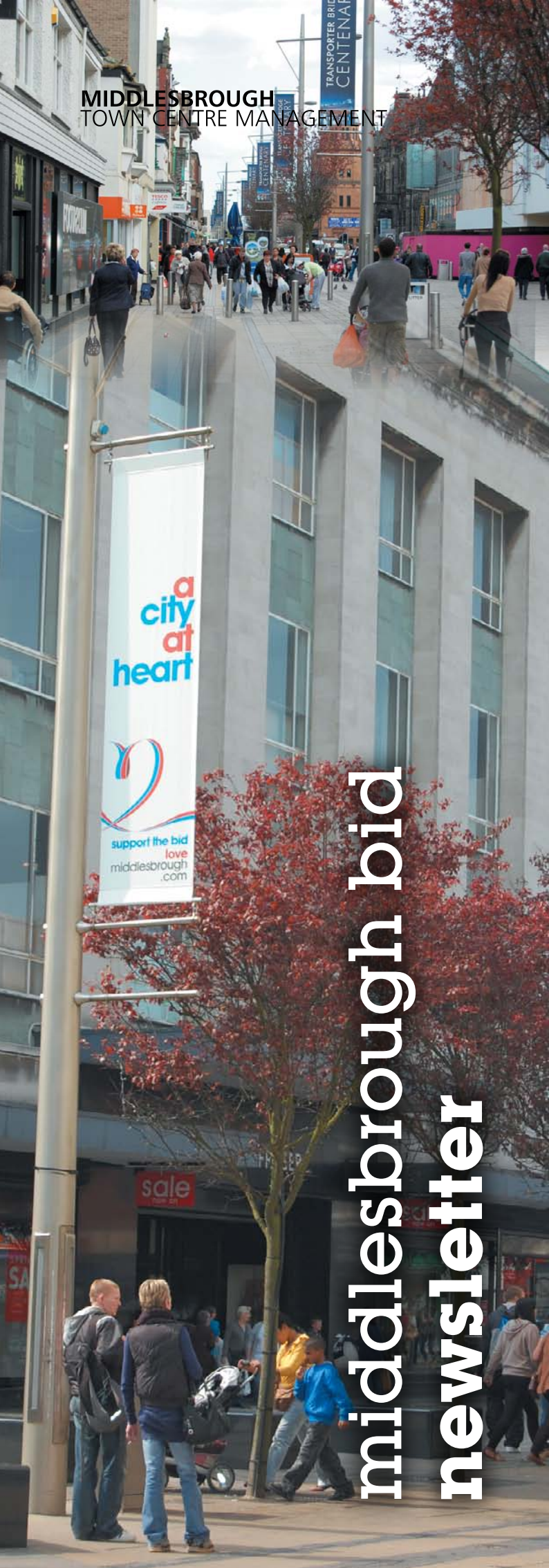


MIDDLESBROUGH
TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT



middlesbrough bid newsletter





Middlesbrough Bid

This is a very exciting time for Middlesbrough town centre and, despite some very difficult trading conditions, many of you have recognised the benefits that a BID (Business Improvement District) could provide to help stimulate the business economy and promote the town centre to a wider catchment area. Given the current economic climate Middlesbrough needs, more than ever, to make sure that we retain and grow our customer base. The town centre needs to be strong and a BID will provide the funding needed for projects to help support the growth of your business.

Information has already been circulated to town centre businesses relating to the development of a BID and you will have received a copy of the BID brochure (pictured below) outlining how a BID works, how you can influence its development and how you can get involved.



Middlesbrough Bid brochure



This newsletter briefly outlines the BID process and will provide you with some straightforward information about how you will benefit from a BID and how it will affect you. We have planned an extensive consultation programme throughout September and October (outlined on the back page of this newsletter).

We hope that you will be able to drop by, find out more about the Middlesbrough BID and give us your views and opinions.



The Town Centre Management Team have had discussions with many businesses in the town centre and have listened carefully to their views to find out how a BID could be developed and how the money raised should be spent.

This newsletter provides an update on the BID proposal and tells you where we are so far with the BID development. The following pages will provide answers to some of the most frequently asked questions and the enclosed draft business plan provides more detail of what the BID will provide

We would like to discuss the draft business plan with you and have arranged a number of informal meetings/drop in sessions to make it easy for businesses to come and share their views. The sessions have been arranged in different locations at various times to make it as easy as possible for people to come along. You are welcome to attend any of these to discuss your ideas and any concerns you may have. If you would prefer a separate meeting we would be more than happy to arrange this with you.



What is a BID?

A BID is a Business Improvement District, a business led initiative where businesses get together to decide what improvements and initiatives they would like to see in the BID area. They also decide how this should be managed and what this will cost. Funding is raised by placing a small levy on the business rate that will be spent by the BID group. A formal ballot is held to determine whether the BID proposal will go ahead.

Times are really tough at the moment, is this really a good time to be going for a BID?

We feel that it is the ideal time, by providing businesses with the opportunity of working together to improve your trading environment and contribute to the delivery of projects that are important to you and your business. We recognise that trading is difficult at the moment so supporting each other and working together is more important than ever. The BID is one thing we can achieve and the actions that are agreed as a part of the business plan will be delivered to strengthen our town centre offer.

My business rates pay for these things don't they?

Business rates are collected by Middlesbrough Council on behalf of central government who then decide how much money is given to the Council for its services. You do not have a direct say on where this money goes. With a BID you agree what and where the additional funding will be spent to best benefit your trading environment and help develop your business.



Is this just another way for the Council to save money?

No this isn't the case at all. This is undoubtedly a period of change for the Council and you will all be well aware of the challenges that they face with government cuts and reduced budgets.

The BID won't replace any statutory services provided by Middlesbrough Council or other agencies such as Cleveland Police. We are currently developing a number of baseline agreements to make sure that the BID will not deliver or replace services that are already provided. Funding raised for the BID will be spent on specific projects as agreed in the BID business plan.

How much will I pay towards the BID?

The BID levy has yet to be agreed and the calculations shown in the draft business plan have been based on a 1.0% and 1.5% levy of your rateable value. The enclosed draft business plan shows how much money this would raise for the BID over a 5 year period and a proposal for how the funding will be spent.

Does everyone have to pay into the BID?

A ballot will be held and voting papers will be sent out to the person liable for the business rates of your business. If the majority of businesses vote in favour by both number and rateable value the levy will be applied to all businesses within the BID area.

Any business that has a rateable value of £9,999 or less would be exempt from voting and would not pay a contribution towards the BID.

How will the money be collected?

The money will be collected in a similar way to your business rates. It will be billed annually in advance by Middlesbrough Council. The money collected will then be passed directly to the BID organisation.

I understand the concept of the BID but wouldn't the money be better spent on other things?

The BID proposition has been based on feedback from businesses and discussions about where they would like to see the money spent. This is a draft Business Plan and if you have any thoughts or would like to discuss the proposals in more detail we would like to hear from you. The consultation period will run until mid October (details on the reverse of this newsletter).

How do I get involved and will what I say make a difference?

Your views do count and we have tried to include as many ideas as possible in the business plan. We would like to hear from you and would urge you to come along to one of the drop in sessions to speak to us. The sessions we have planned are very informal and are open to anyone with a view about the BID.

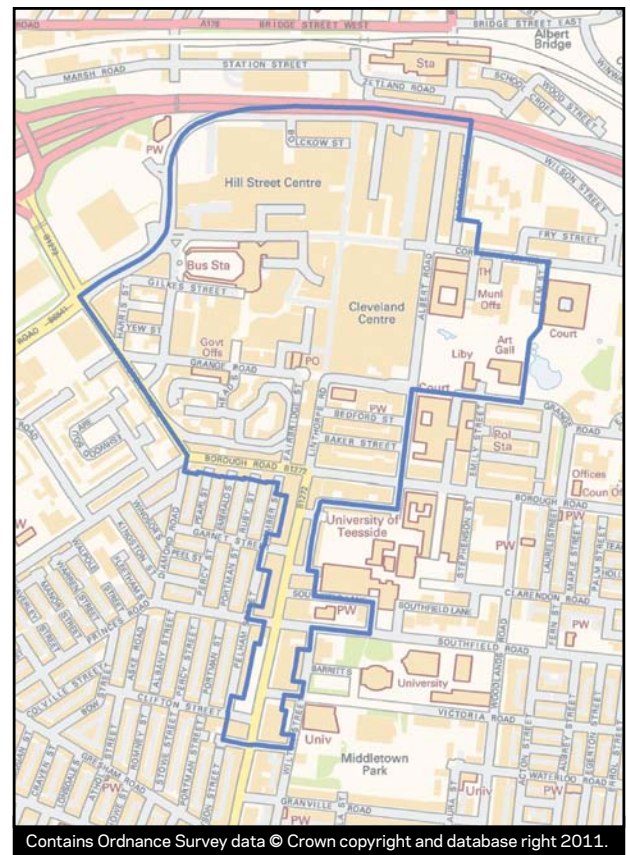
My business is not in the BID area, how can I get involved?

Many businesses do fall outside of the proposed BID area however, we are still interested in your views with regards to the BID and the area that has been defined. We would welcome all business views and contributions towards to the development of the BID.



How was the boundary of the BID agreed and why does it cover this area?

The boundary area has been looked at closely picking up as many areas as possible that may benefit from projects that would improve their areas. The boundary can be small or large but we do need to be mindful of the different needs of businesses in different locations in the town centre. Making the boundary too wide would increase the costs of delivery and too small wouldn't generate enough funding to make a noticeable difference. We would welcome your thoughts on the boundary and where you think this should be.



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How will the ballot work, what does it involve?

Once the business plan has been agreed and the consultation process has been completed we will go to a formal ballot. Voting papers will be sent to all eligible businesses who will be given 28 days to return their ballot papers.

The ballot will need to return a 51% majority vote in favour for the BID organisation to be formally set up. The additional levy will be collected in the same way your Business Rates are collected.

What do I need to do next?

The BID is now starting to gather pace and we will be updating the BID website regularly to reflect what is happening. We will also be sending out further communications concerning the BID that may require a response from yourselves, we would appreciate your input and views so please look out for these.

We would welcome the opportunity to speak to you about the BID so please come along and meet us at one of the drop in sessions listed below.

If you have any comments, views or concerns don't hesitate to give us a call.

BID Consultation & Information Events

The following drop in sessions have been planned for geographical convenience but please feel free to attend any other session if the time is more suitable to you.

DATES	TIMES	VENUE
19 Sept	9.30am - 11.30am	Captain Cook Square Management Office
19 Sept	2.30pm - 4.30pm	Captain Cook Square Management Office
20 Sept	9.30am - 11.30am	Caffechino, Hillstreet
21 Sept	2.30pm - 4.30pm	The Central, Corporation Road
3 Oct	2.30pm - 4.30pm	Dundas Centre Yorkshire Linen Unit
6 Oct	9.30am - 11.30am	Bhs Coffee Shop
10 Oct	9.30am - 11.30am	M&S Coffee Shop
17 Oct	2.30pm - 4.30pm	The Central, Corporation Road
19 Oct	2.30pm - 4.30pm	TS:One, Linthorpe Road
20 Oct	9.30am - 11.30am	Caffechino, Hillstreet

For further information about the Middlesbrough Bid:
www.middlesbroughbid.co.uk

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