

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO ECONOMY AND PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

13 MARCH 2025

Report Title: Newcastle-under-Lyme Business Improvement District – Progress Report

Submitted by: Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery

Portfolios: Finance, Town Centres and Growth

Ward(s) affected: Town

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To provide the Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee with a progress report on the activities of Newcastle-under-Lyme Business Improvement District (BID).			
<u>Recommendation</u>			
That Committee:			
Receive the report and note the progress report on NuL BID and the forthcoming renewal process			
<u>Reasons</u>			
To monitor the impact of NuL BID in improving Newcastle town centre by offering additional services and new initiatives			

1. Background

1.1 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are business led and business funded schemes to improve a defined commercial area, such as a town centre, through additional services or new initiatives.

The benefits of BIDs are wide-ranging and can include:

- Businesses decide and direct what they want in their area
- Businesses are represented and have a voice in issues affecting their trading area
- BID levy money is ring-fenced for use only in the BID area
- Increased footfall and spend
- Improved staff retention
- Reduced business costs
- Enhanced marketing and promotion
- Support with sustainability initiatives
- Guidance in place shaping vision activities

Facilitated networking opportunities with neighbouring businesses
Assistance in dealing with the Council, Police and other public bodies



- 1.2** NuL BID is now in its second term, which runs from 2021 to 2026.
The BID has 3 objectives:
- Support business growth and investment with a great business offer (Networking; Partnership Working; Wi-Fi; Business Insights; Training; Vacant Spaces; Business Support)
 - Create a welcoming and attractive town, ensuring a safe experience (Market Development; Town Centre Safety; Reanimating Public Spaces; Events; Safety and Crime)
 - Celebrate and promote Newcastle as a town for all, preserving the heritage and cultural aspect of the area (Community Focus; Collaboration; Business Comms; PR and Marketing of Town; Business Promotions)
- 1.3** The BID vision, through a business-led programme of investment, is to build on Newcastle-under-Lyme's traditions by creating a safe, welcoming, forward-thinking town for the whole community.

2. Issues

- 2.1** During 2024/25, NuL BID has delivered the following:
- Events - Lymelight Festival; Jazz and Blues Festival; Outdoor Cinema; Castle Classics; Love NuL Business Awards; Christmas Lights Switch On (Light Up Castle); Food and Drink Festival
Reanimating Public Spaces – Pop Up Park (including organised activities); Britain in Bloom; Seasonal lighting, bunting and banners; Artbox and murals
Safety – contribution to CCTV running costs; Safer Newcastle Drop ins
Clean Up Castle – Town Tidy Days; Shop front improvement scheme
Connects Network – business networking; communications and promotion
- 2.2** The impact of these initiatives has seen footfall in Newcastle town centre increase when events are held, creating the opportunity for local businesses to take advantage of higher potential customer volume. The BID Annual Report for 2024/25 is attached at Appendix 1 and provides further information on impact and outcomes.
- 2.3** NuL BID has delivered the initiatives in partnership with the following organisations:
- Partnerships for Better Business (PFBB)
Newcastle Borough Council
Staffordshire Police
Newcastle College
Keele University
Appetite
Association of Town and City Management (ATCM)
British BIDs

- 2.4 Based on feedback from businesses and other partners, NuL BID has agreed the following programme for 2025/26:

Events – Castle Classics; Lymelight Festival; Jazz and Blues Festival; Love NuL Business Awards; Light Up Castle (Christmas Lights Switch On); Food and Drink Festival; Connects Network; Town Centre Tidy Days; Safer Newcastle Drop Ins; Pop Up Park and Activities

- 2.5 The BID will undertake a renewal process during 2025 to determine whether or not it will continue for a third term from 2026 to 2031. The BID has commissioned PFBB (Partnerships for Better Business) to manage this process which will include a review of outcomes and benefits, mapping business objectives through engagement with businesses, a boundary review, the development of a BID Proposal and Business Plan, levy criteria and financial modelling and preparing and running the ballot. A report on this process will be brought to a future meeting of the Cabinet and officers will assist PFBB during the renewal process where appropriate.

3. **Recommendation**

- 3.1 That Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee receive the report and note the progress of NuL BID and the forthcoming renewal process.

4. **Reasons**

- 4.1 To monitor the impact of NuL BID in improving Newcastle town centre by offering additional services and new initiatives

5. **Options Considered**

- 5.1 N/A

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The development of the Business Improvement District Business Plan and the renewal process is governed by legal statute under the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 (Enabling power – Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government Act 2003).

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 N/A

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 The current term of the BID (2021 – 2026) has a levy threshold of £12,001 and consists of 300 hereditaments. The total annual average levy income is £249,229 and this equates to an average annual spend on Objective 1 of £51,113, Objective 2 of £72,517 and Objective 3 of £76,050.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 The major risks associated with NuL BID are:
- 9.2 Failure to collect the levy payments – this is mitigated by the Council collecting the levy payments on behalf of NuL BID
- 9.3 Failure to deliver the objectives in the NuL BID Business Plan – this is mitigated by the governance structure of the BID Board agreeing the work programme for the year and monitoring progress at Board meetings

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially. The Council is a BID levy payer and makes this contribution to assist with economic growth in Newcastle town centre.

One Digital Council

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction. The Council collects the BID levy via its digital Business Rates collection system and passports the income collected to the BID.

One Green Council

We will deliver on our commitment to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle. The Council, as a BID levy payer, supports local business and local procurement with a view to minimising the carbon footprint of the Borough.

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 N/A

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 N/A

14. List of Appendices

14.1 NuL BID Annual Report 2024/25

15. Background Papers

15.1 None