

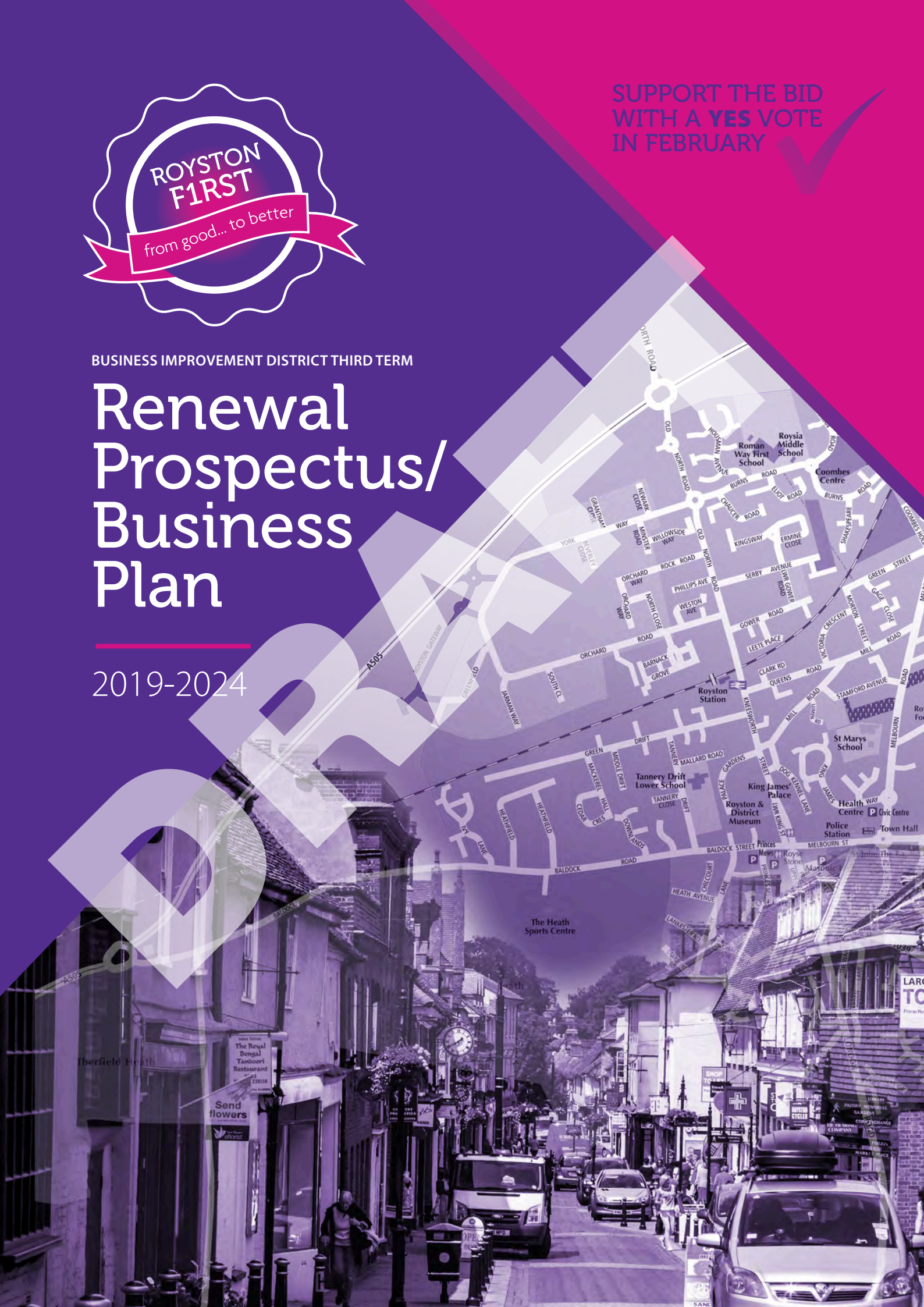


SUPPORT THE BID
WITH A **YES** VOTE
IN FEBRUARY

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT THIRD TERM

Renewal Prospectus/ Business Plan

2019-2024



Life as we know it

- ✓ Royston Town Website
- ✓ Royston Picture Palace
- ✓ Street Cleaning
Selective deep-cleansing in parts of the town
- ✓ Tourist Information
Royston Information Centre and visitor guides including 'Discover Royston'
- ✓ Operation Artemis
Providing additional policing for both town and industrial estate
- ✓ Easter Trail
- ✓ Pirate Trail
- ✓ Christmas Trail
- ✓ Music Trail
- ✓ Town Map
- ✓ Parking
One hour free parking via scratchcards and free after three

SUPPORT THE BID
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Life without the BID

If the BID fails to gain the required level of support at the ballot then moves will be made to wind-up the operations of the BID -all the activities and projects currently carried out or being proposed simply would cease.

Competition across the region is already strong and BIDs operating in locations such as Hitchin, Cambridge, Letchworth, Stevenage, Peterborough and Milton Keynes will continue to increase their appeal, teasing away customers, companies and employees. Failure to gain a 'Yes' vote for the BID will inevitably result in decline in sales and overall profitability for many of the companies trading in the BID area.

Just imagine Royston without the following:

PROJECTS	CONTINUE AFTER A 'NO' VOTE?
Operation Artemis - late night, weekend uniformed police patrols in the town centre and around the industrial estates	✗ Patrols would cease
Free-After-Three - free parking in the town centre car parks after 3:00pm	? Royston First majority funding partner
Parking Scratchcards - offering 1 hour's free parking in town centre (distributed to businesses outside the town centre)	✗ Scratchcards would be withdrawn
Christmas Lights - cross street lights in the High Street and Angel Pavement; decorations at The Cross, Market Hill, Fish Hill Square, Town Hall	? Royston First jointly funds with RTC
Replacement Christmas Lights 2020 - regulations for powered circuits will necessitate new lights	✗ Estimated cost £20K+
Royston Information Centre - plus collateral, including: tear-off maps, the accommodation guide, the guide to clubs/associations, the shortened Royston Trail guide (and possibly the Trail Guide). Also, library opening Thursday mornings plus visitor research/outreach	✗ Total estimated cost £25K p.a.
Annual Children's Trails - every year the Easter Trail, the Music Trail, the Pirate Trail and Rudolph's Christmas Trail get several thousand visitors to take a detailed look at the town centre's retailers	✗
Eatery film short - featuring every eating place in the town centre and shown in the cinema to 10,000 plus attendees p.a.	✗ Without update unusable within 2 years
Retailer film short - featuring over 80 retailers throughout Royston and shown in the cinema to 10,000 plus attendees p.a.	✗ Without update unusable within 2 years
Royston Focus - a complete list of all consumer businesses in Royston, sorted by trade and delivered to 15,000 households in and around Royston	✗
Pavement Deep Cleans - conducted up to three times per year on Market Hill, High Street, Angel Pavement	✗ Not included in NHDC cleaning provision
Royston Town website www.roystontown.uk - constantly maintained in order to provide 'everything Royston' in one place - currently receiving thousands of hits per month	✗ No maintenance = no use
New Projects - such as the Shuttle Bus, the Dockless Bikes, the Park-and-Ride or Multi-Storey car park, landmark illumination, new park-based events, lobbying for an incubator unit, etc.	✗ Nobody else will do this

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From good...
to better

www.roystonfirst.com

Foreword by the Chairman of Royston First



I am pleased to be writing to ask for your vote of support to renew the mandate to keep Royston First Business Improvement District ('BID') operating for a third successive term, for the continued benefit of all of the businesses in the town. For the next term, the vote will be made by approximately 160 focussed businesses and organisations that have their business premises in Royston and that will be contributing to the success of the BID through this next term period.

Together with my fellow directors and many other advisory representatives of businesses in the town, we have invested our time freely in supporting the success of the BID. In these challenging times of declining town footfall and general economic uncertainty, I believe the Royston First BID offers a 'force for good' and promotes a strong sense of business community spirit for the town of Royston. Both myself and the company I represent, that will continue to be one of the larger contributors of the BID levy, feel that Royston First has provided an excellent return on our levy investments. By voting in favour of retaining the BID, we can mount a positive response to many of the issues that increasingly challenge our town and its business community.

Royston First has had some outstanding successes during the ten years in which the BID has operated including the Royston Picture Palace, Royston Information Centre, Policing Projects (including Operation Artemis), Free Parking initiatives, the Christmas lighting, festivals and trails. Importantly, the BID team have been successful in securing matched-funding of over £INSERT in cash and services over the first two BID terms, thereby making our contributions even more influential.

Having concluded an extensive consultation exercise over the past few months, we are now able to demonstrate support for both the work of the BID to continue and for a series of new projects to be introduced. The range of activities being proposed are fully set out within this document and all have one thing in common – they are all designed to maintain the push to make Royston an economic centre of excellence in this part of North Hertfordshire.

It is important to ensure you know who in your organisation is casting this vote and check that they have all the information they need to make this vital decision for Royston. Without a 'Yes' vote, all current projects scheduled to be continued by the BID (see pages ...) and all projects proposed for this third term (see pages ...) will be unable to continue or commence, as there are no known alternative suppliers of these valuable services.

Our website, at www.roystonfirst.com provides lots more information. So please look out for the ballot paper and then mark it with the cross that commits you and the BID to making a better, brighter and safer Royston for our immediate future.

David Campbell
Chairman, Royston First BID Company Ltd

SUPPORT THE BID
WITH A YES VOTE
IN FEBRUARY



A summary of the proposals

Royston needs to ensure that it remains competitive and attracts more customers into the town centre while building up the profile and success of the many companies that operate on our key industrial estates. Businesses have indicated that we need to continue the work of Royston First to develop footfall & trade. The proposals to achieve this are summarised in this document.

THE OPPORTUNITY

This is your unique chance to continue to invest circa £1M of extra funding in Royston over the next 5 years. The projects have been carefully selected to positively impact on as many businesses as possible. This is therefore a huge opportunity for businesses to actively participate in and continue to take ownership of the enhancement of trading conditions in and around Royston.

FUNDING THE PROPOSALS

- The BID would be funded by a 1.50% levy on the rateable value of all eligible businesses within the proposed BID area (n.b. this levy was 2% in the first BID term; 1.75% in the second BID term)
- In keeping with central government policy, small businesses, with a rateable value of £15,000 or less will be exempt from the levy but may choose to make a voluntary contribution if they wish. In recognition of the large amounts involved, contributions from a single hereditament with a Rateable Value of £1M+ will be capped at £15,000
- The levy has been carefully calculated to provide sufficient funds to deliver the range of improvement projects that businesses have identified as a result of a detailed consultation process

THE BALLOT

- As required by law, a postal ballot of all eligible businesses within the BID boundary will be conducted
- Voters will receive a ballot paper **around the 5th of Feb 2019 and will have until 5pm on 6th of March 2019 to submit their vote**
- If the ballot is successful, as determined by a majority of businesses voting in favour by both number and by aggregate of rateable value, the levy will become mandatory on all businesses in the BID area with a rateable value of £15,000 and above
- The BID would then renew its services on 1st April 2019 for 5 years until 31st March 2024

BID MANAGEMENT

- The BID would continue to be run by a private-sector led Board of Directors, all of whom would represent businesses or organisations paying the BID levy
- The Board would be responsible for the delivery of projects, ensuring that they are delivered on time, within budget and to the highest standards possible
- The Board would apply meticulous rigour and probity to the BID function, offering openness, transparency and inclusivity

A reminder of what a BID is

A BID is a business-led and business funded body formed to improve a defined commercial area. Most are governed by a board made up of BID levy payers who represent the various trading components within the BID area. This means that all businesses have a genuine voice in deciding and directing how they want the trading environment around them to be improved.

There are more than 300 BIDs already operating across the UK, with the majority focusing on town or city centres. Royston is unique in the fact that it supports both the town centre and its adjacent industrial estates. Businesses report that the benefits BIDs have brought about include:

- Businesses able to influence the delivery of projects beneficial to the town
- Improved promotion and marketing of the town and its successes
- Increased footfall and dwell time in the town centre - leading to increased turnover for businesses in the town centre and a greater level of service provision for employees
- Added vibrancy and vitality (or, at the very least, the avoidance of decline!)

- Many more networking opportunities within the local business community
- Improved relations with Councils, Police and other public agencies

Following ten years of BID success in Royston, our research suggests that there is a willingness on the part of a majority of businesses here to see the BID continue and they have asked us to seek another 'Yes' vote to continue Royston First's work through to 2024.

Johnson Matthey's original involvement with the RF BID was to sustain the town which hosts the company's largest site. We continue to support that objective and consider the BID's activities ever more critical in the face of tightening Local Authority budgets.

We are particularly interested in the new BID's ambitions with respect to a greater regional influence. Projects such as a business incubator unit delivered locally would represent a significant step forward for Royston.

John Gourd
Site Director, Johnson Matthey



Our Vision

By working closely with our partners, the Royston First BID exists to grow our local economy, improve facilities for the community, enhance safety and security, boost visitor numbers and raise the overall profile and appeal of Royston as a significant trading and manufacturing destination.

Some of the benefits that your business will enjoy

Because our BID is spread across the town centre and the industrial estate, we thought it would be useful to provide just a few examples of how the renewed BID would benefit each sector across both locations:

PROFESSIONAL, MANUFACTURING AND COMPANY SECTORS

- Improved connections between businesses and networking opportunities
- A greater opportunity to recruit & retain high-quality staff
- Enhanced ability to promote products and services both to Royston and beyond
- A cleaner, safer and more vibrant BID area for both staff and customers
- A powerful and proven, collective voice on key business issues

INDEPENDENT AND NATIONAL RETAILERS

- Detailed insight into local trading factors and conditions
- Collaboration over seasonal trading campaigns and initiatives
- Increased customer footfall and longer dwell-time
- Promotional campaigns to highlight the range of retail in the town

LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY OPERATORS

- Campaigns and initiatives to highlight the breadth of the leisure and hospitality offer
- Specific events to increase footfall into the town
- Work on projects to improve the evening economy
- Improved levels of business activity leading to increased demand

THE COMMUNITY

- A safer, cleaner and more secure town centre for residents and their visitors
- More activities and entertainment within the town
- Greater employment prospects
- An enhanced sense of local pride

> We would encourage Royston First to focus heavily on their new initiatives to improve the links, both commercial and transport, between the industrial estates and the town centre. Obviously, we are keen to support any initiative that attracts Royston's community to the industrial estate.

Andrew Dawson
Branch Manager, Jewson



Why keep the BID going in Royston?

Even with the BID's extensive work, the town centre is continuing to be hit by the major forces of a national decline in retail sales, increased competition from online sites and ongoing economic uncertainty.

The BID has proven that Royston businesses can successfully respond and so our town is much stronger under a collective and unifying banner. Without this approach, many businesses stand far less chance of survival, allowing a spiral of decline to set in. Throughout a variety of economic conditions experienced over the past 10 years, the amount of empty shops in the town centre has never exceeded 10% (the national average has been 17%). At the time of writing, the total of retail premises standing empty and not recently sold or undergoing refurbishment is ... 2!

Our industrial estate continues to operate robustly and is seen as an attractive, even premium, location to invest in. We will continue to invest in projects designed to ensure that criminals do not also find it as attractive! With easy access to the A10, A1 and M11 and fast train links to London and Cambridge – our transport links are second to none. The problem of reaching the A505 from the industrial estate, during rush hours, is about to be significantly alleviated by the opening of the link road through the Royston Gateway (which Royston First has actively supported). Additionally,

Royston is about to enter an exciting phase of development with new retail, corporate and light industrial units proposed on the outskirts of our town.

One of the focuses of a third BID term will be to introduce further projects which specifically link our town centre which is holding its own and our ever-expanding industrial areas. We are also contemplating regional aspirations that will benefit the wider town and its entire community.

I supported the Business Improvement District legislation when it was brought in front of Parliament in 2003 and was subsequently pleased to see it enacted in my home town. Since the 2009 launch, I've followed the work of the Royston First BID and have been impressed by the scope of the projects delivered. I am convinced that renewal for a further five year term is an important way forward for our town and I commend the BID to the voting businesses.

Rt Hon Sir Oliver Heald
QC MP



Positional image

This page shows some of the principal successes that Royston has benefited from as a result of the work of Royston First since its inception.



Royston Town Website



Operation Artemis

Providing additional policing for both town and industrial estate



Christmas Trail



Royston Picture Palace



Easter Trail



Music Trail



Street cleaning

Selective deep-cleansing in parts of the town



Pirate Trail



Town Map



Tourist Information

Royston Information Centre and visitor guides including 'Discover Royston'



Parking

One hour free parking via scratchcards and free after three



The preparation of this Plan

This new Business Plan has been the result of almost a year of consultation and planning involving significant numbers of Royston businesses in the process.

Activities have included:



Key feedback and proposed additional activities

Here are the highlights from the detailed research which has been carried out over the past few months:

- Businesses were invited to complete a survey of key activities which they would wish to see enacted as part of the plan for a third-term BID and responses were received from 40 businesses, which represents a sample of approximately 27% of the proposed area
- Royston First worked closely with a development group of key businesses in shaping the proposals contained within this Business Plan
- Direct visits were paid to more than 50 businesses and organisations to invite their input
- An open survey ran via www.roystonfirst.co.uk during October and November 2018
- Consideration should be given to reducing the levy percentage used during the second-term BID and to increasing the Rateable Value below which businesses would not be liable for the BID levy
- A number of new projects and initiatives should be enacted, to focus upon greater promotion, better events, encouraging more commuters to stay in Royston and reinstating the shuttle bus
- The BID area should be expanded to include Tesco and the new Gateway site

The research revealed a number of key findings, which included the following:

- Although the BID can point to a strong track record of achievement, much more needs to be done to communicate with businesses within the town

> We gave our testimonial last time stating that the "Free after 3" and other parking initiatives have had a direct, positive impact on our late afternoon trade. This continues to be the case today. We also actively participate in many of the town trails and intend to do so for another 5 years.



Jenny Robinson
Branch Manager, Mica Hardware



Priority projects for the next five years

The result of our detailed research and feedback from businesses has directly shaped the plans within this proposal and this includes sustaining proven activities which businesses have re-endorsed as well as new additional projects which are considered vital for the BID to carry out if Royston is to continue to prosper rather than lose out to active, neighbouring competition.

The following headings detail the priority actions we propose to undertake over the course of the next five years:

BUSINESS AS USUAL (CONTINUATION OF CURRENT PROJECTS)

- Parking, one hour free parking via Scratchcards and Free-After-3
- Town trails and events programmes
- Royston Information Centre distributing visitor information including town maps, guides to accommodation and clubs/associations, town trail leaflets and "Discover Royston"
- Christmas lights and seasonal window dressing
- Royston town website - "everything Royston" in one place
- Royston "Focus" - every consumer-facing business in Royston, listed by trade and distributed to 15,000 households annually

- Cinema shorts - 3 films featuring, variously, 90+ retailers, 30+ eateries and Royston's key visitor attractions
- Operation Artemis, providing additional policing for both town and industrial estate
- Selective deep-cleansing in parts of the town
- On-going support for the library, the market and the cinema

NEW MEDIA/ COMMUNICATIONS PROJECTS

- Employ new communications/ business development team to improve business liaison and networking while supporting marketing activities in the town centre
- Working with major players, such as the local pubs/ hotels to more effectively promote themselves and subsequently the town
- Make more of events based on attractions at local venues. Also adopt a more joined-up approach to the benefits that businesses derive from events, including the use of smart technology
- Oversee targeted social media campaigns to promote aspects of the commercial scene to a local audience

PROJECTS FOR THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

- Regularly showcase some of the industrial estate's creative companies and diverse product ranges in the town centre and vice-versa. In conjunction with this, run a series of Job Fairs

> We have enjoyed working closely with Royston First and their project, the Royston Information Centre, which is housed within the library. As a direct result of this collaboration, we were able to re-open the library on Thursday mornings – hugely to the benefit of our community. We very much look forward to continuing this relationship over the coming years.

Lynne
Library Manager,
Royston Library



Positional image

> To be honest, I was initially hostile to the concept of paying an additional local 'tax'. However, over time we've come to realise that the BID is behind, in some shape or form, most of the innovations taking place locally. That's why I have thrown my support behind making the Royston First BID all it can be for the next 5 years. Putting it another way, what will happen in Royston if the BID is cancelled?



Justin Pringle
Managing Director, Prototype Projects

- Attempt to broker a deal with the Royston Gateway or an adjacent landowner to get a multi-storey car park built to handle overflow employee parking from existing and new businesses
- Investigate and deliver a park and ride system for industrial estate workers – potentially from the new multi-storey car park (especially if it is located towards the back of the Gateway site) and/or off-site car parks created outside the town boundary
- Initiate a maintenance programme, including private land, for the industrial estate (litter-picking, tending to verges/hedgerows/flower beds etc.)
- Co-ordinated signage project across the industrial estate
- Free-to-use dockless community bikes available across the estate and throughout the town
- Attempt to negotiate and deliver walk-through links from the estate to the adjacent supermarkets

- Use the town's parks much more often to stage major events – the expectation being that footfall into the town increases the more people that attend these events the more businesses should be willing to invest because they can see the potential for a return on that investment
- Encourage more local commuters to stay in Royston and explore the town
- Replace the existing Christmas lights in order to comply with new and tighter Hertfordshire CC regulations
- Produce a detailed plan (and funding pre-allocated) as a contingency against a large store becoming vacant in the High Street

TOWN CENTRE ACTIVITIES

- Night-time illumination/ animation of major/ historical building facades or substantial trees in parks
- Expand on the Royston Trail to provide more interactive information about the town's history and cultural contributions e.g. tours provided by local historians, with links to Royston's industrial heritage as well as the royal association

TOWN-WIDE PROJECTS

- If we are anchoring our regional activities with an incubation unit, training courses will be offered (e.g. using financial data to make business decisions; fire marshalling; managing data; social media for business etc.)
- Run a local beer, wine and cheese or food festival
- Reinstate the shuttle bus, this time to run between the Gateway, the adjacent industrial estate, Tesco and subsequently the town centre

REGIONAL ASPIRATIONS

- Generate strong links to the farming communities in the Royston catchment through projects such as a town centre pick-up point for rural producers to sell produce and make more of Royston's 'countryside' association
- Working with partners and Local Authorities (e.g. NHDC, regional bodies e.g. LEP and commercial entities e.g. Great Northern and Arriva) to broaden the regional influence of the town and tackle projects such as a potential incubator unit, a multi-storey car park or park and ride etc

NB: There are a substantial number of projects listed here and as a consequence, it is important to note that they will be tackled as and when conditions are favourable and the circumstances right. Several require the co-operation and participation of other agencies/authorities and until detailed discussions and significant additional research has taken place, we cannot guarantee how they will evolve. The BID expects to become the 'delivery arm' of key public organisations such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, and will work hard to identify and bring into being projects and activities that enhance and grow the local economy with its attendant job stability and community prosperity.

> I like the cinema and think it could be more heavily promoted as an asset. The police are in at 8pm and it's a comfort knowing they are about but it would be good if they could stop by at 11pm too.

Proposals for closer working together of the town's 'hospitality' offer on promotions looks like a positive innovation. The idea for a stronger connection between the industrial area and town centre will be helpful to both (from our perspective it's a potential source of staying guests).

We should be celebrating the names we have on the industrial area more.

Ben
Owner, The Old Bull



One of the possible recipients of town centre floodlighting



Our planned five-year budget

Having assessed the current financial requirements of the BID, the renewal group consider that they can finance the next five years of the BID by raising the threshold at which businesses would become liable to pay the BID levy to £15,000, meaning that over 200 of the smaller businesses in Royston who are bearing a considerable brunt of the current economic challenges will not now be required to contribute to the costs of the BID.

As they will still continue to enjoy the benefits of the BID, including all communications, they may wish to support the costs of the partnership by making a voluntary contribution equivalent to the levy at the lowest payable rate, £225 per year.

This brings the BID levy rules in line with the Government's current relief arrangements for non-domestic rates (business rates). The following table therefore summarises the proposed BID budget for the next 5-years.

Estimated BID expenditure per year (£K)

BID Projects	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Five-year total
'BUSINESS AS USUAL'	68,000	68,000	69,000	70,000	72,000	347,000
NEW MEDIA/ COMMUNICATIONS PROJECTS	30,000	30,000	32,000	32,000	35,000	159,000
PROJECTS FOR THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE	29,000	7,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	66,000
TOWN CENTRE ACTIVITIES	15,000	45,000	16,000	20,000	20,000	116,000
TOWN -WIDE PROJECTS	14,000	18,000	42,000	26,000	26,000	126,000
REGIONAL ASPIRATIONS	1,000	1,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	14,000
OVERHEADS & CONTINGENCY	35,000	35,000	36,000	37,000	39,000	182,000
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	192,000	204,000	209,000	199,000	206,000	1,010,000
Anticipated income at 1.5% of RV	170,000	184,500	189,100	193,800	198,650	936,050
Additional earned income/ sponsorship	5,000	5,000	5,000	10,000	10,000	35,000
Funds carried forward from last term	30,000	30,000				60,000
TOTAL INCOME	205,000	219,500	194,100	203,800	208,650	1,031,050

Notes:

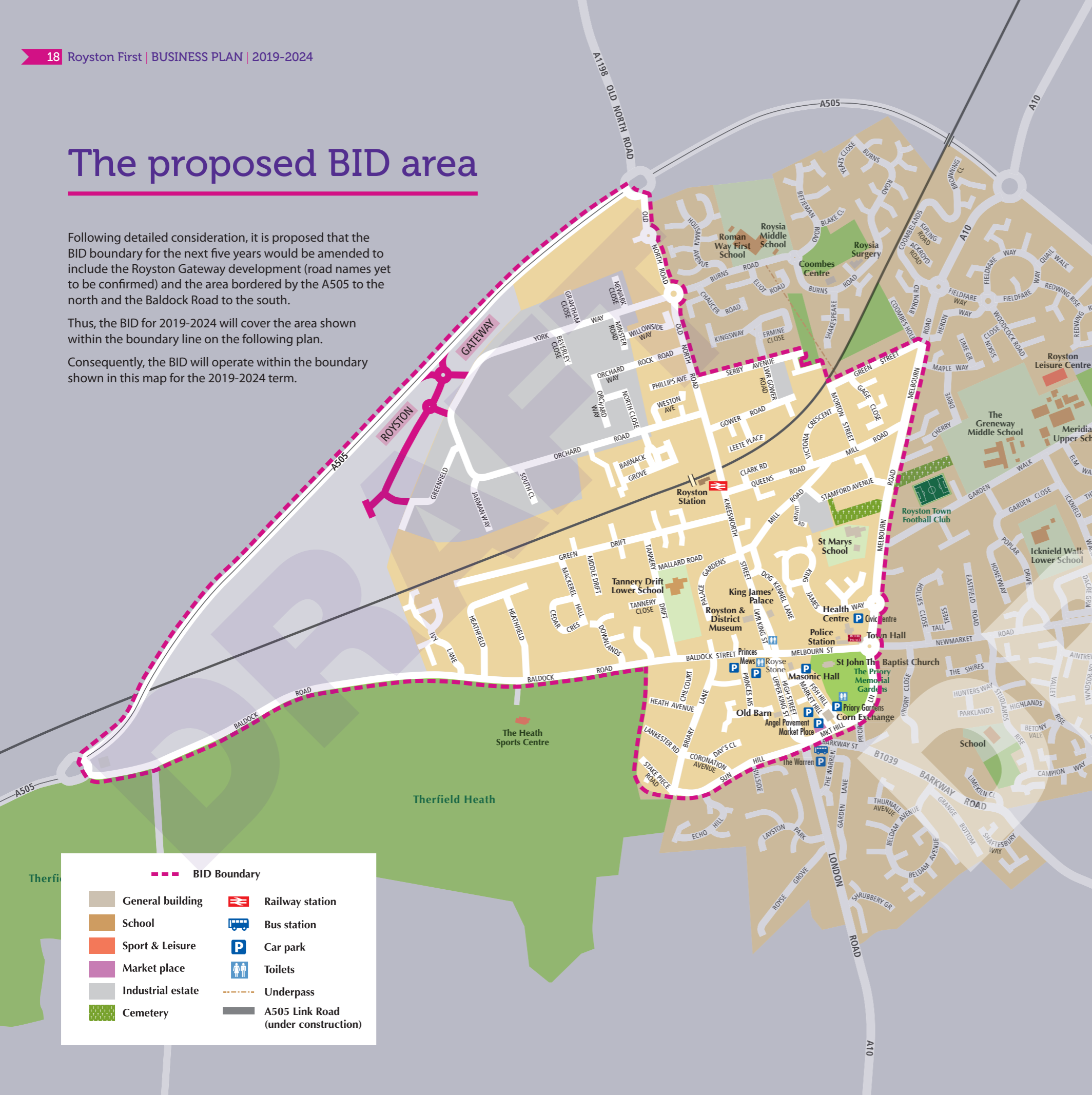
- Levy income has been increased each year to allow for inflation, as per the levy rules. This has been set at +2.5% but will vary according to the prevailing CPI
- A contingency of £5K pa allowed. If unused at the end of the five-year period, it will be put towards the cost of the next renewal ballot
- RV total revenue increases over the five years as new businesses come on-stream in the Gateway area of the BID
- A collection rate of 98.5% has been assumed for the levy income, a figure achieved by NHDC in the previous BID term
- Unspent income from the previous BID term has been used to offset some of the 'influencing' or capital costs of some of our 'high ticket' items
- Income is derived primarily from the BID levy. It will be supplemented by sales of services, information, sponsorship and eventually ticket receipts from the shuttle bus

The proposed BID area

Following detailed consideration, it is proposed that the BID boundary for the next five years would be amended to include the Royston Gateway development (road names yet to be confirmed) and the area bordered by the A505 to the north and the Baldock Road to the south.

Thus, the BID for 2019-2024 will cover the area shown within the boundary line on the following plan.

Consequently, the BID will operate within the boundary shown in this map for the 2019-2024 term.



The following streets fall within the defined BID boundary for the purposes of the renewal ballot and the subsequent levy process:

- Angel Pavement
- Gage Close
- Lumen Road
- Queens Road
- Baldock Road (North side)
- George Lane
- Mackerell Hall
- Rock Road
- Baldock Street
- Gower Road
- Mallard Road
- Serby Avenue
- Barnack Grove
- Grantham Close
- Market Hill
- South Close
- Barkway Street
- Green Drift
- Melbourn Road
- St Mary's Park
- Beverley Close
- Greenfield
- Stamford Avenue
- Braeburn Walk
- Green Street
- Middle Drift
- Stamford Court
- Briary Lane
- Heath Avenue
- Mill Road
- Station Yard
- Cedar Crescent
- Heathfield
- Minster Road
- Stuart Drive
- Chillcourt
- High Street
- Morton Street
- Sun Hill
- Church Lane
- Jarman Way
- Newark Close
- Tannery Drift
- Clark Road
- Jepps Lane
- North Close
- The Green
- Copperfields
- John Street
- Old North Road
- The Warren
- Coronation Avenue
- Kiln House Yard
- Orchard Road
- Upper King Street
- Coombelands
- King James Way
- Ostler Court
- Victoria Crescent
- Days Close
- King Street
- Palace Gardens
- Weston Avenue
- Dog Kennel Lane
- Knesworth Street
- Phillips Avenue
- Willowside Way
- Downlands
- Leete Place
- Pightle Close
- York Road
- Evans Close
- London Road (part)
- Pippin Grove
- York Way
- Farrier Court
- Lower Gower Road
- Princes Mews
- Fish Hill
- Lower King Street
- Priory Lane
- All roads associated with the Royston Gateway

Management and governance

If the ballot is successful, it is proposed to continue with an Advisory Council comprising of up to 20 persons led by volunteer senior employees drawn from levy-paying organisations, supplemented by one representative each from the local community, the Royston Town Council and North Herts District Council. This will continue to achieve a representative, business-led group to oversee the financial, managerial and operational activities of the BID.

The majority of the Board will continue to come from private-sector organisations and the Chair will always be a private-sector member to ensure that the BID retains its strong business focus. This company will continue to be Limited by Guarantee, thus limiting the liability of Directors and businesses.

Major Industrial Estate Businesses	2
Independent Industrial Estate Operators	4
National and Independent Businesses	5
Financial and Legal Services	4
Community Representatives	1
Property	2
Town Council	1
District Council	1

The Board of Directors will be fully accountable to BID levy payers and will consist entirely of representatives from BID levy paying organisations who would be senior figures within their parent organisations. The Board will meet at least 3 times per year and receive both management and financial reports at each meeting. They will communicate regularly with levy-payers on key issues, particularly reporting progress against this Business Plan.

All BID levy payers will be entitled to write to the Chairman to raise any matter and the Board will also follow BID 'Industry' best practice in the following aspects:

- Being subject to independent, accredited, external audit, leading to the production and submission of an annual report, annual accounts and the submission of statutory financial and corporation tax returns
- Producing regular updates to BID levy payers
- Allowing the rotation of Board representatives as required with a third of the Board standing down each year, with elections to replace the vacant positions

> We have worked with the Royston BID, particularly with the trails that take place four times a year. It certainly helps to boost the number of people on the High Street! As one of the longest established retail businesses in Royston (and still completely family run), we support the BID's efforts to maintain and improve footfall into the town centre.

Yolande Gautrey
Business Owner, Ladds



The ballot process

Legally all BIDs need to be established via a ballot of eligible business and the vote is conducted entirely by post over a 28 day period.

The votes will be sent to either the tenant of the business or the landlord (in the case of vacant units), within the BID boundary. The proposed schedule is as follows:

5th February 2019	Ballot papers issued
6th March 2019*	Final day of ballot
7th March 2019	Result announced

*The last day by which votes must be received

For the BID proposal to be successful, there are two requirements which must be met:

- A majority of those who vote must have voted in favour
- The total rateable values of those who vote yes must exceed that of those who vote against

The BID levy

The cost of the levy for each business is a percentage of its rateable value and so is based on the size and location of the business premises. All businesses should consider the proposed cost of the levy as an investment – an investment of a relatively small sum which is pooled with the contributions of all the others in the BID to provide a considerable sum that is spent entirely in Royston over five years.

The renewal team, duly mindful of the pressure on business currently, propose to reduce the percentage of RV applied from 1.75% to 1.50%. This means that the BID would only cost your businesses the following amount per year:

Small business with a rateable value of £15,250	£229 per annum
Medium business with a rateable value of £40,000	£600 per annum
Large business with a rateable value of £100,000	£1,500 per annum

> We think it's crucial that the BID continues to boost the offer for both town centre, retail and the market. Looking forward, we are very hopeful for the potential of projects linking the industrial areas to the town centre. We welcome the opportunity promised in the new BID to improve our local networking with other Royston based businesses. We also appreciate the BID's activities, such as support for local events and the cinema, which continue to benefit our employees that live locally."



Tara Prior
Principal, Stephanie Prior School of Dancing

To calculate your proposed annual levy, simply multiply your rateable value by 0.0150. If you are unsure about your rateable value, please contact the Valuation Office on 03000 501501 or visit www.gov.uk/correct-your-business-rates

Remember that any business with a Rateable Value of £15,000 or less would be exempted from paying the BID levy, although would be able to join the BID as a voluntary member if they wish to do so and be invited to participate fully in all BID initiatives. Landlords, property owners and institutions will be invited to participate through voluntary contributions too.

Any additional roads that are added into the BID area, and businesses moving into those roads, will be liable for the BID levy.

How you can be sure the BID is working for you

The Royston First BID proposes to continue with a number of Key Performance Indicators to measure the impact of the projects contained within this plan.

These include:

- Measuring using town-wide indicators to include pedestrian footfall and vacant unit levels
 - Sampling through survey work with a fixed percentage of BID businesses each year to seek detailed feedback on their perception of the performance of the town and the BID as the term progresses
 - Conducting regular customer surveys to learn how the town centre is changing in the eyes of our visitors
 - Producing and distributing an annual report to BID members to advise on our progress and activities
- The BID will continue to communicate to all businesses on a regular basis, regardless of whether or not they pay a levy, by email bulletins, newsletters, social media and our website. One to one meetings can also be requested at any time.

Council agreements

In developing our BID proposal, we have carried out extensive consultation with North Herts District Council over a number of aspects of our plans and they have consistently voiced their support for our BID and the projects planned for the future.

Specifically, we have worked with the District Council in assessing the service levels that are currently provided by the public sector in the town and they have agreed that, as far as possible given the current national economic circumstances, they will maintain these throughout the five-year term of the BID.

We have also agreed a draft Operating Agreement that details the proposed arrangements for BID levy collection. This is available for viewing by any potential BID levy payer via www.roystonfirst.com

> NHDC consider BIDs to be a vital contributor to the economic wellbeing of our local towns. This is why we have always fully supported, and will continue to support, the BIDs currently running in Royston, Letchworth and Hitchin. A testament to the effectiveness of BIDs is the fact that there are currently over 300 BIDs running in the UK.

Clr Tony Hunter
Executive Member for
Community Engagement,
NHDC



Proposed levy rules

- 01 This is a second BID renewal proposal to cover the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March inclusive.
- 02 The BID will deliver services additional to those provided by any public or private sector organisation.
- 03 All National Non-Domestic Ratepayers within the proposed boundary will be liable to pay the BID levy, with the exception of any business with a rateable value below £15,000, which will be exempt.
- 04 The BID would be funded by a 1.50% levy on the rateable value of all eligible businesses within the proposed BID area. The BID levy is proposed at 1.50% of applicable rateable value using the 2017 Rateable Value list, as updated on the 1st January each year of the BID term, which will be used for the calculation of each annual BID levy for the duration of this proposal.

Small businesses, with a rateable value of £15,000 or less will be exempt from the levy. Contributions from a single hereditament with a Rateable Value of £1M+ will be capped at £15,000.
- 05 The BID levy will apply from 1st April each year and the chargeable day policy will operate, which means that liable parties would pay their levy for the year in advance with no refund due in the case of subsequent non-occupation or change of ownership.
- 06 The liability for the BID levy on any eligible vacant premises would revert to the landlord, with no void period.
- 07 The BID Board may exercise the ability to raise the BID levy annually by the current rate of inflation as determined by the consumer price index over the duration of the term of the BID.
- 08 VAT will not be charged on the BID levy.

BID development timetable

The BID has taken an appropriate amount of time to follow the correct processes for a renewal ballot, seeking and confirming the views of businesses at every step of the way.

Date	Milestone
June-September 2018	Project development and planning
September 2018	Formal notifications to the Secretary of State and Local Authority of intention to hold a ballot
September 2018 - December 2018	Business survey and extensive consultation with businesses to develop the draft Business Plan projects
January 2019	Notice of ballot given
February 2019	Ballot papers issued
March 2019	Final day of the Ballot
March 2019	Ballot result declared
March 2019 - April 2019	Preparations begin for third BID term, subject to a positive business vote
1st April 2019	BID levy invoices become due and the BID company formally begins operating for a third term, subject to a positive business vote

Get in touch

For further information on any aspect of this proposal, please contact:

Geraint Burnell
Royston BID Manager
01763 878242
info@roystonfirst.com
www.roystonfirst.com

➤ Much of Royston First's work goes unseen by the wider public, but we are in a position to see just how critical the BID's contribution is locally. In particular, the BID has enabled us to maintain and expand the contribution made by the Town Manager – who for the past 15 years has provided us with continuity of contact between the business community and the Local Authorities.

John Davison
Royston Town Council



➤ Royston First BID have, from the first, been fully supportive of our exciting development project on the borders of the industrial estate. In particular, they have been instrumental in supplying information to support our decision for early opening of the link road to relieve congestion on the existing industrial estate. Royston First continue to work with us for the betterment of Royston and have been a useful conduit for information between us and local businesses/authorities

Developer



➤ Being responsible for policing in the Royston area, I greatly appreciate the additional resources available to me as a result of the funding from Royston First. It's not just that Operation Artemis provides additional manpower, it's also the flexible structure that makes it so valuable.



It allows me to focus the Artemis officers on emerging local problem areas and crime hot spots. This means we can deal directly with some of the issues that my Response officers would find difficult to focus on, due to their other commitments.

I always ensure that we use experienced and proactive officers for Artemis who know Royston and genuinely understand the requirements of patrolling both the town centre and industrial areas.

Royston First has always responded positively to our requests for support and additional short-term funding for projects. I am extremely grateful for this assistance and I hope to progress some new projects in the coming year that will benefit the town.

Royston First has genuinely given me the resources to maintain the essential visible policing presence in the town and compliment the work already carried out by Hertfordshire Constabulary.

Police Sergeant

The BID company cannot be held liable for any errors or omissions that may have occurred during the production of this business plan



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