



REPORT TO CABINET

DATE OF MEETING	8 th September 2026
REPORT TITLE	BID Ballot 2027-2032
LEAD MEMBER	Cllr Simon Ring E-mail: cllr.Simon.Ring@West-Norfolk.gov.uk
LEAD OFFICER	Lead Officer: Duncan Hall E-mail: duncan.hall@west-norfolk.gov.uk
CONSULTEES	Internal departments including Revenues & Benefits, Finance and Electoral Services.
WARDS AFFECTED	St Margaret's & St Nicholas

KEY DECISION	NO
DECISION MAKER	Cabinet
IS THE REPORT OPEN OR EXEMPT	OPEN

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	YES
HR IMPLICATIONS	NO
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	YES
STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS	YES
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	YES
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS	NO
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT COMPLETED	N/A

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Discover King's Lynn has been in operation since 2017 as King's Lynn Business Improvement District (BID) and has become an established business led organisation supporting the vitality and viability of the town centre. During the current BID term (2022-2027), Discover King's Lynn has delivered a wide range of initiatives including: town centre events, Christmas markets and entertainment, Street Rangers, business support services, marketing campaigns and town centre enhancement projects. These activities have supported efforts to increase footfall, strengthen business collaboration and promote King's Lynn as a visitor and business destination.

The proposed BID Business Plan for 2027-2032 builds on these achievements and focuses on three priorities:

- Championing King's Lynn through events and marketing,
- Supporting Businesses and Strengthening Community,
- Championing King's Lynn as the voice of town centre businesses.

The renewal of the BID requires the Borough Council to support the BID renewal process and the delivery of the proposed BID Business Plan. The BID renewal comes at a significant time as Norfolk prepares for Local Government Reorganisation. The continuation of a successful BID will provide continuity, local leadership and a strong business voice to help ensure King's Lynn town centre remains a priority for future investment, regeneration and economic development.

The Council also fulfils its statutory role as billing authority for the BID and is responsible for the administration, collection and recovery of the BID levy. The Council is also responsible for running the election process for the BID renewal ballot.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation to Cabinet

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Endorse the Discover King's Lynn BID Business Plan 2027-2032.
- b) Endorse the holding of a BID renewal ballot in accordance with the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004.
- c). Support the Borough Council to vote in favour of the BID renewal for all eligible properties within the BID area for which the Council is liable for the payment of the BID levy.
- d) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to undertake all actions necessary to facilitate the BID renewal process.
- e) Continue to work collaboratively with Discover King's Lynn to support the successful delivery of the BID Business Plan and wider town centre regeneration objectives.

REASON FOR DECISION

To enable the Council to formally support the continuation of the King's Lynn Business Improvement District for the period 2027 - 2032 and to secure continued private sector investment in King's Lynn town centre and assist delivery of the Council's corporate priorities relating to economic growth, regeneration, business engagement and place-making.

CORPORATE STRATEGY

How does this proposal support our Corporate Priorities [Our priorities | Corporate Strategy 2023 - 2027 | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk](#)

Promote growth and prosperity to benefit West Norfolk

The BID supports economic growth by increasing footfall, attracting visitors, promoting local businesses, supporting the evening economy and delivering initiatives that encourage investment within King's Lynn town centre. The BID acts as a key delivery partner in delivering the West

	Norfolk Economic Strategy Action Plan and the Pride in Place Programme.
Protect our Environment	The BID supports initiatives that improve the appearance of the town centre, encourage sustainable travel, promote local shopping and strengthen the long-term sustainability of King's Lynn as a thriving commercial centre.
Efficient and effective delivery of our services	The BID supports, enhances and complements the service delivery of the Council including Economic Development and Commercial Services through joint partnership working on business support, public realm and event programming that strengthen the long-term sustainability of King's Lynn as a thriving commercial centre.
Support our communities	The BID contributes to a vibrant and welcoming town centre that serves residents, visitors and businesses. Through events, animation, cultural activities and public realm initiatives, it helps foster civic pride and community engagement.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Introduction

Discover King's Lynn is the Business Improvement District (BID) for King's Lynn town centre. The BID has operated since April 2017 and currently represents businesses across approximately 667 hereditaments within the King's Lynn town centre. It is governed by King's Lynn BID Ltd, a not-for-profit company led by a Board drawn from local businesses.

The current BID term concludes in March 2027, and a renewal ballot is due to take place on 12 November 2026. If approved, the BID will continue for a further five-year period until March 2032.

2. Background

2.2 Since 2022, Discover King's Lynn has delivered a significant programme of activity designed to support businesses, improve the visitor experience and increase town centre footfall. Key activities delivered include:

- More than 20 Merchants' Markets.
- Annual Christmas Markets and Christmas Street entertainment.
- Annual Halloween and Easter events delivered in partnership with the Vancouver Quarter.
- The creation of the Discover King's Lynn App, achieving over 4,000 downloads since launch.
- Growth in social media engagement to more than 15,000 followers.
- Delivery of the Street Ranger service, providing business support, crime prevention and welfare assistance.
- Support for Shopwatch, Pubwatch and the DISC information sharing system.
- Delivery of subsidised business training and networking opportunities.
- Investment in Christmas lighting, hanging baskets and public realm improvements.

- Proving strong representation on behalf of the businesses in the town centre at local, regional and national level, including at the King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board.

2.3 During this 5-year term, annual town centre footfall recovered to approximately 94% of pre-pandemic levels, with Easter footfall in April 2026 exceeding equivalent 2019 levels. The BID has also secured over £100,000 of additional external funding to support delivery of town centre initiatives.

3. Proposal

3.1 The proposed BID Business Plan 2027-2032 (attached at Appendix 1) has been developed following extensive consultation with businesses. Survey responses demonstrated strong support for the continuation of core BID services, particularly the Street Ranger service, town centre events, business support activity and advocacy on behalf of businesses.

3.2 The Business Plan is structured around three priorities:

Championing King's Lynn through events and marketing to increase footfall, dwell time and visitor spend.

Supporting Business and Strengthening Community through business support, networking, training, crime reduction initiatives and town centre safety measures.

Championing King's Lynn as the Voice of Business by representing business interests and advocating for improvements to the town centre environment and economy.

3.3 The next stage if approved, is to run a BID ballot in accordance with the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations and administered by the Council in its role as Ballot Holder. The process includes verification of the eligible hereditament list, appointment of an independent ballot service provider, issues and management of ballot papers, maintenance of statutory notices, handling replacement ballot requests, ballot verification and declaration of the result. Delivery of the ballot will require resource from the electoral services team to together with support from the Revenues and Benefits team and finance.

3.4 A specialist ballot company will print, distribute and count ballot papers, whilst officers will oversee the statutory process, engage with businesses, manage stakeholder communications and ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

3.5 The Borough Council has worked closely with Discover King's Lynn since the BID was established in 2017. The BID is an important strategic partner that supports the town centre through events, business engagement and initiatives which help improve the vitality and attractiveness of King's Lynn.

3.6 If the ballot is successful, the Council will continue to work with the BID throughout the 2027-2032 term. This will include regular liaison between officers and the BID team, partnership working on town centre projects and ongoing engagement through programmes such as the Economic Strategy Action Plan and the Pride in Place Programme. This will help ensure that BID activity complements the Council's wider strategic priorities for economic growth, regeneration and supporting town centre businesses.

3.7 If approved, the BID renewal ballot will take place on 12 November 2026. The new BID term will commence on 1 April 2027 and continue until 31 March 2032.

4. Options Considered

4.1 Option 1 – Support the BID Renewal Ballot (Preferred option)

This option secures continued private sector investment into King's Lynn, provides continuity of delivery and supports the Borough Council's regeneration and economic growth objectives.

4.2 Option 2 – Vote against the BID renewal (Least Preferred option)

Under this option, the BID would cease operation following the end of the current term. This would remove a significant source of town centre investment, reduce partnership working opportunities and weaken coordinated business-led place promotion activity.

4.3 Option 3 – Abstain

This would result in the Council not influencing the outcome despite being a significant stakeholder and levy payer within the BID area.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The Borough Council will continue to be liable for BID levy payments in respect of hereditaments (individual properties subject to tax) it occupies within the BID area. Based on current estimates, the Council's annual BID levy liability for 2027/28 is approximately £25,900. This reflects the levy payable on Council properties located within the BID area and is not an additional discretionary funding contribution. The cost will be met from existing service budgets.. Under the proposed BID arrangements, the levy rate will increase from 1.5% to 1.9% of rateable value for eligible properties, generating anticipated annual BID income of approximately £222,000 (based on a 97.5% collection rate). This will support a five-year investment programme valued at over £1.1 million.

5.2 The proposed increase in the levy rate from 1.5% to 1.9% reflects the introduction of a £7,500 rateable value threshold, which removes smaller hereditaments from the levy-paying base. The revised rate is intended to maintain overall BID income at a level sufficient to continue delivering services and activities rather than generate significant additional income.

5.3 In addition to its role as a levy payer, the Borough Council is responsible for the administration, billing, collection and recovery of the BID levy in accordance with the Business Improvement District Regulations. This function is delivered through existing Revenues and Benefits resources and supports the effective operation of the BID. The Council recovers the costs associated with this activity from the BID company through the arrangements set out within the Operating Agreement

6. HR Implications

6.1 The resources required from the Revenues and Benefits service is managed from within existing resources, as is the resources required from the electoral services team to run the BID ballot. However, there is currently long-term sickness within the Electoral Services team and plans are being made to ensure that this knowledge gap can be filled and does not adversely impact on the BID ballot process.

7. Policy Implications

7.1 The proposed BID renewal directly supports delivery of the Council's Corporate Strategy, the West Norfolk Economic Strategy Action Plan, and the King's Lynn Pride in Place Regeneration Plan and wider regeneration ambitions for the town centre.

7.2 The BID is well placed to support delivery of several priorities within the West Norfolk Economic Strategy Action Plan and the King's Lynn Pride in Place Programme through its programme of events, marketing, business engagement and advocacy activity. Many of the priorities set out within the West Norfolk Economic Strategy Action Plan, particularly those relating to thriving towns, business growth, visitor economy development and town centre vitality, are supported by BID-led initiatives including events, marketing campaigns, place promotion and advocacy on behalf of businesses.

7.3 The BID will not only be a key external partner, but also undoubtedly be a vehicle for the success of the King's Lynn Pride in Place programme. The vision statement and strategic objectives of creating a vibrant town centre, increasing footfall, supporting local small and medium sized businesses, improving perceptions of the town centre and encouraging investment are shared priorities across both initiatives.

7.4 The success of both the Pride in Place programme and the West Norfolk Economic Strategy will depend not only on public investment, but on the active participation and support of local businesses. The BID provides the established mechanism for securing that engagement. A successful BID renewal will ensure there is a dedicated organisation with the capacity, relationships and local knowledge needed to help deliver the ambitions of both programmes and maximise their long-term impact on King's Lynn town centre. The BID provides an established mechanism for business engagement and collaboration which complements the work of the Council and other partners. Through its relationships with levy payers, local businesses and stakeholders, the BID brings valuable knowledge, connections and delivery capacity that can help maximise the impact of wider regeneration and economic development initiatives.

8. Climate Change and Environmental Implications and considerations

8.1 The BID will continue to work with the Borough Council and other partners where opportunities arise to support environmental improvements and contribute to the wider objectives of the Borough Council's Climate Change Strategy.

9. Statutory and Legal Implications

9.1 The Legislation:

In England and Wales, BIDs are underpinned by the Local Government Act 2003 and specific statutory regulations such as The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004, which dictate how districts operate, ballot, and are dissolved.

9.2 The Ballot Process:

To establish a BID, a business plan must pass a democratic ballot. The proposal is approved if a simple majority of those who vote are in favor, and those businesses also represent more than 50% of the total rateable value of the valid votes cast.

9.3 Mandatory Levy:

Once established, all eligible businesses within the geographic boundary are legally required to pay the BID levy, which is collected by the local billing authority alongside standard business rates.

As the billing authority, the Borough Council is responsible for administering the BID levy, including the billing, collection and recovery of payments from eligible hereditaments within the BID area. These functions are undertaken in accordance with the Operating Agreement between the Council and King's Lynn BID Ltd.

9.4 Term Limit:

BIDs generally operate in fixed terms of up to five years, after which a renewal ballot must be held to continue.

10. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

The proposed BID term (2027-2032) will span a period of significant change in local governance as Norfolk moves through Local Government Reorganisation.

Whilst the future arrangements for local government are still being developed, periods of organisational change can create uncertainty for businesses and stakeholders. A renewed BID would provide continuity during this transition period through its established relationships with businesses, partners and public sector organisations.

The BID provides an independent, business-led forum through which town centre businesses can work collectively and engage with emerging local and regional structures. This continuity will help ensure that the interests of King's Lynn town

centre continue to be represented and that momentum is maintained on town centre initiatives and business engagement activities.

A successful BID renewal would therefore provide a stable platform for collaboration and partnership working during a period of change and uncertainty.

11. Evidence of benefit from business community

11.1 *“The King’s Lynn BID has been instrumental in supporting local businesses and promoting the town as a destination for residents and visitors alike. Through events, marketing and business engagement, it has helped strengthen the town centre and local economy. Continuing the BID for a further five years will provide the focus and momentum needed to build on this success, attract more visitors and support the long-term prosperity of King’s Lynn.”*

David Kneeshaw, General Manager, Dukes Head Hotel

11.2 *“Running a small business can be very lonely, having the BID on hand to provide business support and advice is invaluable.”*

Nicky Crown, Owner, Whatahoot.

11.3 *“We have a high detection rate when it comes to retail crime in King’s Lynn. There is no doubt in my mind that the Street Rangers, and our partnership with BID and businesses, contributes to this.”*

Howard Elvidge, Local Policing Inspector

11.4 *“The BID has played a significant role in that success. Its ability to advocate for businesses, secure investment, coordinate initiatives and work in genuine partnership with organisations such as the Vancouver Quarter has strengthened the town’s offer and enhanced its reputation. The continued collaboration between the BID, businesses and stakeholders gives me great confidence that King’s Lynn is well placed to build on this positive momentum for many years to come.”*

Alistair Cox, Manager, Vancouver Quarter

12. Health and Safety Implications

NONE.

13. Equality Impact Assessment

13.1

The proposal is considered to be equality neutral. The renewal of the BID will continue to support activities and initiatives that are accessible to residents, visitors and businesses across the town centre. No disproportionate negative impacts on any protected group or disadvantaged community have been identified.

14. Risk Management Implications

14.1 If the BID ballot is unsuccessful:

- Dedicated investment into town centre events, marketing and business support activities would cease.
- The Street Ranger service and associated business crime reduction initiatives would be at risk.
- Businesses would lose an established mechanism for collective representation and advocacy at the King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board and at other regional and national levels.
- Opportunities to attract additional funding and influence future regeneration priorities may be reduced.
- As Local Government Reorganisation progresses, King's Lynn would have fewer dedicated mechanisms to champion and deliver town centre interests and support initiatives.

15. Conclusion

15.1 Over the current BID term, Discover King's Lynn has become an established voice for town centre businesses and an important partner in delivering town centre initiatives, events and business engagement activities. In addition, key external partner in delivering the strategic ambitions of the West Norfolk Economic Strategy Action Plan and the Pride in Place Programme, among others. The BID provides King's Lynn with an independent, business-led champion at a time when Local Government Reorganisation could otherwise distract focus on the town centre.

15.2 The Borough Council's support to the Renewal of the BID will ensure that businesses continue to have a powerful collective voice and a locally accountable champion capable of advocating for town centre renewal, investment, supporting regeneration and maintaining King's Lynn's position as the economic heart of West Norfolk.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - [Draft BID proposal 2027-2032 for Cabinet.pdf](#)

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

BID Proposal 2027 – 2032 for R&D Panel. Link here: [Draft BID proposal 2027-2032 for Cabinet.pdf](#)

PRE SCREENING EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

For equalities profile information please visit [Norfolk Insight - Demographics and Statistics - Data Observatory](#)

Name of policy/service/function	BID Ballot 2027 - 2032			
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function? (tick as appropriate)	New		Existing	☒
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations, and identify relevant legislation.	To enable the Council to formally support the continuation of the King's Lynn Business Improvement District for the period 2027 - 2032 and to secure continued private sector investment in King's Lynn town centre and assist delivery of the Council's corporate priorities relating to economic growth, regeneration, business engagement and place-making. The BID is constrained by the statutory obligations and legislation: The Legislation: In England and Wales, BIDs are underpinned by the Local Government Act 2003 and specific statutory regulations such as The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004, which dictate how districts operate, ballot, and are dissolved. The Ballot Process: To establish a BID, a business plan must pass a democratic ballot. The proposal is approved if a simple majority of those who vote are in favor, and those businesses also represent more than 50% of the total rateable value of the valid votes cast. Mandatory Levy: Once established, all eligible businesses within the geographic boundary are legally required to pay the BID levy, which is collected by the local billing authority alongside standard business rates. As the billing authority, the Borough Council is responsible for administering the BID levy, including the billing, collection and recovery of payments from eligible hereditaments within the BID area. These functions are undertaken in accordance with the Operating Agreement between the Council and King's Lynn BID Ltd. Term Limit:			

	BIDs generally operate in fixed terms of up to five years, after which a renewal ballot must be held to continue.				
Who has been consulted as part of the development of the policy/service/function? – new only (<i>identify stakeholders consulted with</i>)	The proposed BID Business Plan 2027-2032 has been developed following extensive consultation with businesses. Survey responses demonstrated strong support for the continuation of core BID services, particularly the Street Ranger service, town centre events, business support activity and advocacy on behalf of businesses.				
Question	Answer				
1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service? Please tick the relevant box for each group. NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group. <i>If potential adverse impacts are identified, then a full Equality Impact Assessment (Stage 2) will be required.</i> <i>*For more information on health inequalities please visit The King's Fund</i>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			x	
	Disability			x	
	Sex			x	
	Gender Re-assignment			x	
	Marriage/civil partnership			x	
	Pregnancy & maternity			x	
	Race			x	
	Religion or belief			x	
	Sexual orientation			x	
	Armed forces community			x	
	Care leavers			x	
	Health inequalities*			x	
	Other (e.g. low income, caring responsibilities)	x			
Please provide a brief explanation of the answers above: The King's Lynn BID Ballot is expected to have overall neutral equality impacts, particularly for groups experiencing disadvantage or poorer outcomes.					

No negative impacts have been identified here.

Question	Answer	Comments
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No.	N/A
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No.	N/A
If 'yes' to questions 2 - 3 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary: Decision agreed by EWG member:		
4. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section	N/A	Actions: N/A
		Actions agreed by EWG member:
5. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No.	Please provide brief summary: N/A
Assessment completed by:	Walton Mabuto	
Job title	Economic Growth Officer	
Date completed	24/07/2026	
Reviewed by EWG member	Alison Demonty	Date 24/07/2026
✓ Please tick to confirm completed EIA Pre-screening Form has been shared with Corporate Policy (corporate.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk)		

