



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Councillor Nick Worth, Leader of the Council
<b>DATE:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Delegations and arrangements relating to a proposed Delegations and arrangements relating to a proposed Business Improvement District for Spalding
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	To agree matters relating to the Council's engagement in a forthcoming ballot in relation to the potential formation of a Business Improvement District for Spalding.
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	No
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	Councillor Nick Worth, Leader of the Council
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	Spalding Castle, Spalding St Paul, Spalding St John, Spalding St Marys
<b>EXEMPT REPORT?</b>	No

This report considers a range of considerations from the perspective of South Holland District Council, as both an eligible voter and potential levy payer, in respect of a forthcoming ballot in relation to the potential formation of a Business Improvement District for Spalding town centre

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) That the authority agrees to participate in the forthcoming ballot relating to a proposed Business Improvement District for Spalding town centre
- 2) That the authority agrees to vote in favour of the proposed Business Improvement District for Spalding town centre
- 3) That delegation is provided to the Assistant Director – Corporate to conduct vote submissions on behalf of the authority

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

To formalise arrangements relating to the Council's participation in the forthcoming ballot in relation to the potential formation of a Business Improvement District for Spalding.

## **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

**To abstain from the vote** – As set out within this report, this option has been considered but discounted

**To vote against the proposed Business Improvement for Spalding** - As set out within this report, this option has been considered but discounted

**Do nothing** – As set out within this report, this option has been considered but discounted

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** A Business Improvement District is a legally and geographically defined partnership for area improvement and service delivery, funded by levypaying businesses within that agreed boundary. It is managed and operated by a BID Company, usually a non-profit company run by and for its members.
- 1.2** BIDs are business-led initiatives supported by government legislation, which give local business the power to get together, decide what improvements they want to make within a defined area and how they will manage these. BID's have the power to raise and spend funds locally.
- 1.3** BIDs are typically run as not for profit companies and are controlled by the businesses and organizations that fund them. There is no limit on what projects or services can be provided through a Business Improvement District. The only requirement is that it should be something that is in addition to services provided by local authorities.
- 1.4** A BID mandate is for a maximum of five years. A BID wishing to continue beyond that must reaffirm its mandate through re-ballot, based on a further proposal.
- 1.5** The process of developing a BID involves widespread consultation by the BID proposer with businesses to ascertain what improvements they want and would be prepared to pay for. A BID proposal by the BID promoter is then produced and a 28 day postal ballot held where those eligible business ratepayers vote 'for' or 'against' the proposed programme. For the BID to go ahead, two conditions must be met; firstly, a majority of those voting have to vote 'yes'; and secondly those 'yes' votes have to correspond to more than 50% of the total rateable value of all votes cast.

## **2. A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT FOR SPALDING**

- 2.1** An ambition to develop and establish a Business Improvement District for Spalding first emerged in c2021 through the development of the Spalding Town Centre Improvement Plan. A key priority identified early in the Town Centre Improvement Plan (TCIP) initiative

related to 'Supporting local business', with a small 'sub-group' of businesses formed as part of the TCIP initiative. This sub-group, chaired by a local representative of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and involving a number of independent retailers (alongside representation from Springfields Outlet Shopping Centre) identified the formation of a Business Improvement District as a potential means of achieving the following;

- Consolidation business-led leadership within Spalding town centre, to amplify the business 'voice' in shaping long term planning in respect of Spalding Town Centre
- Generating both financial and time capacity within the business community, to take forward initiatives of common interest led by the business community
- Providing a basis from which other business-led activity can be pursued, including;
  - Marketing and promotion
  - Incentives and other initiatives to drive footfall and enhance consumer offer, across both the day and evening economy
  - Sponsorship and further funding applications

**2.2** To this end, in 2021 the Council agreed to utilise an element of the TCIP budget for Spalding to provide financial support to the group in order to further develop the planning in respect of a Business Improvement District for the town. This support has principally revolved around supporting the business group to secure independent specialist advice on formulating a BID, funded by SHDC but ultimately working to the businesses involved. Through an iterative process, this support has provided the group with;

- An initial feasibility study which explored both the wider business appetite, coupled with the economic viability of a BID for Spalding. This feasibility study demonstrated evidence of a wider business interest in developing such an initiative for the town centre, coupled with an indicative annual levy which would fund a viable programme of impactful activity
- Support with facilitating a wider number of meetings involving town centre businesses, including two 'open' meetings for all town centre businesses, coupled with c10 meetings of the emerging 'Spalding Business Board' to plan a proposal in more detail.
- The development of a draft Business Plan, owned by the Spalding Business Board and circulated to the business community within the proposed BID area
- Engagement with c80% of town centre businesses, to seek their involvement and/or views on the Business Plan
- The development of a Business Improvement Plan 'Proposal', detailing how such a BID would operate (e.g. eligible properties, BID area, proposed levy, priority areas), which was formally submitted to the council on May 16<sup>th</sup> 2024.

**2.3** In addition to supporting and enabling the businesses involved in the emerging BID proposals in accessing support and guidance to develop their plans for the town centre, the council has also played an active role in supporting the group from an economic development perspective.

**2.4** The guidance for the government's recently announced Long Term Plan for Towns initiative, through which Spalding has been offered £20m in endowment-style funding, places significant positive value on the formation of Business Improvement Districts as a means of enabling business-led organisations to play a role in shaping a town's long-term plan,

coupled with BIDs potentially playing a central delivery role in respect of any proposed investment.

**2.5** Where the potential role of any Spalding BID in the delivery of the £20m Long Term Plan for Towns funding is yet to be explored in any detail, the formation of a business-led organisation working for the benefit of the town centre brings with it a strong synergy with the aims and objectives of the government's Long-Term Plan for Towns programme.

**2.6** Furthermore, from the perspective of the council it is anticipated that the formation of a Business Improvement District for Spalding has the potential to deliver a wide range of local benefits. These include;

- The opportunity to strengthen business-led leadership in the town centre, including in areas where businesses can bring real value and expertise to support the town i.e. marketing and promotion, incentives and initiatives
- The opportunity to raise and attract funding for initiatives that could provide 'additionality', over and above the services and functions provided by the local authority.
- Business cost reduction, for example, from reduced crime and joint procurement
- Improved liaison with the Council, County Council, the Police and other public bodies
- Increased footfall and staff retention
- Place promotion; and
- Networking opportunities with other local businesses.

**2.7** In light of the above, the Spalding Business Board's proposals are considered to be complementary to the Council's own activity in respect of Spalding town centre. If voted into existence, the council would become a levy payer into the Spalding BID. Based on the council's current ownership of 18 eligible hereditaments in the BID area, the annual cost to the council as levy payer would be £6,593 (based on 2% of May 2024 rateable values).

### **3. CONCLUSION**

**3.1** In light of the Spalding Business Board submitting a 'BID Proposal' to the council, this requires the authority to consider three immediate issues, those being as follows;

1. Whether to vote within the ballot, or to abstain
2. In voting in the ballot, whether to vote in favour of the proposals or whether to vote against.
3. In voting in the ballot, to determine who will vote on behalf of the authority under appropriate delegation

**3.2** In light of the strong synergy between the Spalding Business Board's objectives and the council's, coupled with the synergy with the emerging Long-Term Plan for Towns programme being developed for the town, this report recommends the following;

1. That the authority agrees to participate in the forthcoming ballot relating to a proposed Business Improvement District for Spalding town centre

2. That the authority agrees to vote in favour of the proposed Business Improvement District for Spalding town centre
3. That delegation is provided to the Assistant Director – Corporate to conduct vote submissions on behalf of the authority

#### **4. EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP**

- 4.1 These are detailed within the report

#### **5. IMPLICATIONS**

##### **5.1 SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP**

- 5.1.1 The recommendations within this report build upon the priorities of the SELCP's Sub Regional Strategy, coupled with the emerging Growth and Prosperity Plan for the partnership

##### **5.2 CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 5.2.1 The recommendations within this report build upon the priorities of the SELCP's Sub Regional Strategy, coupled with the emerging Growth and Prosperity Plan for the partnership.

##### **5.3 STAFFING**

- 5.3.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any specific staffing implications. However, should a BID come into effect in Spalding, this will create a resourcing implication for PSPS Business Rates and Finance, coupled with a resourcing requirement within SHDC's Economic Development function in terms of ongoing engagement with the BID. PSPS are readily engaged in the proposals for Spalding, with the detail of the implications being worked through. If a BID is voted into existence, the authority will look to enter into an operating agreement with the BID to detail roles, responsibilities and resourcing arrangements.

##### **5.4 WORKFORCE CAPACITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.4.1 As set out above, the report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any specific staffing implications. However, should a BID come into effect in Spalding, this will create a resourcing implication for PSPS Business Rates and Finance, coupled with a resourcing requirement within SHDC's Economic Development function in terms of ongoing engagement with the BID. PSPS are readily engaged in the proposals for Spalding, with the detail of the implications being worked through. If a BID is voted into existence, the authority will look to enter into an operating agreement with the BID to detail roles, responsibilities and resourcing arrangements.
- 5.4.2 It should be noted that the authority has invested considerable officer time and capacity in supporting the Spalding Business Board with progressing their ambitions to develop a BID for the town. This has been led by the council's Economic Development function, and has included support, guidance, attendance at meetings, receiving and commenting on legal documentation, and co-ordinating engagement with various council services (e.g. PSPS Business Rates, Finance, Democratic Services and Legal).

##### **5.5 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.5.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any legal implications. Constitutionally, Monitoring Officer advice has confirmed that the decision with regards to how the authority may vote within the BID process is an executive function. The report proposes to delegate the authority to cast votes to the Assistant Director – Corporate.

## **5.6 DATA PROTECTION**

5.6.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any data protection implications.

## **5.7 FINANCIAL**

5.7.1 As of May 2024, the Council owns 18 eligible hereditaments within the proposed BID area. Consequently, a 'yes' vote would create an annual levy cost to the council of £6,593. This would cover a five year period, commencing on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2024.

## **5.8 RISK MANAGEMENT**

5.8.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any data protection implications.

## **5.9 STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES**

5.9.1 The voting period for Spalding BID commences on May 31<sup>st</sup> with the distribution of ballot papers via Civica Electoral Services. The ballot period closes on Friday June 28<sup>th</sup> at 5pm, with an announcement on the outcome expected on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July. If voted into effect, the Spalding BID is anticipated to take effect from September 1st 2024.

## **5.10 REPUTATION**

5.10.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any reputation implications.

## **5.11 CONTRACTS**

5.11.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any reputation implications. However, in the event of a BID being voted into effect, the authority will enter into an operating agreement with the BID company. This will be subject to its own decision making process, in line with the council's constitution.

## **5.12 CRIME AND DISORDER**

5.12.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any implications in respect of Crime and Disorder. However, BIDs are a common stakeholder in efforts to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

## **5.13 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING**

5.13.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any implications in respect of Crime and Disorder.

## **5.14 HEALTH AND WELL BEING**

5.14.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any implications in respect of Health and Wellbeing. However, BIDs are a common stakeholder in efforts to improve health and wellbeing through town centre activity.

## 5.15 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.15.1 The report recommendations themselves do not carry with them any implications in respect of Climate Change.

## 5.16 LINKS TO 12 MISSIONS IN THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

<b>MISSIONS</b>	
<b>This paper contributes to the following Missions outlined in the Government’s Levelling Up White paper.</b>	
<b>Transport Infrastructure</b>	By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.
<b>Digital Connectivity</b>	By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.
<b>Education</b>	By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
<b>Skills</b>	By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.
<b>Health</b>	By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by 5 years.
<b>Wellbeing</b>	By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
<b>Pride in Place</b>	By 2030, pride in place, such as people’s satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
<b>Crime</b>	By 2030, homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst-affected areas.
<b>Local Leadership</b>	By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.

## 6. ACRONYMS

### 6.1

- BID – Business Improvement District
- SELCP – South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership
- PSPS – Public Sector Partnership Services Ltd

## APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A	<i>Spalding BID Proposal</i>
APPENDIX B	<i>Spalding BID Business Plan</i>

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report

### CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

*(If none then insert the wording 'A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body'. Also delete the below text/boxes.)*

Name of body	Date
<i>none</i>	

### REPORT APPROVAL

Report author:	Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director Strategic Growth and Development Matthew.Hogan@sholland.gov.uk
Signed off by:	Assistant Director – John Medler
Approved for publication:	Leader of the Council