

INTERIM REVIEW OF BID ACTIVITY AND SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES OCTOBER 2020



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**
B BUSINESS I MPROVEMENT D ISTRICT

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We know that currently it is a difficult time for many. Since lockdown began, the BID has remained open and operational supporting businesses throughout the pandemic. As a result of the COVID 19 situation and to enable us to support you in recovery in this unprecedented situation, the Government has granted any BID renewing this year an extension of 6 months. To that end we are happy to announce the re-ballot will take place in March 2021.

As a consequence of this extension, the current BID arrangements, plans and levy criteria will therefore continue until the end of March 2021, for which a pro-rata levy bill will be raised in September to cover this period. This is a positive measure that will not only allow us to support you and your business over the next several months but will also allow us to re-engage with you regarding the BID re-ballot, to achieve a positive and successful bid re-ballot.

If you would like to be further involved with the BID or have any ideas of projects or activities that would benefit the area please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at – manager@nulbid.co.uk

Over the course of the past 6 months, in line with government guidelines around social distancing and social gatherings the BID have been forced to cancel 5 of our main events that we would normally have brought to the area to encourage local spending and drive footfall. Due to the pandemic we were unable to do this and as lockdown began, we immediately changed our focus to providing direct business support through these exceedingly difficult times.



TOP LINE ACHIEVEMENTS

✓ CCTV

90% of the first phase of the new CCTV system is now installed and up and running. In 2019 the BID made a substantial capital contribution to the scheme after lengthy consultation with businesses.



✓ SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

Throughout the pandemic the BID has remained open and operational and supported businesses with the delivery projects and ensuring latest guidelines and information was readily available.



✓ SECURED GOVERNMENT FUNDING

NUL BID were part of an industry wide campaign to support BIDS throughout the crisis and were successful in securing Government funding for BIDS through the BIDS Resilience Fund.



✓ HIGH STREET RE-OPENED

Worked in partnership with the Local Authority for a safe re-opening of the High Street in June. This included identifying hot spots for queuing issues, free parking, signage installation around the area to encourage social distancing.



✓ PAVEMENT LICENCES

Worked with partners at the Borough Council and County Council to effect a road closure on Pepper Street to allow businesses to utilise the outdoor space for trading - this has meant they could apply for pavements licences through the newly announced legislation.



DELIVERY OF PROJECTS

HAND SANITISING STATIONS –

were installed to encourage people to regularly clean their hands whilst using the town centre.

LARGE WINDOW VINYL –

were put up to encourage social distancing and to thank key workers and the local community for continuing the support the town.

SUPPORTED LOCAL NHS CHARITIES –

by hosting a Monster Hero Safari trail to encourage footfall and raise much needed funds.



CHILDREN'S 'LOCKDOWN' COLOURING COMPETITION –

to engage with the local community and encourage people to share their lockdown memories and win vouchers to spend in the local area.



WORKED IN PARTNERSHIP –

with the markets team from the Borough Council and the local policing team on successful delivery of 3 Sunday Record Fairs. These events saw an increase of 30% in footfall compared to a normal Sunday. We are continuing to work with partners to look at further projects to deliver in the area to drive footfall and visits to the town.



Sunday 30 Aug 2020



SOCIAL DISTANCING BOLLARDS –

have been created with floral designs to make the area look attractive as well as safe.



ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY –

through social media competitions to win vouchers for the local High Street.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

BUSINESS GRANTS –

the BID stepped in to help businesses get their grants swiftly through the local authority – business that were in financial difficulty were given priority.

RE-OPENING KITS –

were offered to businesses ahead of the wider re-opening of shops and businesses in June. These included: Floor Stickers, Social Distancing Posters, Face Coverings, Hand Sanitiser. Over 200 packs were given to businesses allowing them to have the correct measures in place and re-open safely.



SHOP AND LOVE LOCAL –

social media campaigns have been run throughout June, July, August and September to encourage the local community to continue to support the town during the pandemic.

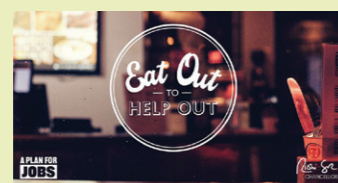
EXTRA PPE –

was offered to ALL BID businesses in the form of face masks. 15 masks were offered to each business. To date we have given over 800 masks to businesses in the area.



SHOP SAFE ON SUNDAY –

Campaign has been launched to encourage people to make use of FREE parking on Sundays.



EAT OUT TO HELP OUT –

all businesses within the BID that took part in this scheme were highlighted on a dedicated page on the BID website and posts were regularly shared through social media channels.



JOB RETENTION SCHEME –

the BID liaised with businesses about the furlough scheme and worked one to one with businesses to guide them through application process.

SUPPORTED 'RAISE THE BAR' CAMPAIGN –

through promotion to lobby the Government to increase support for businesses with a rateable value of over £51k.



ACCESS TO FREE TRAINING AND WEBINARS –

was shared with businesses from institutions such as the Staffordshire University, Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and HMRC to upskill staff and advice business owners.

BID AMBASSADORS –

one of the BID Ambassadors was returned to work in readiness for the wider re-opening of shops and businesses in June. They have assisted with any queuing issues and reported on safety issues within the town centre, checked on closed businesses from a security aspect and reported any problems to the LA or Police.

NETWORKING –

our monthly networking sessions continued through lockdown and beyond via Zoom. This has allowed local business to share ideas and work together during these difficult times.

You can find out how to join these sessions here – <http://www.connectsnetwork.co.uk/>

If you would like a visit from our BID Ambassadors or the BID Manager to discuss how we can support you do not hesitate to get in touch – manager@nulbid.co.uk



RENEWAL

VOTE YES
IN 2020 ✓



The preparation for renewal of the BID had started last year with an original timeline for the ballot being in June. This had meant that as Lockdown started the new BID Proposal and Business Plan was in the process of being finalised.

It soon became clear that dramatic change of the business environment was under way and that it would have been wrong to proceed with a ballot and a BID Proposal and Business Plan where business priorities had changed so much.

The Board, the BID Steering Group and Business Working Groups all agreed that we should completely review the draft BID Proposal and Business Plan to ensure that the BID could provide the right support for businesses in the future. This also meant that the timeline for the ballot had to be moved.

On 25th March as part of the Coronavirus Bill, BIDs which were due to complete their five year term this year were granted permission to extend their life to the end of March 2021.

As a consequence of this, the timeline for the Newcastle-under-Lyme BID renewal was

reviewed to provide time to re-evaluate business needs and priorities and for the ballot to take place in March next year.

Since April and May we have been assessing the actual and potential impact of COVID on businesses, working with business owners through individual interviews, surveys and Working Groups, what their key priorities are now and for the future.

Inevitably these have changed and as a result a new plan is being pulled together which takes account of the desire of businesses to work even more closely together and take advantage of the desire of the people living in and around Newcastle-under-Lyme to use their local town even more as a focus for their community.

If you have not already had a chance to input your views into the new BID Proposal please contact us so that we can try to make sure that the new plan reflects the needs and priorities of businesses in the BID area as much as possible.

The plan is being drafted up in November ready for finalising in December for the ballot in March.

CHRISTMAS



With the current situation Christmas is likely to look a little different this year. Sadly, we will not be hosting the big Christmas Lights event this year.

However, we understand that Christmas should still be celebrated, especially after such a tough year so we are planning on putting up lights and hosting a series of smaller, more community focused events and projects

to try and attract some footfall into the area, as well as encouraging the local community to #ShopLocal this Christmas and support the High Street.

The BID welcome any ideas and suggestions for events throughout the festive period from our businesses – please contact manager@nulbid.co.uk or call us in the office on **01782 922712**.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Since the beginning of lockdown in March Government guidelines and rules have changed rapidly and frequently. We have ensured that businesses across all sectors have been kept up to date with this information – we have done this by:

- **E-Bulletins** – sent weekly during March, April and May advising of any change in guidelines and regulations.
- **Re-Opening advice and Guidelines** – sent across sectors for Hairdressers, Retail, Hospitality, Health and Beauty, Gyms and Sport Venues in preparation for re-opening.
- **Dedicated COVID19 Page** – was immediately set up on the website with a downloadable Business Support Guide updated each week with latest funding opportunities, grant schemes, information on the Job Retention Scheme and latest issued guidelines – this is still updated each week and can be found here –

<https://www.newcastleunderlyme.org/covid-19-advice/>

- **NUL BID Business Social Media Group** – has been used to share latest e-bulletins, guidelines and business support guide. This group is open to all BID area businesses and can be found here –

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/233545357455812>



SO WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

As we learn to live in the 'new normal' the BID is working hard to ensure that we create opportunities that drive footfall, investment and growth to the area. Significant projects and schemes that the BID is either delivering or contributing to are:

- **Newcastle under Lyme Town Deal Investment Plan –**

The Town Deal for Newcastle is an exciting opportunity to bid for significant investment of up to £25 million to facilitate future economic growth. To be in with a chance to access the funding, a Town Investment Plan (TIP) must be submitted by the end of October 2020.

The Town Deal Board and the Borough Council together with our consultants, AECOM are working hard to put together a TIP that will bring real and lasting economic benefits to Newcastle town centre and the surrounding area. The BID has had a significant input into the Town Deal plans having both the BID Manager and the BID Chairman sit on the Board for the scheme.

- **Future High Street Fund** – The BID has been a significant partner in the process sitting on the Future High Streets Fund Board and inputting into the plans for NUL. In August 2019, the Council was invited to progress to Phase Two of the Future High Street Fund bidding process and awarded funding to build a business case outlining key aspirations for the town. The submission bid could bring in up to £25 million for town centre regeneration.

- ✓ The redevelopment of the Ryecroft site as a key strategic anchor for the town, using the site for a mix of employment and residential uses, a new multi-storey car park, new public space and more direct pedestrian and cycle connections to the residential areas at the North of the town centre.
- ✓ The creation of a series of linked plazas and public spaces with attractive pedestrian routes.
- ✓ A development opportunity to replace the ageing Midway multi-storey car park with residential units.
- ✓ Complementing an improving offer from the street market by creating a community event space in the heart of the town.

- **£1.75 million Arts Council Grant for Appetite Expansion** –

The BID is proud to be part of a local consortium led by New Vic Theatre. This has been awarded a grant of £1,750,000 as part of Arts Council's Creative People and Places programme to expand the work of the Appetite arts project into Newcastle-under-Lyme. Activity was put on hold during lockdown but we are pleased to say that we should be able to see some activity happening as soon as November this year.



“

THE TOWN DEAL FOR NEWCASTLE IS AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO BID FOR SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT OF UP TO £25 MILLION TO FACILITATE FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH.”

HOW TO CONTACT US AND GET INVOLVED

**VOTE YES
IN 2020** 

There are lots of ways you can get involved with your BID and by working together we can really make a difference and make Newcastle-under-Lyme a great place to LOVE, WORK and ENJOY!

HOW TO PAY

Telephone – Payment may be made by debit or credit card by telephoning the 24hr automated payment line on 0345 234 9977 at any time. Please select option 7 and ensure your card details are available. This automated system will issue you with a transaction number to confirm payment, which you should note for your own records.

Online – Log on to the Council’s website at www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk and follow the instructions. Payments are accepted by debit or credit card and you will be issued with a transaction number to confirm payment, which you should note for your own records.

Bank Credit Transfer – Notify your bank of the amounts and dates of your payments. Allow five working days for payments to reach the Council’s bank account. The Council’s bankers are Lloyd’s Bank PLC, 114-116 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 3BD. Please quote the Council’s bank account number 00747929, Sort Code 30-00-03 and your own BID account number shown on the front or the correspondence.

FINANCES

THESE ARE BASED ON A 6 MONTH PERIOD (APRIL – SEPT). THE BID HAS BEEN GRANTED 6 MONTHS EXTENSION TO MARCH 2021 AS PER THE CORONAVIRUS BILL MARCH 2020.

EXPENDITURE	TOTAL (ACTUAL AND COMMITTED AS AT SEPT 2020)	BUDGET	INCOME	INCOME TO DATE (AS AT SEPT 2020)
OBJECTIVE 1	£7,585.00	£40,188.00	LEVY	£74,968.00
OBJECTIVE 2	£29,679.00	£68,633.00	OTHER INCOME	£16,860.00
OBJECTIVE 3	£3,415.00	£13,048.00	TOTAL	£91,828.00
CENTRAL ADMIN	£6,450.00	£24,408.00		
LEVY COLLECTION COSTS	£8,000.00	£8,000.00		
TOTALS	£55,543.00	£146,277.00		

UNDER SPEND DUE TO FACT THAT LEVY COLLECTION FOR APRIL 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 2020 IS NOT IN LINE WITH BUDGET DUE TO CORONAVIRUS CHALLENGES. LEVY CURRENTLY AT AROUND 50% OF BUDGET AS OF SEPTEMBER HAS MEANT THAT CASH FLOW HAS RESTRICTED SPEND.