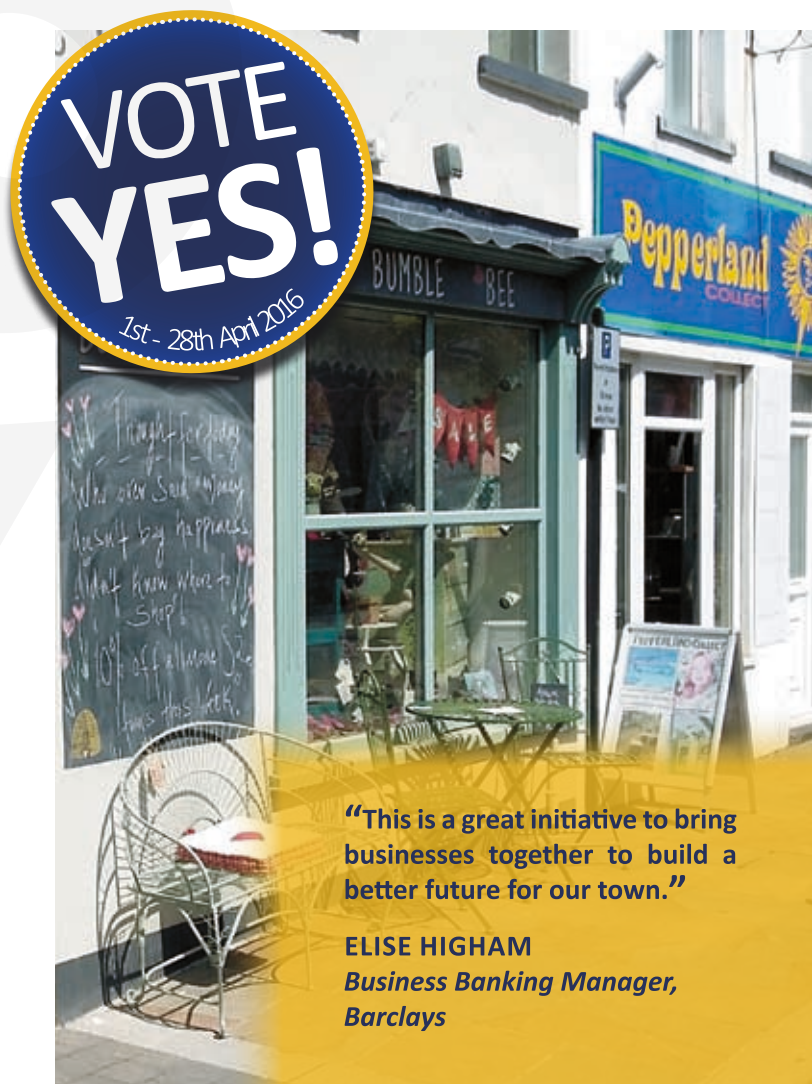
Complementing the marketing and promotion of the town centre to achieve increased footfall, the BID can make it easier and more accessible for people to visit Barrow town centre through support for two initiatives:

### 1 Car Parking Incentives

Barrow BID will incentivise people to visit and use the town centre through the delivery of car parking promotions and incentives that will raise awareness of the parking options and, in partnership with Barrow Borough Council, offer discounts to the standard ticket charges, such as 'buy one hour, get one free' or 'free after three'.

### 2 Improve Bus and Rail Connections to Town Centre

Barrow BID will also incentivise people to visit and use the town centre wherever possible by promoting greater patronage of public transport into the town centre through promotions and incentives, in partnership with bus and/or rail operating companies.



**"This is a great initiative to bring businesses together to build a better future for our town."**

**ELISE HIGHAM**  
*Business Banking Manager,*  
*Barclays*

**“For a relatively small cost this initiative is an opportunity to involve all of the businesses in securing a bright future for the town centre.”**

**MIKE STEPHENSON**  
*The Last Resort Coffee Shop*



### 3 Brighter streets and buildings

Address concerns about empty shop units and vacant premises by sponsoring a new initiative to encourage new and expanding businesses to grow and thrive in Barrow. This can combine the need to stimulate new entrepreneurial activity in the town centre with the need to change perceptions about the town's future. Filling shops and offices with people who just need a helping hand to try out their ideas will extend Barrow town centre's retail and services offer and create a more attractive destination for local shoppers and visitors.

This will be achieved through 2 initiatives:

#### 1 **Pride in Barrow**

Establish a new 'Pride in Barrow' initiative between businesses and the community, sponsoring projects and activities that contribute to brightening up the town centre.

#### 2 **Filling Empty Shops Strategy**

The BID will work with Barrow Borough Council and private sector partners to commission a strategy and implementation plan to tidy and fill empty shops in the town centre. This will not only improve the overall appearance of the town centre but also expand the retail offer by supporting pop-up shops.

### 4 Boost the evening economy

Barrow town centre can make more of its potential to be a vibrant town centre into the evening, particularly as a place for food, drink & entertainment catering for a variety of age groups and tastes.

Promote a safer, accessible town centre by bridging the gap between the daytime and evening economies. This will specifically focus on 3 initiatives:

#### 1 **Extending the offer**

Organise and coordinate late night shopping at least one night per week

#### 2 **Dining out**

Introduce 'Restaurant Week': a collaboration proving successful in other towns and cities which will promote all that the town centre offers after 5pm.

#### 3 **Entertainment**

A co-ordinated programme of weekend events and entertainment to enhance what the town centre currently offers to customers in the evenings.

## What's a Business Improvement District (BID)

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a precisely defined geographical area of a town, city, or commercial district where business ratepayers are invited to vote to invest collectively in local improvements that are additional to those currently provided by local government.

BIDs are business-led initiatives taking advantage of government legislation that gives local businesses the power to raise *their* own funds to spend on *their* priorities in order to improve *their* trading environment.

**"This is an exciting opportunity for diverse businesses to work together, making local decisions, for the good of Barrow primarily to make Barrow an appealing place to visit, shop or invest in. In retail customer's shopping habits have changed with the rapid increase in online shopping so hopefully we can use the BID to find innovative ways to react to feedback, improve the shopping experience and entice more customers, more often into the town centre."**

**MORAG MCMEEKIN**  
*Boots*



## Why there is a need for a BID

In Barrow the development of the BID proposal is a response to a growing awareness that doing nothing to address the challenges they face is simply not an option. These challenges are a combination of threats and opportunities and could be summarised as:

- Meeting the changing demands and expectations of consumers;
- Being better organised and equipped to exploit opportunities.

Barrow needs to adapt to rapidly changing consumer habits driven by technological change, the prolonged squeeze on household budgets, and supermarket price wars. These drivers of change are a perfect storm creating an incredibly competitive environment and presenting an enormous challenge to the survival of many businesses.

Significant investment is coming into Barrow, with the town's major employers actively recruiting and several businesses expanding. These developments open up opportunities to revitalise Barrow as a whole, and to breathe new life into the town centre.

Therefore, the need for the BID is twofold:

- To act as a catalyst for change, to re-energise Barrow's ailing town centre by taking practical measures to help the town centre be fit for purpose in 2016 and beyond.
- To provide the organisation and vision needed to stimulate new ideas and economic activity, pump-priming investment in the town centre, and building confidence in Barrow, driven by the ambition of its businesses, and supported by the loyalty of its customers and communities.

## What your priorities are for improving the town centre

During consultations in the Spring and Summer of 2015 you told us what the main challenges are, as well as pointing out what is good about Barrow and what you consider to be the priorities for action. Your priorities can be summarised using some of the actual comments we received.

### The Priorities Emerging from Consultations

Challenges	Positives	Priorities for action
<p>"Town residents have a rather negative view of the town (unless any outsider dares to criticise it)"</p> <p>"There is insufficient footfall to maintain future profitability for businesses"</p> <p>"We have no USP"</p>	<p>"Friendliness of this town is always a 'pleasant' surprise to visitors."</p> <p>"The size and range of our retail outlets in a largely rural area."</p>	<p><b>Marketing and promotion of Barrow town centre and what it offers.</b></p> <p>"Need to attract consumers into town centre"</p> <p>"Top priority should be making connections with locals to encourage them to shop locally once more!"</p>
<p>"Parking is a huge problem"</p> <p>"Parking is a massive problem in Barrow."</p> <p>"At the moment the parking has to be the main concern"</p> <p>"Get the car parking sorted out"</p>	<p>"It still has customers, hopefully with improvements more customers will return."</p>	<p><b>Convenient access to the town centre throughout daytime &amp; evening.</b></p> <p>"Discounted parking initiatives are the biggest priority"</p> <p>"Reroute buses into centre."</p>
<p>"Needs to keep town centre cleaner &amp; fill all empty shops."</p> <p>"Fill the town up - no empty shops"</p> <p>"Clean town more regularly"</p> <p>"Better help for start-up business and small businesses"</p>	<p>"Nice mix of shops - independent &amp; chain."</p> <p>"Large, diverse town centre with a friendly atmosphere!"</p>	<p><b>Filling empty units and brightening appearance of the town centre.</b></p> <p>"Main priority is to fill up empty shops &amp; get more consumers in town."</p> <p>"Enhancing the appearance of the town"</p>
<p>"This used to be the place to come for a night out!"</p> <p>"Barrow doesn't make enough of what it has got. Great place to eat and drink".</p>	<p>"Barrow has a captive audience..."</p>	<p><b>Improving the evening and night-time economy.</b></p> <p>"..a lively night life all in one place".</p> <p>"Large, diverse town centre with a friendly atmosphere!"</p>

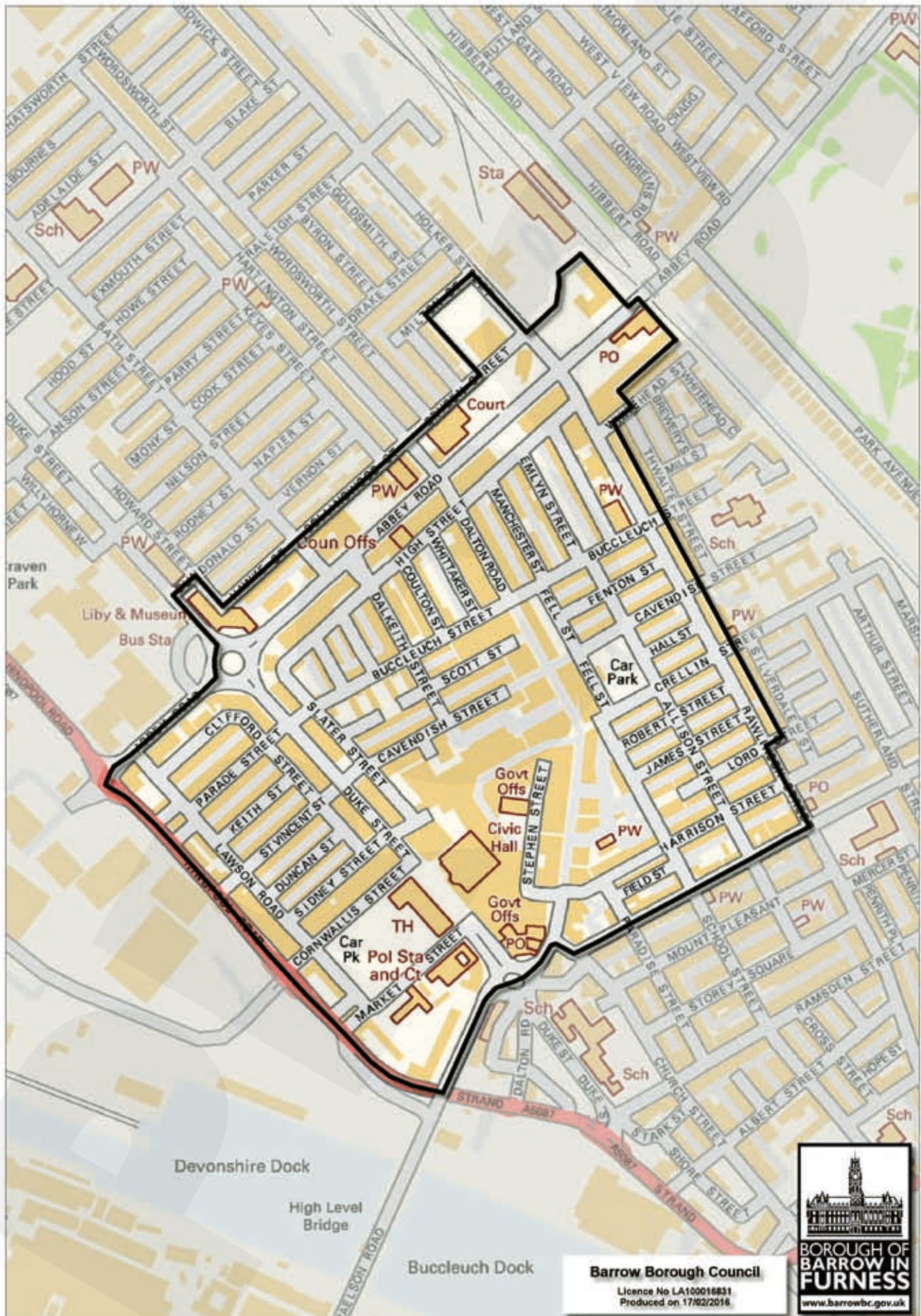



"The BID is a great way for the community to work together, to create & build a better future for our town."

AMELIA ATKINS  
Shot@Photography

## Where the BID area would cover

The BID area focuses on the town centre.





**"After expanding my business I feel I've invested in the town, but we need to attract more customers to get back to the thriving market town we once were."**

**ANDREA SCRAGGS**  
*Andrea's Accessories*

**VOTE  
YES!**

1st - 28th April 2016

## How the BID would be funded

The BID would be funded in two ways:

### BID Levy Income

The BID is a 5 year programme of projects and activities and most of the income required to deliver this will be drawn from the BID Levy. This would be collected on behalf of the Barrow BID delivery company by Barrow Borough Council as the local billing authority, with strict rules to ensure that every penny is ring-fenced for the purposes of delivering the BID Business Plan.

The BID Levy will be fixed at 1.5% (one and a half percent) of the current Rateable Value (using latest available Valuation Office Agency survey data) for each property. There will be no annual inflation increase. The BID levy once calculated will be charged as a flat rate i.e. the amount will not change, for the 5 years duration of this Business Plan. Refer to Section 8 for more details of what this means to individual Non-Domestic Ratepayers in the BID.

The BID Levy will apply to all properties (hereditaments) within the defined BID area with the exception of hereditaments with a Rateable Value of less than £4,000. All other premises, including those in receipt of charitable or small business rate relief, will be charged because they are expected to benefit from marketing and improvements to the town centre and it is expected that the majority will want to play an equal role in the local business community.

The Barrow BID area includes 460 hereditaments with a Rateable Value of £4,000 and over. Their combined Rateable Value (RV) is a calculation based on the existing RV survey information. The combined Rateable Value is £10,771,450. The levy can raise £161,572 gross per annum or £807,859 over the 5 years term of the Barrow BID.

## How the BID would be funded

### Other funding

The Barrow BID will not be limited to income derived from the BID Levy and can expect to raise further funds from:

- Voluntary contributions;
- Grants;
- Sponsorship & advertising revenue.

The Barrow BID can attract these other funds towards specific items or activities identified within the programme of projects as part of the delivery of the Business Plan. In particular, businesses within the town and surrounding borough will be encouraged to support the implementation of the Barrow BID and its considerable potential to deliver wider benefits both to the town and to the Furness peninsula. Voluntary contributions can help to ensure that the benefits of activities such as marketing extend to areas beyond the defined BID area.

Barrow BID creates a significant fund that has the potential to draw in further investment, including grant assistance from government as well as other sources such as the National Lottery and other grant distributing bodies.

Some of the projects can also expect to attract sponsorship, again for specific items or activities that bring corporate benefits e.g. the sponsorship of the town's marketing campaign or online applications.

The total income for the delivery of this 5 year programme based on income both from the BID Levy and from other contributions will be close to £850,000.

The programme budget assumes an upper limit of 20% of total income to be spent on programme administration and management, ensuring that around 80% of resources focus on the project outputs and activities as described above.

The programme administration and management budget is intended to cover any necessary expenditure on:

- BID levy collection administration fee;
- Setting up (including registering and insuring) the Barrow BID Company;
- Professional fees such as an accountant;
- Recruiting and contracting a part-time BID Manager to commission and manage the delivery of projects and activities funded through the BID.

The costs of collection, are estimated by Barrow Borough Council to be £10,926 per year with initial system set up costs of £15,000. The forecast expenditure plan has been calculated using the most current rates data (April 2015).

**"After trading in the town centre for 40 years the businesses can, for the first time, really shape the town centre. Supporting the BID will help to make Barrow a better place to shop and more accessible to the public during the daytime and in the evenings. All businesses in the town centre should be voting YES to make this happen."**

**PAUL GRAVES**  
*Identity*



## BID budget forecast for 5 year term

INCOME	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total £
BID Levy	161,572	161,572	161,572	161,572	161,571	807,859
Other Funding	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	40,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>169,572</b>	<b>169,572</b>	<b>169,572</b>	<b>169,572</b>	<b>169,571</b>	<b>847,859</b>

EXPENDITURE	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total £
1. Better Barrow	30,000	50,000	55,000	57,000	58,000	250,000
2. Busier Barrow	25,000	40,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	200,000
3. Brighter Barrow	20,000	25,000	28,000	32,000	35,000	140,000
4. Boost Barrow	10,000	8,500	8,500	8,500	8,500	44,000
Running Costs	25,000	30,900	31,827	32,782	35,491	156,000
Start Up Costs	16,000	0	0	0	0	16,000
Contingencies	8,371	8,372	8,372	8,372	8,372	41,859
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134,371</b>	<b>162,772</b>	<b>176,699</b>	<b>183,654</b>	<b>190,363</b>	<b>847,8559</b>
Balance c/f	35,201	42,001	34,874	20,792	0	

\*with 3% annual uplift and supplement in final year for refreshing the business plan.

## Budget for Year 1 (2016/17)

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Bid Levy	161,572	1. Better Brand and Promotion	30,000
Voluntary Contributions and Grants	8,000	2. Busier Shops and Services	25,000
		3. Brighter Streets and Buildings	20,000
		4. Boosting Evening Economy	10,000
		<b>SUB-TOTAL PROJECTS COSTS</b>	<b>85,000</b>
		Administration (Project delivery)	14,000
		Administration (Levy collection)	11,000
		Start-up costs (IT, insurance, registering BID company)	16,000
		<b>SUB-TOTAL RUNNING COSTS</b>	<b>41,000</b>
		Contingency	8,371
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>169,572</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134,371</b>
		Balance c/f	35,201

## How the BID would be managed

Barrow BID will be implemented through the creation of a Barrow BID Company. This not-for-profit body will be registered as a company limited by guarantee with a board of directors drawn from, and representative of, the diverse business and organisational interests within the BID area. All businesses eligible to vote in the BID ballot will be invited to nominate themselves or other eligible persons to be considered for directorship and to be part of the BID Company Board.

The performance and effectiveness of the BID will need careful monitoring to ensure that BID levy payers receive a good return on their levy throughout the 5 year term. The Barrow BID Company board will develop a basic toolkit of key performance indicators to monitor and review progress, using the information to make adjustments and allocate resources between the budget headings where there is a sound business case to do so.

Key performance indicators should initially include the following:

- Total number of commercial units - rateable properties within BID area
- Number of vacant units - regular survey by number and business use
- Number of markets/traders - regular survey
- Footfall - regular footfall survey
- Car parking - availability and usage survey
- Business confidence - regular survey
- Town centre users/customer survey - regular survey
- Shoppers origin - postcode survey

This is not an exhaustive list and the BID Company Board should have discretion to add to, or improve the performance indicators at their discretion and subject to the resources available.



**“The timing of the Barrow BID could not have been better as the town prepares itself for a period of huge economic investment from a number of different sources. It gives town centre businesses the opportunity to take charge of the issues that are important to them and make Barrow town centre an attractive place to visit by day or by night.**

**The Barrow BID will have the resources, expertise and vision to implement a number of strategies designed to ensure that the town centre both benefits from and is aligned with a growing local economy. The fact that it already has close links with local authorities and key employers who are also keen to see a thriving town centre should be a recipe for success over the coming years.”**

**STEPHEN METCALFE FCCA MAAT**  
*The Drawing Room*





**"I know from first hand experience the dramatic positive impact a BID can have on the town it serves and the community as a whole. This is a not to be missed opportunity to really make a difference in Barrow and I'd encourage all businesses to vote yes for Barrow's success."**

**BILL JOHNSTON**

*Managing Director, The Bay*



## **Who decides whether or not to have a BID**

The ballot will be conducted through a confidential postal vote. Ballot papers will be sent to all persons entitled to vote, defined as Non-Domestic Ratepayers for hereditaments within the defined Business Improvement District where the Rateable Value of the property is £4,000 and above, and who are ratepayers on the day of the notice of ballot.

Where a person has more than one hereditament within a BID area, that person will get a vote for each hereditament. A proxy vote is available and details will be sent out with ballot papers.

## **When the decision will be made**

This will be a 5 year programme of investment in activities to revitalise Barrow town centre, with funds drawn mostly from the BID Levy, collected on behalf of all the businesses involved by Barrow Borough Council as billing authority and collection agency. Subject to a successful vote on 28 April 2016, the Barrow BID will be managed by a new Barrow BID

Company limited by guarantee, with its own ring-fenced accounts, and with membership open to nomination and election from all businesses, organisations and individuals contributing through the BID levy. This will ensure that the control, delivery and responsibility for the BID sit firmly with the town centre businesses.

## **How much it will cost you**

Barrow BID aims to boost business and local trade, not add further burden on the costs of running a business. With this in mind the Barrow BID proposal is keeping the financial demands on local businesses to a minimum.

The smallest businesses (in premises with Rateable value of less than £4,000) will not be expected to pay a levy but several are expected to contribute voluntarily in cash and in kind to help to ensure that this exciting new initiative succeeds.

For those who would be expected to pay towards the BID, please refer to the table for some indication of the costs to your business.

## Calculating the cost of the levy

Rateable Value	Annual Cost @ 1.5% of RV	Weekly cost Equivalent	Daily cost Equivalent
< £4,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
£4,000	£60	£1.15	16p
£5,000	£75	£1.44	20p
£10,000	£150	£2.88	41p
£15,000	£225	£4.32	61p
£25,000	£375	£7.21	£1.03
£50,000	£750	£14.42	£2.06
£75,000	£1,125	£21.63	£3.09
£100,000	£1,500	£28.84	£4.12
£250,000	£3,750	£72.11	£10.30
£500,000	£7,500	£144.23	£20.60

## What happens after the ballot

The result of the ballot is expected to be announced on Friday 29 April 2016 or as soon as reasonably possible. If the vote is in favour of establishing the BID, in other words a majority of the votes are in favour and these also represent a majority of the aggregate rateable value, there will be a period of four months to recruit a board of directors for the BID Company and for the administration systems needed to collect the levy to be set up.

Once appointed the new BID Company will recruit a person or organisation for the purposes of managing the implementation of the BID Business Plan, on behalf of the levy payers and under the direction of the BID Company Board. This is expected to be a part-time appointment or equivalent.

**“Being part of the Barrow BID makes you understand that whilst each individual business hopes to gain from a successful and vibrant town centre, it is the positive outcome for Barrow and its community that will be the greatest winner. Finally being able to have a say in shaping the future of our town centre is an opportunity we should not give up. Quite simple, vote yes.”**

**DEREK PEARCE**  
*Partner, Poole Townsend  
 Solicitors, Estate Agents  
 and Financial Advisors*



## Want to know more?

**Chris Kolek** Barrow BID Co-ordinator

**Tel:** 07900 608085

**Email:** [chris@barrowbid.co.uk](mailto:chris@barrowbid.co.uk)

Or visit our website to view the Barrow BID Business Plan 2016 - 2021



**"This is a one-off opportunity for businesses in Barrow to work together to drive things forward, take the initiative, and have a positive influence on bringing the town centre back to life. I will be voting YES."**

**PHIL HEATH**  
*Heath's*



**"Crafty Hobbies supports Barrow BID as we think it is important for us all to work together to help make the town centre a more vibrant place to be. It gives the little voices of the independent businesses as much chance to be heard as the larger chains."**

**SHELAGH MORRALL**

**"The BID can provide the means to bring businesses together to address the priorities we share. I welcome opportunities to work with other businesses, of every size, to help Barrow town centre to reach its potential as the first choice destination for shoppers across South Cumbria."**

**PAULA MOORE**  
*Store Manager, Debenhams*



**"This is a massive opportunity for business owners to influence not only the spend available from the new levy, but have a BID group who are able to work alongside other business partners to mould and shape a regenerated town centre. Working in partnership to achieve the same aim, promoting the town centre to our local community and beyond as a vibrant hub for people to shop, eat and meet."**

**ELAINE HARRIS**  
*Managing Partner, RfM Chartered Accountants*



**"Barrow BID is fantastic opportunity for the town. Barrow and the surrounding area is currently embarking on a period of investment whose scale is unique within the UK. A successful BID will help ensure that all the businesses encompassed by the BID boundary will be in a position to capitalise on this investment and have a strong future. The reward to the Barrovian public will be that they will once again have a town centre that they deserve, vibrant, bustling, clean, full of diversity and choice, whilst also being easy to visit and navigate. A town to be proud of. Vote YES!"**

**SIMON CRAIG**  
*Store Manager, Marks and Spencer and Deputy Chair, Barrow BID Steering Group*



If we do not take this opportunity to act now, then when will we act?  
If we do not deliver the BID, then what are we going to do?

The time is right, the proposal is right,  
so please use your vote and...

# VOTE YES!

Your say, your money, your priorities, your BID.

