

**To: Leadership Board**

**On: 4 December 2024**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Paisley First Renewal Ballot**

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## **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. At its meeting of 14 June 2024, the Leadership Board agreed that the Council should support the conduct of this ballot. At its meeting of 20 September, the Board agreed that the Council would abstain in the ballot. It further agreed that subject to a successful ballot outcome, authority would be delegated 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. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Board notes the result of the renewal ballot for the Paisley First Business Improvement District and that Paisley First were successful in getting approval for a third term as the business improvement district for Paisley Town Centre and that work is ongoing to conclude the required operating agreement between Paisley First and the Council.
- 2.2 That the Board agrees that the Head of Marketing & Communications will replace the Head of Economy and Development as the Renfrewshire Council nominated Director on the Board of Paisley First with effect from January 2025.

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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, and there are currently 10 Board Members, including one position for Renfrewshire Council. This position is currently held by the Head of Economy and Development.
- 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. At its meeting of 14 June 2024, the Leadership Board agreed that the Council should support the conduct of this ballot, and that a further report should be brought to this meeting of the Leadership Board setting out the details of the BID Proposal and officers' recommendations on how the Council's votes in the ballot could be cast.
- 3.4 Following that decision, the Council commissioned the ballot and Civica Election Services Ltd (formerly Electoral Reform Services) were appointed to conduct the ballot on our behalf. Ballot papers were issued to all levy payers by 12 September with the ballot closing on 24 October 2024.
- 3.5 The ballot outcome was announced on 28 October 2024. The total number of votes (excluding rejected ballot papers {6}) was 260 out of a total number of eligible premises of 673. The return rate (turnout) in respect of those eligible to vote is (37.24%). The return rate (turnout) in respect of rateable values is 51.77%. Of the votes cast, 201 (77.3%) votes were in favour of Paisley First continuing and 59 (22.7%) were not in favour. The rateable values of the relevant properties in respect of which the votes were cast: an aggregate rateable value of £5,152,800 voted in favour, with an aggregate rateable value of £926,400 against. The ballot therefore met all four tests set out in the legislation and was declared in favour of renewal of Paisley First for the 5 years commencing in January 2025.
- 3.6 Following the announcement of the ballot result, officers have been working with Paisley First to revise the operating agreement for the next term including the arrangements for collection of the bid levy which is the responsibility of Renfrewshire Council on behalf of Paisley First. Delegated authority was given to the Chief executive by the Board in September 2024 to put in place necessary arrangements for the collection of the BID levy and for finalising the terms of the operating agreement.
- 3.7 Renfrewshire Council is currently represented on the Board of Directors for Paisley First by the Head of Economy and Development. It is proposed that

the Head of Marketing & Communications will replace the Head of Economy and Development as the Renfrewshire Council nominated Director on the Board of Paisley First with effect from January 2025.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The financial implications to the Council of the ballot being successful were reported to Board in September 2024. There are no further implications arising from this report.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – 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.
  - 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 as the report sets out the ballot result and confirms the appointment of the Council's nominee on the Board of Directors of Paisley First.
8. **Health & Safety** – n/a.
9. **Procurement** – Renfrewshire Council have appointed the Civica 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.
13. **Children’s Rights** – n/a as the report seeks to confirm how the Council will cast it’s votes in the upcoming ballot on the proposed renewal of the Paisley BID.
14. **Climate Risk** – 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.*

*Paisley First Renewal Ballot Reports to Leadership Board 14 June 2024 and 20 September 2024*

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