

To: Leadership Board

On: 19 June 2019

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Paisley First Renewal Ballot

1. Summary

- 1.1 Paisley First was registered as the Business Improvement District for Paisley Town Centre in January 2015 following the outcome of a successful ballot of town centre businesses on 13 November 2014.
- 1.2 BIDs have a legislative basis under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2006. After operating for a 5 year term, another successful ballot must take place for the BID to continue operating. Under the legislation, it is for the Local Authority to conduct the ballot on behalf of the BID. The Local Authority also has a power of veto in certain circumstances which are outlined in the Act. The ballot may only be held if it is demonstrated that at least 5% of those eligible to vote are in support of the renewal ballot being held.
- 1.3 Paisley First have written to the Chief Executive confirming their intention to issue a formal request to the Council to put the BID proposals to ballot.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Renfrewshire Council confirms that in principle it supports the renewal of Paisley First Business Improvement District subject to approval of the BID proposals
- 2.2 That the Council notes that the Bid proposals must be submitted to the Council and the Scottish government by 18 July 2019.

- 2.3 That the Chief Executive be authorised to consider the BID proposal and determine whether to veto the proposal as explained in paragraph 3.8 below and otherwise to exercise the council's functions in relation to the BID procedure.
 - 2.4 Subject to the approval of the bid proposal as outlined in 2.3, that the Chief executive be authorised to exercise positive votes on behalf of the Council during the BID ballot.
 - 2.5 Subject to a successful ballot outcome, delegates to the Chief Executive to put in place the necessary arrangements for the collection of the BID levy, and for finalising of the terms of the operating agreement.
 - 2.6 Notes that the outcome of the ballot process will be reported to a future meeting of the Leadership Board.
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3. Background

- 3.1 Paisley First was registered as the Business Improvement District for Paisley Town Centre in January 2015 following the outcome of a successful ballot of town centre businesses on 13 November 2014. BIDs have a legislative basis under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2006.
- 3.2 The Paisley First Board of Directors is made up of local business owners, there are 13 positions on the board, including one position for Renfrewshire Council. This position is currently held by the Director of Communities, Housing and Planning.
- 3.3 After operating for a 5-year term, another successful ballot must take place for the BID to continue operating. Under the legislation, it is for the Local Authority to conduct the ballot on behalf of the BID. The Local Authority also has a power of veto in certain circumstances which are outlined in the Act. The ballot may only be held if it is demonstrated that at least 5% of those eligible to vote are in support of the renewal ballot being held.
- 3.4 Paisley First has conducted a survey of Levy Payers and has gathered evidence of the support of more than 10% of the levy payers for the bid renewal ballot to take place.
- 3.5 Paisley First has reviewed the boundary and the levy charged as part of the preparations for the renewal ballot and has decided that there will be no change to the current boundary or to the levy.
- 3.6 Renfrewshire Council is required to commission the ballot and the Electoral Reform Commission has been appointed to conduct the ballot on our behalf. Ballot papers will be issued to all levy payers in September 2019 with the ballot closing on 24 October 2019. The Council is also responsible to collect the bid levy, and to deliver the baseline services as set out in the operating agreement.

- 3.7 Other key milestone during the BID process are:
- a) 20 June 2019 – draft BID proposal to be submitted by Paisley First to Scotland's Improvement Districts
 - b) 18 July 2019 – Paisley First to submit the BID proposal to Renfrewshire Council and Scottish Government
 - c) 15 August 2019 – Renfrewshire Council to confirm whether or not it is vetoing the BID proposals
 - d) 29 August 2019 – Paisley First requests the Council to instruct the ballot holder to hold the ballot
 - e) 15 September 2019 – ballot papers issued
 - f) 25 October 2019 - Ballot result announcement
- 3.8 The legislation governing the BID ballot process requires that the Council formally intimates to Paisley First and the Scottish Government a notice stating whether the Council are or are not vetoing the proposals. The Council can only veto the proposals on a limited number of grounds including conflict with any Council plan or conflict to any material extent with any policy contained in a document published by the Council or that it imposes a significantly disproportionate financial burden on any person or classes of persons entitled to vote during the ballot.
- 3.9 The Council will be entitled to vote in the BID ballot in respect of each of its properties within the BID area. It is proposed that the chief executive will cast the votes on the council's behalf during the ballot.
- 3.10 Paisley First has delivered a number of successful initiatives over the past 4 years including successful public art trails and summer and winter events, such as the Pride of Paisley, and Jurassic Bricks and Winterfest, they have sponsored a mural trail, shop front grants, and provided hanging baskets for levy payers, and provided business training and networking events, support and marketing, and advocacy on a range of issues. They have also played a key role working with the Council and community safety partners on Purple Flag accreditation which has recently been renewed.
- 3.11 Paisley First will publish a Business Plan for 2020 – 2025 to set out the main issues and priorities that Paisley First will take forward in the next period. The business plan is currently in draft form and is available on request.
- 3.12 A report will be brought to a future meeting to advise on the outcome of the BID renewal ballot.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – Renfrewshire Council pays a levy in respect of properties within the Bid Boundary.
 2. **HR & Organisational** – The collection of the BID levy is the responsibility of Renfrewshire Council. Systems and arrangements for collection are already established.
 3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - Our Renfrewshire is thriving – the activities of Paisley First contribute to the animation and activity within Paisley Town Centre.
 - Our Renfrewshire is safe – Paisley First work with Renfrewshire Council and the Community Safety Partnership on initiatives such as Purple Flag accreditation which contributes to a safer night time economy.
 - Working together to improve outcomes – Paisley First work closely with the Council and partners on a range of issues and provide events and activities which are complementary to the Council's activities.
 4. **Legal** – Paisley First is established as a Business Improvement District under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2006. The requirement for a renewal ballot after the 5 year term and the requirements for Renfrewshire Council as the local authority are established in the legislation.
 5. **Property/Assets** – n/a
 6. **Information Technology** – n/a
 7. **Equality & Human Rights** –
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
 8. **Health & Safety** – n/a.
 9. **Procurement** – Renfrewshire Council have appointed the Electoral Reform Commission to conduct the ballot on behalf of Paisley First.
 10. **Risk** – There is a risk that the ballot will fail to achieve the required level of support from levy payers.
 11. **Privacy Impact** – n/a
 12. **COSLA Policy Position** –n/a.
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List of Background Papers

Background Paper 1 – “Paisley First” Proposed Business Improvement District (BID) paper to Economy & Jobs Policy Board 28 January 2015.

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Communities, Housing and Planning Services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting.

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12 June 2019