



Slough BID Business Plan 2020-2025

Building Success through Business Collaboration



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Slough is in need of a big boost to get back into shape, and a Business Improvement District (BID) is a brilliant chance to generate ideas, working in partnership with local businesses, to help bring Slough to a new season of success.

As a business located in the centre of Slough, we like others recognise the need for the plans that the BID will be implementing. Key themes such as working to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour; marketing and improving the reputation of Slough and the town centre through advertising and promotion of events and schemes; and providing additional support to local traders can only be beneficial to businesses in Slough and to Slough as a whole.

From a property-specific angle, in an unclear economic climate as we're in now it's important for Slough as a town to not only prevent property values and interest in new developments from slowing down, but to continue to promote growth. As crucial new opportunities such as Crossrail and state-of-the-art development has been and is taking place here (including the much anticipated redevelopment of the Queensmere and Observatory shopping complexes), Slough needs to continue to improve and increase its offering to take full advantage of its geographical location and the already thriving industry positioned in the town. The aim of the BID is to apply strategy to make this outcome as strong as possible as we move into a new decade that will surely be crucial for Slough.

Andy Wright – Steering Group Chair

Why we need a BID for Slough town centre

In recent years it has become clear that much more needs to be done to respond to pressures of closing shops, competition, and safety challenging Slough, and to capitalise on its assets and location. YOU are part of that response.

Slough is a vibrant, diverse and growing town, ideally situated along the M4 corridor between London and Reading.

Education rates are high, and the town is one of the youngest in the UK. Major international businesses are situated in the town and the extension of the Crossrail service, coupled with the planned expansion of Heathrow indicate that, as a whole, Slough is set to see continued developments, growth and expansion.

However, the town centre is at significant risk of being left behind and of failing to meet the aspirations of the Council, residents, business owners and workers.

Declining standards and footfall in our shopping offer, competition from nearby towns, and the negative perception of Slough all leave this wonderful town in a precarious position, with businesses and customers leaving the town centre in droves.

A Business Improvement District (BID) for Slough will help to check this decline, and in time, reverse it. As well as more than £2 million investment over the five year term of the BID, it will see the business community have a real say in the future of the town. Working together, we can make collective positive changes to improve our business environment, encourage growth, and improve the perception of Slough. AND, we'll have the investment to put our money where our mouth is. Together.

Please vote "yes" to Slough BID.



What is a BID

Since 2005, over 300 UK BIDS have been formed in the UK. In her report to Government on the state of Britain's high streets, Mary Portas identified BIDs as key players in the transformation of those places where they operate.

A BID is a business-led and business-funded body formed to improve a defined commercial area. The benefits of BIDs cited by the businesses they represent are wide-ranging and include:

- Businesses decide and direct what they want in their area
- Businesses are represented and have a voice in issues affecting their trading area
- BID levy money is ring-fenced for use only in the BID area
- Increased footfall and spend
- Improved staff retention
- Reduced business costs
- Enhanced marketing and promotion
- Looking at infrastructure, pollution and movement
- Guidance in place shaping vision activities
- Facilitated networking opportunities with neighbouring businesses
- Assistance in dealing with the Council, Police and other public bodies



BIDs: Answering your Questions

How is the BID funded?

A BID is funded by businesses paying a small proportion of their RV, before discounts, as a levy. This money is ring-fenced for use only in the BID area.

A BID can only be formed after extensive consultation and a ballot of businesses. The BID levy for most businesses in Slough would be 1.25%, raising a levy income of more than £400,000. BIDs can then attract additional funding from other sources.

Find more frequently asked questions at www.sloughbid.co.uk

How can a BID help my business?

There are more than 300 BIDs operating across the UK, mainly in town or city centres.

There are some in industrial areas, and others which cover mixed business areas. Benefits they bring include:

- BID levy money is ring-fenced for use only in the BID area.
- Businesses decide and direct what they want for the area
- A BID manager is appointed to engage and promote business needs, including event management
- Co-ordination to attract visitors to the area
- Business cost reduction, reduced crime and increased footfall
- Help in dealing with Local Council, the police and other public bodies
- Increased footfall and improvements in staff retention
- Promotion and branding of the area to attract new customers
- Facilitated networking opportunities with the area and neighbouring businesses

Every penny raised is accounted for and spent on helping the BID to deliver the projects the businesses have voted to support. Clear commitments are made and targets set to deliver businesses priorities for the district.





A Vision for Slough BID

Based on the results of the feasibility study and other consultation undertaken over the past months, we have developed a clear vision for this BID proposal:

To create the conditions for businesses to invest and thrive in a safe, clean and welcoming environment for customers and workers.

As the largest retailer within the BID area and on behalf of Tesco, I am pleased to be able to support the BID for Slough. Slough is a growing place with many more businesses, great development and increased footfall coming in the town centre, although not without its challenges. The focus of the BID will cover many areas, and improvements towards the Safety and Crime issues will greatly improve the town centre. By working together on the BID and using this vital funding to put back into our town, I feel all businesses will benefit and ultimately increase footfall across the whole of the BID Area.

James Lingard, Tesco Stores Ltd

Slough BID Projects

Project 1

Safe and Secure

We know that crime and anti-social behaviour is a concern for every business in Slough. Even if it doesn't affect your business directly, the perception and fear of crime in the town centre keeps customers and investment away.

The BID will work with businesses and other organisations to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, making Slough town centre feel a welcoming and safe environment for residents, customers and workers.

Slough BID will encourage the update and expansion of the Pubwatch Radio Scheme to include all businesses, and implement a "banned from one, banned from all" principle for those perpetrating crime and anti-social behaviour.

The BID will fund a full time 'Town Team' to enforce restrictions on drinking in the town centre and other non-criminal offences. They will also be a security presence in the town centre, acting as a deterrent, and making customers and workers alike feel safer.

The BID will work with businesses to help reduce crime, from shoplifting, to cybercrime. We will support businesses to report crime and make the most of the extensive CCTV

coverage. Where there is scope to improve the security infrastructure – for example, with additional CCTV coverage - the BID will seek to lobby for and support this.

The BID will work with Thames Valley Police as a representative voice for the business community. We will seek to build relationships across all levels of policing, from PCSOs on the beat, to the Police Crime Commissioner.

**Safe and Secure budget:
£160,000 per year**

Project 2

Environment

Creating a clean, safe and welcoming environment will help to encourage customers to Slough town centre.

The BID will support additional street cleaning in Slough town centre, aspiring to a principle of "everything clean, everything working". All cleaning and maintenance carried out by the BID will be additional to Council provision, and we will seek to leverage additional funding from Slough Borough Council through cost sharing partnerships where appropriate.

The BID will act as a facilitator for businesses, ensuring that the authorities responsible for dealing with specific services, such as waste removal, have the knowledge they need to honour those responsibilities, keeping Slough



town centre tidy and safe.

The BID will financially support and lobby for physical changes in the town centre that encourage increased customer dwell times, particularly in the winter months, such as increased street lighting.

It is vital that customers find it easy to get to Slough, park and find their way around. The BID will carry out an audit of signage in Slough Town Centre and work with Slough Borough Council and others to enhance signs approaching Slough and in the Town Centre.

**Environment Budget:
£92,000 per year**

Project 3

Marketing and Events

Rightly or wrongly, Slough's reputation has suffered in recent years, and both residents and staff have rather low confidence in the town centre.

The BID will aim to curb this trend and reverse it, showing Slough to be a vibrant, diverse and modern environment.

The BID will create a Slough brand methodology, improving the perception of the town in the mind of the consumer. We will use branding principles across all channels to create a consistent positive message to customers and investors, and encourage businesses to do the same.

The BID will develop the online offer for Slough town centre, building a new fully mobile-responsive, customer-facing website that includes an events calendar, business listings and "brochureware". Every levy payer will be listed, providing a free web presence and a direct line from your customer to you.

Slough BID will establish social media channels to support and promote the town. The BID will follow and share business news, events and offers, increasing awareness of all Slough has to offer.

The BID will have an advertising budget to promote events and other town assets as part of a cohesive marketing strategy, which encompasses physical, print and digital media locally and regionally. We will work with our partners at Slough Borough Council to ensure efficient use of funds and consistent positive messaging across organisations in Slough.

Events are an integral part of experiences that bring customers to town centres. The BID will organise and support a range of events in the town centre where they benefit local business. Slough BID will especially focus on Christmas events to encourage the Christmas shopper back into our town centre.

**Marketing and Events Budget:
£96,000 per year**





Project 4

Business support

Slough BID will work to strengthen the business community through networking and training opportunities. We will work with local training providers to help businesses achieve their potential.

The BID will support businesses to aim for higher standards and introduce business excellence awards to celebrate success.

To help businesses reduce their running costs, Slough BID will trial a joint procurement scheme for utilities and other services.

Town centre loyalty schemes have proved to be very successful in other areas, and Slough BID will trial the introduction of a customer loyalty scheme across the town centre, with the aim of increasing customer dwell time, spend, and return visits. The scheme could also cover the reimbursement of car parking fees.

We will work with Slough Borough Council and others to develop data collection about footfall and movement of customers in the BID area and use the data for planning, promotion, and performance monitoring.

**Business Support Budget:
£36,000 per year**

Project 5

Representation

The BID, and its professional team, will provide an active voice for the business community of Slough Town Centre.

The BID will build close relationships with other stakeholders in the town such as Slough Borough Council, Thames Valley Police and the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce. The BID will seek to be represented on decisions about the town centre, giving businesses a real voice in the future of the town centre. As a legislated, representative and well-funded body, the BID is perfectly placed to represent business views and lobby on your behalf.

With a team enthusiastic about the town, the funding to market Slough town centre, and help with cleanliness and security, the BID will be instrumental in Slough's regeneration and growth.

Representation has no specific budget, as it will run through all of the BIDs work.

Administration

Slough BID will employ one full time BID Manager, as well as other employees as appropriate to fulfil roles necessary to deliver this business plan and accommodate the changing needs of the BID. Such roles could include marketing, crime reduction or general administration. Most staff costs will be allocated to project work, rather than overheads.

The BID will employ a full-time team to enhance the security of Slough, or contract this out to a competent third party through a transparent procurement process.

The BID will rent an office in Slough town centre, and purchase all equipment needed for the effective management of the organisation, such as computers, printer etc.

The BID will introduce a local procurement policy, ensuring that, wherever possible, and via open tenders, local businesses will be given direct opportunities to work with or become suppliers to the BID.

Slough Borough Council will charge the BID £35 per hereditament or property of the levy as a collection fee, totalling £70,000 over the five-year term.

Slough Borough Council will also charge the

BID £35,000 for the initial cost of the software necessary, payable in the first year of the BID, to build the software necessary to collect the BID levy.

We have set aside £190,000 to cover overheads (such as office space and staff costs) and Slough Borough Council's collection costs.

Measuring Success

The BID will be a transparent, accountable body with robust governance and key performance indicators (KPIs.)

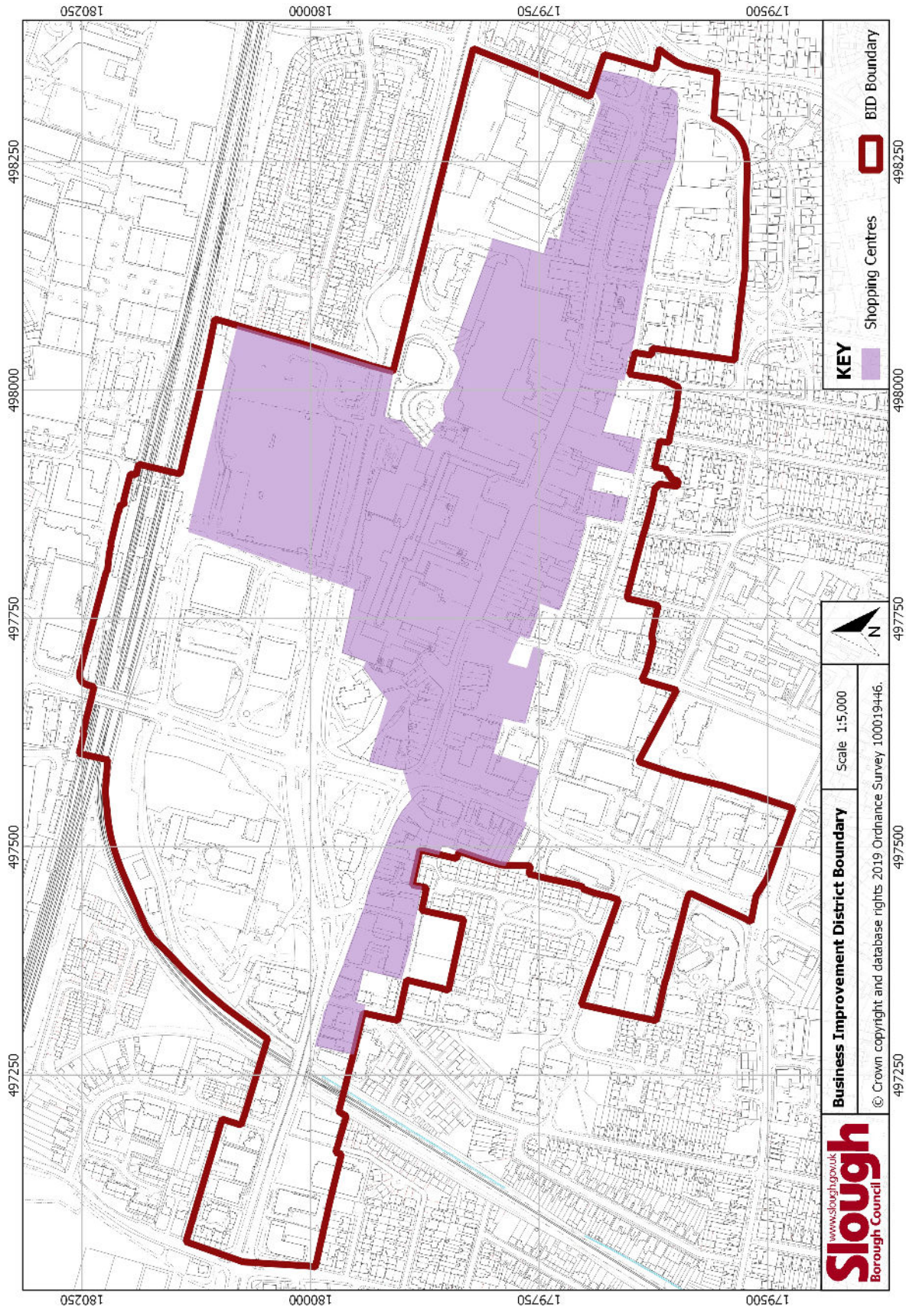
As well as the delivery of the projects in this business plan, the BID will carry out an annual satisfaction survey among levy payers, not only asking about what you feel the BID is achieving, but also to gather data about businesses performance and confidence where it may reflect the achievements of the BID. The BID will use data gathered under the business support project, and other publicly available data to track trends in the performance of the town as a whole, to build a picture of how Slough is doing, where it's going, and the BID's place in the journey.

The BID will call an annual levy payer meeting to report on finances and project delivery. All levy payers will be invited to attend and put themselves forward to join the BID board of directors.



BID Boundary

The BID Boundary will cover the area shown on the map below:



A full list of streets wholly or partly covered by the Slough BID Boundary can be found on the BID's website: www.sloughbid.co.uk



The Ballot

Slough Borough Council has commissioned Electoral Reform Services (ERS) to hold the ballot. ERS will send those responsible for properties, or hereditaments, to be subject to the BID a ballot paper prior to the start of the ballot.

Each property, or hereditament, subject to the BID will be entitled to one vote in respect of this BID proposal in a postal ballot, which will commence on 30th May 2019 and close at 5pm on 27th June 2019. A proxy vote is available and will be sent out with ballot papers.

Ballot papers received after 5pm on 27th June will not be counted.

In order for the ballot to deliver a successful result for the BID proposal, the result will need to meet, as a minimum, two independent criteria:

- (a) Of those ballots returned by the close, those voting in favour of the BID proposal must exceed those voting against it, and
- (b) Of those ballot papers returned by the close, the total rateable value of those properties or hereditaments that vote in favour must also exceed the total of those voting against.

The result of the ballot will be announced as soon as practically possible after the close of ballot. If successful at ballot, the new BID will commence delivery of services on 1st April 2020 and continue for a period of 5 years, to end on 31st March 2025.

Levy Rules

The levy rate to be paid by each property or hereditament is to be calculated as 1.25% of its rateable value on the 1st April each year.

Tenants of shopping centres or businesses that otherwise pay a management fee for service charges will pay a discounted levy of 0.75% of the rateable value.

All properties or hereditaments with a rateable value of £10,000 or more will be eligible for payment of the levy. The BID levy for properties with a rateable value greater than £1 million, will be capped at a levy of £15,000. Where one levy payer is responsible for more than one property or hereditament, where the aggregate levy of those properties totals more than £15,000, the levy payer will be eligible to apply to the BID Board for the same cap to be applied.



We are very excited about the proposed plans for Slough BID and think it is an extremely positive step. Times are changing and the BID is a great opportunity for all the businesses to come together and make a positive impact on the future of the town. We hope everyone else will get on board and start taking pride in their town and their businesses again.

Nick Heath, Santander

A guaranteed cap of £30,000 is likely to be applied to the liability for empty properties at the Queensmere and Observatory shopping centres which will be demolished by the end of the first 5-year term of the BID.

Properties or hereditaments with a rateable value below the threshold can opt to pay voluntarily the minimum amount of £125 per year (plus VAT) to become a voluntary member of the BID and receive the same benefits as ordinary levy payers, with the exception of being able to vote in the BID ballot, or becoming BID board directors.

The number of properties or hereditaments liable for the levy is approximately 442. This

figure may change during the BID term with change of use, building or demolition.

The total levy expected to be invoiced will be £410,000 per year. BIDs can expect to collect 95% of the invoiced amount, so we will budget on levy income of £389,000 per year.

Based on the Rating List for the BID area, most businesses will pay less than £10 per week and many will pay much less. The chart indicates how much this will cost you at the maximum 1.25% levy.

Rateable Value	Pounds per year	Pounds per week	Pounds per day
£10,000	125	2.40	0.34
£20,000	250	4.80	0.68
£50,000	625	12.02	1.7
£100,000	1,250	24.03	3.43
£1 million	12,500	240.38	34.34
Cap	15000	288.46	41.20

Levy Collection

The levy will be charged annually in advance for each chargeable period. Charging periods will align with the rules used by Slough Borough Council for business rates.

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. Charities in receipt of 100% relief can apply to the Slough BID Board for an exemption. We will not charge a levy on ATM (cash) machines, advertising billboards or mobile telephone masts, as these don't represent trading entities.

The BID levy will also not be affected by the small business rate relief scheme.

Collection of the BID levy carries the same enforcement weight as collection of non-domestic rates. The levy will be collected on behalf of the BID by Slough Borough Council, who will charge the BID £35 per hereditament of the levy for collection, and to manage legal proceedings in the event of non-payment.

A few of our stores are in towns that have already introduced the BID. From our experience, Slough Town Centre, would benefit enormously from the coherent and focused planning that a BID offers. Though Slough Town Centre has suffered in recent times from neglect and relative decline it, has great potential, and the BID will help it to realise that potential.

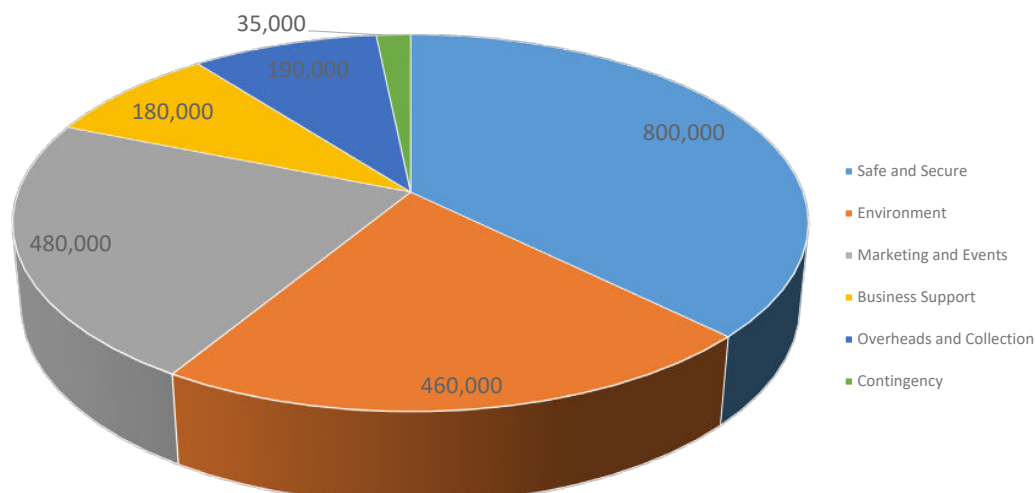
Anna Michalak – Mleczko

Budgets

We are budgeting for an expected levy income of £389,000 per year. In addition, we expect to leverage additional expenditure of £40,000 (about 10% of the levy) per year, giving a total of £429,000 per year, £2,145,000 over the five-year term of the BID. We plan to carry a contingency fund of £35,000 through the five-year term.

We will allocate spending as follows:

Safe and Secure	£800,000
Environment	£460,000
Marketing and events	£480,000
Business support	£180,000
Overheads and collection	£190,000
Contingency	£35,000
=	£2,145,000





Accountability and Transparency (Governance)

If the ballot is successful, the BID will be managed and delivered by an independent, not-for-profit company, which will operate as a Company Limited by Guarantee.

The Board will comprise a maximum of 12 directors. Levy payers will vote for up to eight Directors. These eight directors will have the option to co-opt two more directors where specific competences are required. A further two directors will be co-opted to the board, one each from Slough Borough Council (normally the Economy portfolio holder) and Thames Valley Police.

The levy payer elected Directors will be subject to annual re-election at the Annual Levy Payers' Meeting. Co-opted Directors will be reviewed at the first Board meeting after the Annual Levy Payers' Meeting. The represented stakeholders will nominate their own representatives for the Board to agree. The BID Board will meet monthly, or as otherwise agreed by Directors.

The BID Board will appoint a Chair from the Directors, who will be a representative of a levy-paying business.

Board meeting minutes and Board reports will be made available on request to all levy paying businesses.

Provided that the BID is meeting its overall objectives and subject to approval at the Annual Levy Payers' Meeting, it shall have the ability to vary service delivery and expenditure allocation according to the changing demands of levy payers. However, any change to the BID boundary or to the headline levy rate would require an alteration ballot.

The BID will file annual accounts, compiled by independent accountants, with Companies House. The accounts will be available to all levy payers on request. An annual report on activities, including finances, will be presented at the annual Levy Payers' Meeting.

The BID will only provide services over and above the provisions made by statutory bodies such as Thames Valley Police and Slough Borough Council. A draft Operating Agreement, which includes the council's Baseline Services commitments, is available at www.sloughbid.co.uk

For information about Slough BID, please contact:

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Website: www.sloughbid.co.uk



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