

**REPORT TO:** Employment Learning and Skills and  
Community Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17 September 2012

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Children and Enterprise

**PORTFOLIO:** Economic Development

**SUBJECT:** Business Improvement District (BID)  
Programme Progress Report

**WARDS:** Borough Wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with a review of the first five years of the Business Improvement District (BID) programmes at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates and to detail the measures that have been put in place to secure a positive vote from the businesses community to continue to deliver the programmes for a further five years.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- 2.1 The Board notes the positive impact that the BID programme has made over the last five years at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates
- 2.2 The Board notes the steps that are currently being taken to ensure that the businesses at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates vote positively for the programme to continue for a further five years.

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 What is a Business Improvement District ?

Business Improvement Districts or BIDs are a partnership between local authorities and local businesses to provide additional services or improvements to a specific area funded by an additional levy to the non-domestic rates.

All ratepayers in the BID area have the opportunity to vote on the proposed BID. Approval of a BID has to meet two tests. Firstly a simple majority of those voting in the BID ballot must vote in favour. Secondly, those voting in favour must represent a majority by rateable value of the rateable properties of those voting.

BIDs are completely private sector lead so local businesses have total control over how the resources of the BID are spent. Local businesses can, therefore, develop local solutions to address local issues and by investing collectively in those solutions make a real impact on their business area.

The Borough of Halton is perhaps unique in the UK in that it has two BID areas based upon industrial areas. The Astmoor and Halebank BID programmes have been operating since April 2008.

## 3.2 The Impact of the Astmoor and Halebank BID programme

Since their inception the Astmoor and Halebank BID programmes have delivered a range of programmes under four key themes; Security, Image, Business Support and Administration.

### 3.1.1 Security

A broad range of crime reduction and community safety initiatives have been brought to Astmoor and Halebank to tackle both recorded crime and the perception of crime over the last five years which have, collectively, contributed to a massive reduction in recorded crime.

Both Astmoor and Halebank estates benefit from :-

- state wide CCTV systems
- SmartW ater DNA forensic property marking equipment for every businesses on the estate
- A twenty four hour alarm or incident response service
- A 365 days per year key holding service
- Automatic alarm diallers linked to existing security systems and connected to the alarm response service
- High profile crime prevention signage
- Vacant property alarms and external PIR sensors
- Business Watch (email alert service)

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The businesses at Astmoor Industrial Estate have chosen to invest further in additional security services and CCTV provision including :-

- An Auto Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) CCTV system recording all vehicles entering and exiting the estate
- A dedicated mobile CCTV patrol vehicle
- Three mobile security patrols each day
- Day time guarding between Monday and Friday

Table 1 : Recorded Crime Astmoor Industrial Estate : 2006 - 2012

Crime Type	Percentage change Since inception of BID programme
Arson not endangering life	+50%
Burglary in a building other than a dwelling	-17%
Criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling	-65%
Criminal damage to a vehicle	-36%
Criminal damage to a dwelling	-100%
Interfering with a motor vehicle	-100%
Other criminal damage	-75%
Other theft	-30%
Theft by an employee	-50%
Theft from a vehicle	-36%
Theft or unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle	0%
Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	+83%
Burglary in a building other than a dwelling (sub-station)	No data baseline
<b>Total</b>	<b>-31%</b>

Table 2 : Recorded Crime Halebank Industrial Estate : 2006 -2012

Crime Type	Percentage change Since inception of BID programme
Aggravated vehicle taking	-100%
Burglary in a building other than a dwelling	-63%
Criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling	-100%
Criminal damage to a vehicle	-86%
Interfering with a motor vehicle	-100%
Interfering with a motor vehicle	-100%
Other criminal damage	-100%
Other theft	+30%
Theft by an employee	-100%
Theft from a vehicle	-75%
Theft from an automatic machine or vendor	-100%
Theft from the person	-100%
Theft or unauthorised taking of motor vehicles	-85%
Shoplifting	+25%
Other offences or public order	+25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>-58%</b>

### 3.1.2 Image Enhancements

The physical environment and the visual amenity and appearance of both estates has been improved through :-

- New gateway signage at each vehicle entrance



Before



After



Before



After

- Upgraded street name plates covering the whole estate



- Upgraded double yellow lines provision to improve traffic flow around the estate

- Installation of bollards to prevent vehicular access to footpaths / verges



- Landscape improvements



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

- Enhanced cleansing regime

Astmoor businesses have further invested in :-

- Installation of speed activated signs and rumble strips on Astmoor Road



- The painting of gates and fences around the estate in a uniform style



Before



After

- Paint the external cladding of a number of buildings

Halebank businesses have invested in :-

The periodic hire of a mechanical road sweeper to clean both the premises and adjacent road around a particular business which produces high volumes of dust.

The BID programme also works closely with various public sector business support agencies, for example Groundwork, Envirolink Northwest and National Industrial Symbiosis Programme (NISP), to improve the environmental performance of businesses across both estates.

### 3.1.3 Administration

Both BID areas now have the people, resources and systems in place to move the estates forward including :-

- A full time dedicated Estate Manger
- Regular Business Steering Group meetings
- A dedicated website (Astmoor only) and on-line business directories
- Quarterly estate news letters
- A specific Inward Investment brochure (Astmoor only)
- Coordinated estate branding
- Dedicated estate salt stores and salt bins
- A free universal recycling service
- A rodent control service (Halebank only)

### 3.1.4 Business Support

The BID businesses are working together to provide free, bespoke training in a number of business critical disciplines including :-

- Health and Safety
- First Aid
- Forklift ITSSAR
- Management Development
- Marketing
- Financial Management
- Quality Assurance

Since October 2010, the BID has supported 22 training courses for both Astmoor and Halebank businesses, involving 206 employees from Astmoor and 95 employees from Halebank.

- Delegates have attended from 35 different businesses on Astmoor equating to a 35% engagement with all businesses on the estate.
- At Halebank 95 delegates have attended from 13 different businesses equating to a 36% engagement with all businesses on Halebank.
- The training has produced 35 new qualified first aiders across both estates, 6 newly qualified fork lift truck drivers and 13 qualified Banksmen at 2 businesses on Halebank.

In an effort to engage with some of the smaller businesses 8 companies on Astmoor have received 12 months 1-2-1 support to develop their online marketing through their web site.

A full training programme is planned to continue through to March 2013.

<b>Course</b>	<b>Nos Attended Astmoor</b>	<b>Nos Attended Halebank</b>
Manual Handling	11	4
Health & Safety in the Workplace	12	9
Fire Safety for Wardens	13	11
Risk Assessment	12	9
On Line Marketing Website Support	8	0
Selling	5	3
Customer Service	8	3
Project Management	7	3
3 Day First Aid	12	12+11
Supervisory Skills	10	0
Health & Safety Level 1	9	8
Employment Law	12	0
Health and Safety Level 2	12	0
Quality Management Systems	7	0
Electrical Safety	11	0
Workplace Transport Safety	12	0
Emergency First Aid at Work	12	4
Safety Culture	12	1
Customer Service	12	4
Social Media	9	0
Banksman (Halebank only)	n/a	13

The Estate Manager also acts as an interface between Halton Borough Council and the BID businesses for other services. Businesses and property owners regularly make contact to obtain information and assistance regarding:

- Business support provided by Halton Borough Council and external agencies
- Fly-tipping issues
- Unauthorised encampments
- Staff recruitment
- Planning queries
- Property enquiries
- Waste management
- Street cleansing
- Street lighting

BID businesses can also take advantage of free membership of Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise and take part in a series of dedicated business networking events.

The BID Team is also working closely with colleagues from Transport Policy to improve sustainable transport links between the BID areas and adjacent



residential communities, for example better provision for cycling and walking and more flexible public transport provision.

Both BID areas are engaged with the Cheshire and Warrington Superfast Broadband programme to improve the coverage and usage of broadband in industrial areas

Astmoor businesses are also working with the Council's Major Projects Team to forge stronger links between Astmoor Industrial Estate and the Castlefields estate. This will include the creation of safer walking routes to encourage residents to take up employment opportunities at Astmoor and greater involvement of Astmoor businesses within the local community. Kawneer have, for example, invested in Phoenix Park as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility activities.

### 3.2 'BID 2' The Next Five Years

The management of a BID programme is tightly regulated by statute, in this case Statutory Instrument 2004 No 2443 The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004.

Legislation states that a BID can only remain in existence for five years before all resident businesses must be invited to participate in a new ballot to secure the continuation of the programme.

The current Astmoor and Halebank BID programme will come to an end on March 31 2013. The Business Parks Manager, in partnership with the Astmoor and Halebank BID Executive Committees, has, therefore, begun the process which will culminate in a ballot in January 2013 which will seek, from the business community, a mandate to continue the BID programmes at Astmoor and Halebank industrial estates for a further five years.

#### 3.2.1 BID 2 Process

Key to the re-ballot process is the creation of a new, five year, BID Business Plan for each estate. The Business Plan will describe in detail how the BID Executive Committees propose to utilise the BID levy from the resident businesses to make improvement to the estates over a period of five years. It is this Business Plan that the businesses will be asked to vote upon. It is, therefore, critical to undertake a comprehensive consultation exercise to ascertain the views of the business and to reflect those views within the Business Plan.

The BID executive, therefore, went to tender to appoint a third party to undertake that detailed consultation. Groundwork Cheshire were appointed in June 2012 to manage the estate wide consultation and contribute to the drafting of the Astmoor and Halebank Business Plans.

### 3.2.2 BID 2 Timetable

Table 3 : Astmoor and Halebank BID Re-ballot Timetable

Stage	Date
Initial scoping meeting with BID Exec' Committees	July 2012
Draft and agree consultation framework	July 2012
Distribution of consolation questionnaire by email\post\hand	August 2012
Review results of consultation with BID Executive Committees	September 2012
Estate wide open planning meetings	September 2012
Issue '84 Day Notice' to DCLG of intention to hold ballot	12\09\12
Produce draft Business Plan	October 2012
Draft Business Plan submitted to BID Executive Committees	October 2012
Draft Business Plan sent to all participating companies	November 2012
Produce final Business Plan and Executive Summary	November 2012
Request billing authority to instruct ballot holder to hold ballot	21\10\12
Produce final Business Plan	December 2012
Issue '42 Day Notice' of ballot to hereditaments by ballot holder	12\12\12
Issue ballot papers to hereditaments 28 days prior to ballot	09\01\13
Day of ballot	06\01\12
Result of ballot announced	February 2013

### 3.3 Conclusion

The first five years of the BID programme has had a profound impact upon the physical and trading environments at Halebank and Astmoor Industrial Estates. A positive vote for a further five year BID programme will allow the business community, supported by the Business Parks Manager, to build upon the progress made to date to affect real and lasting transformational change at Halebank and Astmoor.

Should a positive vote be secured then the BID team will explore the feasibility of extending the BID concept to other industrial areas within the Borough.

### 4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The delivery of the BID programme benefits both the business communities at Halebank and Astmoor and the wider community of Halton and in so doing contributes to the realisation of a number of the Council's key strategic objectives.

### 5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

#### 5.1 Financial Implications

The BID programme is fully funded by the resident businesses through the imposition of an additional levy of the non-domestic business rate. The financial implications for the Council, therefore, are limited to support provided to the Business Parks Officer.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Improving business sustainability and performance will create more employment opportunities for the Borough's young people

### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

The BID programme contributes positively to business sustainability and, thereby, the creation of employment.

A key element of the BID programme is the provision of enhanced training opportunities to local people employed at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates which makes a positive contribution to the viability of resident businesses.

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Access to employment is a contributor to the health of both individuals and communities. The BID contributes to the creation of tangible employment opportunities for local people.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

The BID programme has contributed to a demonstrable reduction in recorded crime at Astmoor and Halebank industrial Estates

### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

The BID programme contributes to the continuing diversification of the Borough's economic base and increased levels of entrepreneurship thereby contributing to the economic renewal of Halton

The BID programme has also made a positive contribution to the visual amenity and environmental performance of Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

If the forthcoming ballot fails to secure a positive vote then the BID programme will close and any financial balance held by the programme will be redistributed to resident businesses.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

There are no equality and diversity issues

**9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.