**Item 5**

**4th September 2025**

**Glasgow City Council**

**City Administration Committee**

**Report by Councillor Angus Millar, City Convener for Climate, Glasgow Green Deal, Transport and City Centre Recovery**

**Contact: George Gillespie Ext: 79106**

# GLASGOW CITY CENTRE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Members on the development of the City Centre BID called Let's Go Glasgow.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Committee

1. Agree support for the Let's Go Glasgow BID
2. Authorise the Executive Director NRS to accept the BID proposal and the Chief Executive to cast a yes ballot on behalf of the Glasgow City Council family properties.
3. Note that the Council will provide transitional finance on the basis that this would be repaid from the levy.
4. Authorise the Executive Director of NRS to conclude the final financial arrangements and to nominate an officer to sit on the BID Board after a successful ballot
5. Note that an update will be provided to the Committee after the ballot.

Ward No(s): 10 Citywide: No

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☑ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☑

***PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING**:*

*Any Ordnance Survey mapping included within this Report is provided by Glasgow City Council under licence from the Ordnance Survey in order to fulfil its public function to make available Council-held public domain information. Persons viewing this mapping should contact Ordnance Survey Copyright for advice where they wish to licence Ordnance Survey mapping/map data for their own use. The OS web site can be found at <http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk> "*

*If accessing this Report via the Internet, please note that any mapping is for illustrative purposes only and is not true to any marked scale*

## 1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update Members on the development of the City Centre Business Improvement District (BID) which will be called Let's Go Glasgow.

1.2 The Scottish Government adopted legislation in 2006 that permitted the development of BIDs in Scotland. In England and Wales the legislation was introduced in 2004.

1.3 Since that date 345 BIDs have been established across the UK. All Glasgow's comparator cities such as Edinburgh, Leeds, Manchester city centres all have active BIDs.

1.4 Currently there are 34 fully operational BIDs in Scotland with a further 20 in development including this BID. Since 2008 there are 27 operational BIDs in their second or third BID terms equating to 50 successful renewal ballots.

1.5 Council support for BIDS is included in the Glasgow's Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027 as Grand Challenge 2 Mission 2. At this time the Council is supporting three other BIDs in the City: Byres Road and Lanes, Shawlands and Possilpark.

## 2 Background

2.1 A BID is a precisely defined geographical area of a city or town, where businesses and organisations in that area have voted to invest collectively in additional services to those provided by the Local Authority (the baseline services). BIDs enable the business community to invest in their priorities, as well as work collaboratively with statutory authorities to take forward projects which will benefit the local economy.

2.2 BIDs are developed, managed and paid for by the businesses and organisations by means of a compulsory BID levy which all eligible parties have to pay. Each business/organisation liable to contribute to the BID will be able to vote on whether the BID goes ahead.

2.3 The interests of both large and small businesses are protected through a voting system that requires a majority both in the numerical votes cast and the rateable value of votes cast. It also requires a minimum turnout of 25% of the numerical votes and 25% of the total rateable value.

2.4 The ballot will run from 16 October to 27 November 2025.

2.5 If the ballot is successful, the BID will be established for a five-year term from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2031. After this period, it will either be dissolved or it will seek a new mandate and term through a Renewal Ballot.

2.6 Local authorities are statutorily obliged to support any developing or operating BID through the provision of information on baseline services and through the development of a draft Operating Agreement.

2.7 The primary focus of the draft Operating Agreement is on levy collection, the draw down of funds collected and financial governance. The draft Operating Agreement has been provided to the BID Steering Group. This will not be finalised until after the successful ballot.

2.8 The BID has developed a Proposal which outlines many of the key features such as levy rate, etc. as well as setting out the business plan and the additional activity that it will seek to deliver. The Proposal will be considered by the Executive Director on behalf of the Council. Once approved it will become legally binding on the BID company which will be established after a successful ballot.

2.9 The Scottish Government will also consider the Proposal, and it will also be required to approve it.

2.10 The final date for approval is 18 September 2025.

2.11 The Council will manage the ballot process and report the results of the ballot. As in the case of the other Glasgow BIDs the costs of this will be met by the Council. The ballot will end on 27 November 2025.

## 3 City Centre BID

3.1 The map of the proposed BID area is attached at appendix 1. The BID area was developed by the BID Steering Group, which has representatives from a range of business sectors.

3.2 The BID area includes all the business and organisational types within this geographical area. This includes Glasgow City Council Family properties.

3.3 While the BID is entirely focused on providing services and activity that are additional to those currently being provided by the Council the objective of these activities is aligned to the City Centre Strategy 2024 – 2030. The focus of BID activity is on the Magnetic Experience which aims to create more compelling reasons to visit, shop and enjoy a city centre which should have the power to surprise and inspire visitors.

3.4 The main themes of the BID are

- 3.4.1 Cleaner – a more welcoming City Centre
- 3.4.2 Safer - a more secure City Centre
- 3.4.3 Vibrant – a more engaging City Centre
- 3.4.4 Empowered – representing City Centre businesses

3.5 Taken together with the baseline services these additional activities will improve the perceptions and actual experience of the City Centre.

3.6 The levy will be calculated at 1.5% of rateable value. The Council has been asked to collect the levy on behalf of the BID. The council will create a specific BID Revenue Account which will be used to hold the levy income until it is transferred back to the BID bank account under arrangements laid out in the Operating Agreement. There will be regular financial monitoring of levy collection and early intervention when businesses move out of or into the area, or where, in individual cases, payment is not made.

3.7 In line with other Councils in Scotland and across the UK GCC will charge for levy collection. This charge, of 1.8%, has been included in the BID's Business Plan. The collection fee will cover the costs of providing the service outlined in the draft Operating Agreement. The Council does not underwrite or guarantee the amount collected.

3.8 The income from the collection fee will be ringfenced so that it is only used to provide the service outlined in the draft operating agreement.

3.9 In Year 1 (2026 - 27) the notice will be issued on 1 April 2026 and in April for each subsequent year. Where a property is defined as vacant the property owner will be liable for the levy. If there is a tenant or occupier, then they will be the liable party.

3.10 In terms of the levy the BID will, if successful, generate a maximum of £14.5 million over the five year term. This is a significant sum to be spent on additional activities. It will close the gap between Glasgow and its comparator cities such as Manchester, Leeds and Edinburgh which have had City Centre BIDs in operation for a number of years.

3.11 Councillors should note that the contribution of the Council Family along with other very large businesses/organisations in the city centre is capped at £50k per annum.

3.12 The ballot for the BID will conclude on 27 November 2025. If the ballot is successful then the BID Company, a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee with no share capital, will be created and begin operations on 1 April 2026. A senior council officer will have a seat on the Board. This Officer will be nominated by the Executive Director NRS. They will be a key liaison point between the GCC and the BID.

3.13 To facilitate BID preparations after a successful ballot and thereby ensure that it is ready to begin operations on 1 April 2026 the Council should agree now to discuss an advance of levy income to the BID so that all reasonable costs set-up costs incurred by the BID or by the Council on behalf of the BID can be met. This advance will be paid back from the levy collected by the Council on the BIDs behalf, within a term to be agreed, but one that is expected to be no longer than 12 months. These arrangements will be concluded by the Executive Director of NRS.

3.14 An update will be provided to Committee after the ballot.

## 4 Policy and Resource Implications

**Resource Implications:**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Financial:* | The costs of the Levy and ballot administration will be met from existing budgets.<br>The costs of setting up the BID will be repaid from the levy income.<br>The Levy Collection charge of 1.8% will be ringfenced for the collection the BID levy. |
| *Legal:* | A legal agreement has been drafted, and this will be finalised after a successful ballot |
| *Personnel:* | There will be a requirement to recruit additional staff paid for by the levy collection charge. |
| *Procurement:* | There are no procurement implications. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Council Strategic Plan:** | Grand Challenge 2 Increase Opportunity and Prosperity for all our citizens.<br>Mission 2 Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy which contains the commitment to support BIDs. |

**Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.* | None specifically. These will be addressed by the members of a successful BID. |
| *What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?* | The additional activity delivered by the BID is intended to increase footfall and improve the cleanliness and safety. This will make the city centre more accessible to vulnerable groups. The assessment of particular projects and initiatives will be a matter for the BID Company. |
| *Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.* | In addition to the equality impacts the additional services and projects are intended to increase footfall and economic activity in the city centre. It is expected that the jobs created will largely be in the foundational economy. |

**Climate Impacts:**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Does the proposal support any Climate* | The Committee report keeps members uptodate on the development of the Councils support for |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Plan actions? Please specify:* | the development of a BID. This does not support any specific actions in the climate plan. |
| *What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?* | The Council's support the BID will have no additional impact on the climate. |
| *Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?* | Most of the organisation in the proposed BID area have commitments to net zero. |
| **Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:** | |
| Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report. **NO** | |
| If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out | |

## 5 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee

1. Agree support for the Let's Go Glasgow BID
2. Authorise the Executive Director NRS to accept the BID proposal and the Chief Executive to cast a yes ballot on behalf of the Glasgow City Council family properties.
3. Note that the Council will provide transitional finance on the basis that this would be repaid from the levy.
4. Authorise the Executive Director of NRS to conclude the final financial arrangements and to nominate an officer to sit on the BID Board after a successful ballot
5. Note that an update will be provided to the Committee after the ballot.

Appendix 1 – City Centre BID Area

