

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) STEERING GROUP VICTORIA QUAY, EDINBURGH - 8 MARCH 2006

Present:

David Henderson, Scottish Executive Finance & Central Services Department (Chair)

David Davidson, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)

Euan Dobson, Scottish Enterprise

Vicki Lewis, COSLA

Charlie Shanlin, COSLA

Andy McCann, Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

Jacquie Reilly, Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM)

Garry Clark, Scottish Chambers of Commerce (SCC)

Ken Jobling, Scottish Executive

Sarah Wiggins, British Property Federation

Secretariat:

Billy McKenzie, Scottish Executive Finance & Central Services Department

Georgie Duncan, Scottish Executive Finance & Central Services Department

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Apologies were noted on behalf of Fiona Moriarty of the Scottish Retail Consortium and Andy Godfrey of Boots.

1.2 David Henderson asked members whether there were any conflicts of interest regarding the applications and the organisations represented around the table. Although some members did represent organisations who were either directly or indirectly involved in some of the applications, those present made clear that they had not been involved in preparing applications and it was agreed that the members concerned were sufficiently distant from the applications to enable them to make an unbiased assessment.

1.3 David Henderson advised the group that a BID Pilot Project Director had been appointed by an appointment board involving Fiona Moriarty, Nikola Plunkett and himself. The successful candidate was Ian Davison Porter who has extensive experience of working in the private sector, including town centre improvement initiatives.

2. Minutes of Meeting

A round-table discussion then took place on each of the 5 categories.

2.1 Prospering Town Centre

There were 2 applications received from Stirling and Falkirk. As Stirling is classified as a city, and therefore has access to funding that only Cities can access such as the Cities Growth Fund, the Group considered that its application had to be considered under the Prospering City Centre category. A discussion took place regarding the merits of the Falkirk application. The Group agreed that it was strong and met the required criteria, particularly with regard to the current town centre management structure, and that there was a clear understanding of the BID philosophy of business

engagement and autonomy. **The group agreed that Falkirk would be recommended to ministers as one of the Pathfinder locations.**

2.2 City Centre Renewal

One application, from Inverness, was received for this category. All members agreed that the application was strong and met the required criteria. It was noted that Inverness had in place a solid town centre management structure which would drive the project forward. **The group agreed that Inverness would be recommended to ministers as one of the Pathfinder locations.**

2.3 Business Park/Science Campus

One application was received for this category from Clackmannanshire Business Liaison Initiative. Some concern was expressed regarding the proposals contained in the application, particularly with regard to whether they were sufficiently business focussed in their nature. In addition, the fact that the proposals covered 5 business parks in the Clackmannanshire area raised doubts as to whether the application met the criteria. However, due to the strong desire to take forward a BID Pilot in a Business Park area to demonstrate its potential, **the Group agreed that the application would be recommended to Ministers as one of the Pathfinder locations.** However, it was also agreed that the newly-appointed Project Director would need to work closely with the applicants to ensure the Pilot engaged with the business community and that the proposals were further developed.

2.4 Prospering City Centre Area.

Out of the three applicants, Edinburgh and Glasgow were considered the strongest contenders. The group found it difficult to identify a single candidate as both applications had strengths and weaknesses. Whereas Glasgow were starting from a lower base as regards the strength of the current city centre management partnership, the development of a Pilot would help to build on this. In relation to Edinburgh, there was a strong partnership already in place but it was felt by the Group that it would be helpful towards the future success of BIDs if both major Scottish cities were ready to take forward a full BID Project once the legislation was in place. Following discussion on the Demonstration project, **it was agreed that both Glasgow and Edinburgh should be recommended to Ministers for Pathfinder status.**

2.5 Demonstration Project

There were 7 applications under this category, although the Group agreed that the Inverness application did not meet the criteria due to its status as a City. During the discussion it became clear that the Group's view was that, although the applications all met the criteria, none were sufficiently strong to merit full funding. **It was therefore agreed that Bathgate, as the strongest candidate, should be recommended to Ministers for inclusion as an additional Pathfinder.** The £50,000 funding could be used to engage more fully with the business community in order to ensure that viable proposals which met the needs of the local business community could be developed.

3. Funding

Due to the decision taken not to recommend a Demonstration Project, but to recommend 6 pathfinder projects, an additional £200,000 remained unallocated. The Group agreed that this be set aside as additional funding for use during the year depending on the progress made by each pilot.

4. Publicising

The next step was to submit a report to Ministers. Thereafter, it was likely that an announcement on the locations would be made via a press release and that in due course the Minister for Finance and Public Service Reform would visit one of the projects. It was agreed that any press release would be passed to members, for information, in advance of issue to the media.

5. Future role of the BIDs Steering Group

5.1 It was agreed that the Group would in future meet on a quarterly basis (June 06, September 06, December 06, March 07, and June 07) with its main task to monitor progress of the pilot projects. The Secretariat would be in touch to arrange dates.

5.2 The next meeting in June could be used to receive reports on each of the successful applicants and would be attended by the BID Project Director.

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE
March 2006