



Whitehall Business Improvement District

BID Proposal 2023-2028

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Foreword – Nigel Hughes (Chair) & Ruth Duston (CEO)

The Whitehall BID is one of London's newest, but already in just two years much has been achieved. Now, as we launch this new BID proposal we are looking forward to building on some early successes and securing an exciting, longer-term vision for the area.

Through working with neighbouring BIDs and with local and London wide partners, we have developed a set of proposals to support businesses within the Whitehall area, amplifying the priorities that matter to you and showcasing the significant area assets. The investment made by the business community will play a fundamental role in creating a stronger, more resilient, more vibrant Whitehall, and contribute to London's wider renaissance.

As part of the renewal process, we are proposing that the footprint of the Whitehall BID expands southwards from its original boundary at the Palace of Westminster to incorporate Victoria Tower Gardens and Millbank as far as Tate Britain. It will give us the ability to scale up all of our services – promotion, events, public realm management, security, resilience and supporting the vulnerable in our community – and therefore deliver greater impact and value for money.

This Business Plan sets out our objectives for the next five years. In the face of the multiple challenges (and opportunities) of the climate emergency, economic recovery, Britain's exit from the European Union and the cost-of-living crisis there are more reasons than ever to work collectively. It has been informed by the engagement we have with you, our members, but it's a dialogue that will continue so we are always able to adapt and reflect your changing priorities. Included are visionary schemes to enhance public spaces; improve links to the Thames, Victoria, the Northbank, West End and beyond; alongside projects to ensure the area is clean, safe and welcoming. The mix of long-term projects and the more tangible quick wins will ensure that the short and longer-term potential of Whitehall is realised, supporting businesses now and in the future.

It's an ambitious but deliverable plan, and the investment made by the business community will continue to play a fundamental role in supporting London's seat of democracy and tourist hot spot whether as a worker, visitor or resident.

We intend to remain your champion and advocate. Our work is insight led, guided by the unique mix of business sectors who call this part of London home, and we will happily challenge the status quo if we think the area needs new thinking and innovative ideas to support growth and bolster resilience. Our approach relies on partnership to unleash the full potential of both the public and private sectors, and this applies to our hugely productive relationship with Westminster City Council with whom we'll continue to collaborate – delivering our shared goals, area enhancements and helping to spread prosperity to all.

We will also play our part in supporting London's wider renaissance, promoting the Central Activity Zone and ensuring that our capital's reputation as a global economic powerhouse is enhanced. Working with neighbouring south Westminster BIDs under our new umbrella banner of London HQ, and with

organisations such as London & Partners, London First, the NLA and others dedicated to London's vibrancy, will be a core theme of our next term. We recognise that London's success equates to business success so it must be a priority.

Thank you for your support over the last two years and we hope that collectively the area seizes the opportunity this BID renewal offers, we look forward to continuing to work with you in the coming years.

Commitment to Our Community

Hotel School – this initiative teaches hospitality skills to homeless and vulnerable people, matches them to sustainable employment and supports them in their first steps into work. We are proud to support this project by contributing financially and acting as the glue that connects charities partners, businesses and the wider community. As the hospitality sector recovers from the impacts of the pandemic a continued focus on supporting employment in the sector is vital.

Youth Steering Group – we are committed to involving the next generation in how we shape our projects and programmes. Our new Youth Steering Group, comprising a local 16-25 year olds from a variety of backgrounds, is a reflection of this commitment.

The Queen & Her Corgis – trail across South Westminster held in the summer to mark the Platinum Jubilee was a great representation of partnership in action. With support from Westminster City Council, we were able to host 19 giant corgi statues across the London HQ footprint, including in the Whitehall area. Local businesses supported the campaign, and the corgis will be auctioned off for charity later in the year. The trail demonstrated that more can be achieved when all parties work together – a great model for future partnership work.

COVID-19 – from the initial acute days of the crisis to the early days of recovery and beyond, the BID has stood shoulder to shoulder with the business community, acting with agility to respond to changing needs and a city in flux. We provided regular updates and guidance on restrictions and emerging trends and ran a highly popular virtual events programme. As we look ahead to the post-pandemic landscape, we are focused on ensuring we play our part in securing a more vibrant and resilient future for our business community.

Summary of Consultation

After 2 years of working on behalf of businesses in Whitehall we have got to know our community. However, we are not complacent and are committed to developing a Business Plan that responds to the current needs of organisations across the BID area.

In recent months we have undertaken a consultation exercise in the form of a Perception Analysis to ascertain the key priorities for our members and the corresponding projects you'd like us to deliver over the next 5 years.

This is what you said:

Response

- 9 responses representing 8 organisations
- 100% said they were familiar with the work of the BID
- 78% said they'd support another 5-year term, with 22% undecided

Cleaning & Greening

- 100% said pavement deep cleaning and jet washing was important or very important
- 89% rated additional litter picking & sweeping as important or very important
- 88% called for new public gardens and green spaces
- 77% wanted on-street planters, hanging baskets and parklets

Strategic Placemaking

- 77% thought that wider pavements and more pedestrian space was important or very important.
- 66% supported a redeveloped and improved Victoria Station
- 55% called for an improvement to cycling infrastructure such as cycle lanes, safe cycling routes and bike parking.

Community Safety & Business Resilience

- 100% rated our security patrol team as important or very important.
- 100% said our Emergency Notification System (alerts regarding security incidents and disruptive events) was important or very important to them.
- 77% of respondents wanted training and support for licensed premises and night-time venues.

Destination

- 100% wanted the BID to organise networking events.
- 89% said that our Privilege Card scheme was either important or very important to them.
- 77% thought the visitor welcome and information service provided by our on-street Ambassadors was important or very important.

Environmental, Social & Governance

- 100% thought it important that we work to reduce waste and increase recycling in the area.
- 89% said that providing an outreach and support service to the homeless and vulnerable on the streets was important or very important.
- 89% called for the BID should run mental health and wellbeing events for local staff.
- 77% said that the BID should support local charities with grant funding.

Core Themes & Deliverables

Cleaning and Greening - £570k

First impressions count and ensuring that Whitehall's public spaces are reflective of such a prestigious location is of utmost importance to our business community. Our dedicated street cleaning team provides an additional service that enhances the area and ensures environmental issues are resolved swiftly. Our work with urban landscape designers BDP is currently identifying how and where we can introduce a network of on-street planting that brings life and colour to our streets; creating a more attractive place to work, live and visit.

Objectives for 2023-28:

- Ensure that WCC deliver their baseline cleaning service through regular monitoring.
- Increase the frequency of our additional litter-picking, pavement cleansing and graffiti removal service.
- Identify opportunities for specialist cleaning to heritage assets and street furniture.
- Provide an on-call street cleaning service that addresses urgent issues reported by our members at their premises.
- Monitor, report and resolve environmental issues and street defects on a daily basis.
- Increase our network of on-street planting to improve the biodiversity, tranquillity and aesthetic appeal of our public spaces.
- Commission area-wide green infrastructure and biodiversity surveys – identifying opportunities for street trees, enhancing the ecological value of existing green spaces and introducing sustainable urban drainage measures.

Community Safety and Business Resilience - £489k

The safety and resilience of the Whitehall area has always been a top priority for the BID and its members. During our first term we've worked with the police, local authority, private security teams and other key stakeholders to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. An area with so much political significance makes it a key location in the Government Security Zone, bringing with it a range of security issues. This means we need to build resilience to major incidents such as terrorism, protests and civil emergencies – something we achieve by planning/exercising, providing free training opportunities to members and rapidly disseminating important information.

Objectives for 2023-28:

- Introduce a security patrol team for the BID area.
- Support local police teams in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour through intelligence gathering and joint operations.

- Continue to operate our Emergency Notification System, providing businesses with fast, accurate intelligence and information during security incidents, protests and other disruptive events.
- Collaborate with the Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police, Westminster City Council, West End Security Group, BID members and landowners to enhance our resilience to terrorism and civil emergencies.
- Incorporate design-out-crime principles into our Strategic Placemaking.
- Work with our businesses to improve safety and reduce vulnerability in the night-time economy.
- Through our position on the steering group, help deliver the Women's Night Safety Charter in partnership with our members and the Greater London Authority.
- Continue to provide a free business-to-business radio scheme – creating an instant line of communication with one another and our security team.
- Continue to provide businesses with an array of free training on topics such as personal safety, business continuity, counter-terrorism and crime reduction.

Environmental, Social & Governance - £509k

It has become clear through our consultation that Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) standards have become a high priority for local businesses. Our next 5-year term will therefore focus on delivering a comprehensive set of initiatives to address these on an area-wide scale: tackling environmental issues and adapting our city to climate change; improving the health & wellbeing of the local workforce; and supporting the wider Westminster community around us, particularly with regards to skills and employment opportunities.

Objectives for 2023-28:

- Work with an outreach charity to fund a Community Intervention Team (CIT) for the Whitehall BID area who actively support the homeless in finding a route off the streets.
- Support the businesses and general public within the BID area to reduce waste and improve recycling rates.
- Develop a year-round programme of activities to support mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.
- Increase our grant funding programme which supports local Westminster community projects and charities.
- Continue our work with central Government on creating a district-wide renewable energy scheme for south Westminster.
- Continue our membership of the Zero Emission Group – a pan-Westminster partnership of BIDs, landowners and the local authority working to reduce carbon and particulate emissions from road traffic associated with freight, servicing and deliveries.
- Organise free bicycle repair workshops and Bikeregister marking for those cycling in to work.

- Work in partnership with our businesses and Westminster City Council to provide employment and training opportunities for the local community.
- Continue to develop our Youth Board, a group of 16 to 25 year-olds who work alongside our regular Board to broaden the involvement of young people in our activity.
- Commission further research to assess the issues affecting Whitehall and investigate ways in which the BID can assist.
- Minimise the environmental impact of all our services, for example using peat free compost and native perennials in our greening initiatives, and electric vehicles for our cleaning team.

Destination - £521k

Book-ended by Trafalgar Square in the north and Tate Britain in the south – with the Palace of Westminster at its centre – the Whitehall BID footprint is arguably one of the most vital and unique districts in London. It is a destination on the global stage and should be celebrated further as a prime visitor destination. As competition rises for international tourism and domestic leisure spend following the COVID-19 pandemic, we'll promote the area's assets by delivering innovative events and marketing campaigns to showcase its offer.

With a stronger focus than ever on the office as a social space for collaboration, we will support the return of employees to the workplace with a variety of initiatives to help them make the most of the leisure and hospitality on their doorstep. Whitehall must be a thriving destination for its workforce as well as visitors.

We are also heavily involved in strategic efforts to secure the future of the Whitehall BID area, including lobbying for investment in infrastructure to support the growth, and we'll continue to be a strong voice for businesses in the capital.

Objectives for 2023-28:

- Continue to grow the Privilege Card scheme - providing perks for staff and encouraging spend in our local retail, leisure & hospitality venues.
- Work with organisations such as London & Partners and London First to revive international tourism and investment.
- Host and support high profile cultural events and activations in public spaces to drive footfall and increase consumer dwell time.
- Support our retail and hospitality members in their continued post-covid recovery with marketing assistance and event opportunities.
- Participate in pan-London promotional campaigns such as Let's Do London and London's Love Affair.
- Organise seasonal lighting installations with associated promotional activity and events.
- Develop a mobile app for the BID as a comprehensive guide to the area with event listings, news, discounts & offers, itineraries and more.

- Organise a programme of events to help people enjoy and explore the local area.
- Continue with our on-street Ambassadors who provide a multilingual welcome and information service to Whitehall's visitors.
- Collaborate with neighbouring south Westminster BIDs under the London Heritage Quarter (London HQ) banner to lobby central and local Government on issues affecting our community, and for investment in the BID area.
- Share footfall and economic insight data with our members, helping them adapt to changing consumer behaviour.

Strategic Placemaking - £444k

Creating a high-quality public realm and environment has been a priority for the BID since its inception. In our first term we completed our 'People Wanted: Whitehall' study where we commissioned urban design firm BDP to scope the potential for significant improvements to the area's streetscape. The study has identified projects for reducing traffic, improving air quality, adapting to climate change, enhancing public gardens & green spaces, providing safe walking & cycling routes, better wayfinding and activating public space. For our second BID term we want to take the study from theory to practice and implement many of these positive changes.

Our Strategic Placemaking work will also consider Whitehall's position in the wider context of London and enhance connections to the riverfront, West End, Victoria and South Bank.

Objectives for 2023-28:

- Commission a placemaking study for the new area of the expanded BID footprint, building on the current 'People Wanted: Whitehall' strategy.
- Deliver a series of short, medium and long-term public realm improvement projects to activate the riverfront and better connect it with the rest of the BID area and neighbouring districts.
- Reduce vehicle congestion and air pollution to create healthy streets; partnering with businesses, landowners, Transport for London, Westminster City Council and the Greater London Authority to do so.
- Focus initiatives on key gateways into the BID area such as Trafalgar Square, Parliament Square, St James's Park and Lambeth Bridge.
- Work with local stakeholders to enhance the quality of public gardens and green spaces, making them more biodiverse, accessible and welcoming; explore opportunities for creating more where possible.
- Partner with neighbouring BIDs and estates in Northbank, Victoria and Victoria Westminster to promote a co-ordinated approach to public realm improvements and placemaking.
- Work with developers to incorporate green infrastructure into their schemes and encourage sustainable design standards.

- Undertake an accessibility review for those with limited mobility and disabilities, explore solutions accordingly to create a more inclusive built environment.

Governance

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) have numerous advantages for the area in which they operate as they aim to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, drive economic growth and trade, improve social wellbeing, provide a voice for local businesses and enhance the public realm through investment in capital projects and place management. There are over 300 formal BIDs in the UK, with more than 70 of those in London alone.

BIDs are a tried and tested model for generating private sector investment and supporting shared goals. It is a transparent model for delivering change with a clear governance structure.

The Whitehall BID Board

The Whitehall Business Improvement District is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and led by a voluntary Board of Directors. This Board is made up of representatives from businesses within the BID area to ensure balanced representation.

The Board will be supported by a number of steering groups which oversee the delivery of activity, these will be made up of representatives from the wider stakeholder community.

The BID finances will be independently audited and reviewed each year, and these will be presented at the AGM.

The Executive Team

The Board will be supported by an Executive Team. It is proposed that the Executive Team and associated costs are primarily met through voluntary contributions received and not from the core levy generated.

Strategic Advisory Group

This group has been established to provide strategic guidance and support to the Victoria Westminster, Victoria, Northbank and Whitehall BIDs. Made up of thought leaders and influencers, the Advisory Group will meet twice a year with a view to move forward with progressive thinking and innovative ideas for the South Westminster area.

Legal Agreements

It is important that the activities of the BID represent added value over and above the public services already provided in the area. For this reason, a baseline agreement will be entered into with Westminster City Council to clearly define the levels of service that can be expected from the Council and the BID. There will also be a formal operating agreement between the BID and the Council that will define all of the contractual arrangements for collection and enforcement of the BID levy. There may be agreements with other neighbouring BIDs where such arrangements can lead to business efficiencies, cost savings and enhanced services.

The BID Levy Explained

The Whitehall BID proposes to charge a levy on all eligible businesses occupying a property with a rateable value equal to or greater than £150,000.

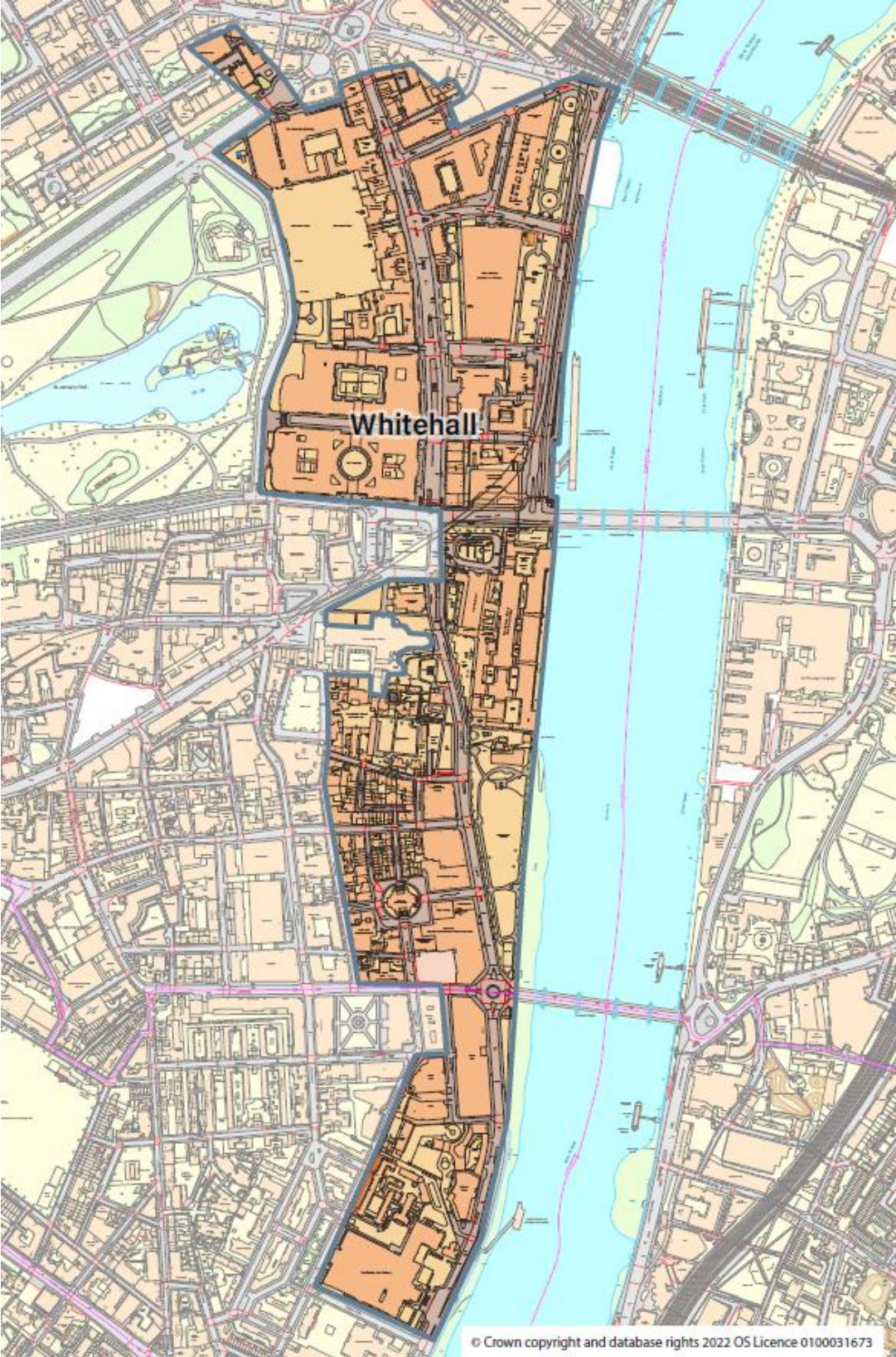
Business Improvement District (BIDs) are business led collectives developed in order to improve a geographically specific area. They come in to being once a majority “yes” vote both on number of votes and aggregate rateable value is achieved from the business community. The BID process is governed by The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 and as such, once a majority vote has been achieved, the BID levy becomes mandatory for all defined ratepayers.

BID Levy Rules

1. The term of the BID will be for a period of 5 years from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2028.
2. A BID levy of 0.9% of the rateable value will be applied to all eligible hereditaments (rateable business units) within the BID area in Year 1.
3. The levy will assume a growth rate for inflation of 2.5% applied on 1st April each year. As the BID will commence on the 1st April 2023, it is proposed that the inflationary rate is applied from 1st April 2024.
4. The BID levy will be based upon the rateable value in effect on 31st March 2023.
5. Hereditaments that come into the rating list during the BID term will be subject to the BID levy from the effective date that it's brought into the rating list and the rateable value effective at that time.
6. The BID levy will be applied to all hereditaments with a rateable value equal to or greater than £150,000.
7. The levy per hereditament will be capped at £44,000. The capped levy will assume a growth rate for inflation of 2.5% applied on 1st April each year.
8. All hereditaments with charitable status and in receipt of mandatory charitable relief from business rates will be fully exempt from the BID levy.
9. A ratepayer will be liable to pay the BID levy on an unoccupied hereditament without any void period or reduction in the BID levy.
10. Where the rateable value for a hereditament changes and results in a lower BID levy, this comes into effect only from the start of the financial year in which the change is made and no refunds of the BID levy will be made for previous years.

11. All state-run schools will be fully exempt from the BID levy.
12. There will be no VAT charged on the BID levy.
13. Hereditaments rated at £0 as of 31st March 2023 but later re-rated to at or above the £150k threshold during the BID term will be subject to the BID levy from the effective date of that change and the rateable value effective at that time.
14. All hereditaments in the Parliamentary Estate (Palace of Westminster, Portcullis House, Richmond House, Norman Shaw Yard and Old Palace Yard) will be fully exempt from the BID levy.

BID Boundary and List of Streets



The BID boundary covers the business district to the north of the Victoria Westminster BID running from Trafalgar Square to Tate Britain (Atterbury Street). It includes historical areas such as Horse Guards Parade, Downing Street, the Palace of Westminster, Victoria Tower Gardens and Millbank.

The streets included within the footprint are listed below:

Street	All or Part	Street	All or Part
Abingdon Street	All	King Charles Street	All
Barton Street	All	Little College Street	All
Bridge Street	Part	Little Deans Yard	All
Cannon Row	ALL	Lord North Street	All
Cowley Street	All	Millbank	Part
Craig's Court	All	Parliament Street	All
Dean Bradley Street	All	Richmond Terrace	All
Dean Stanley Street	All	Romney Street	Part
Dean Trench Street	All	Scotland Place	All
Deans Yard	Part	Smith Square	All
Derby Gate	All	Spring Gardens	Part
Downing Street	All	St Margaret Street	Part
Gayfere Street	All	Thorney Street	Part
Great College Street	All	Tufton Street	Part
Great George Street	Part	Victoria Embankment	Part
Great Peter Street	Part	Westminster Underground Station	ALL
Great Scotland Yard	Part	Whitehall	Part
Horseferry Road	Part	Whitehall Court	All
Horse Guards Avenue	All	Whitehall Gardens	All
Horse Guards Road	Part	Whitehall Place	Part
John Islip Street	Part	The Mall	Part

Alteration Ballot

The proposed BID arrangements for The Whitehall BID have been altered so that the footprint now includes the area south of Parliament Square down to Atterbury Street; bounded to the west by Tufton Street, Dean Ryle Street and John Islip; and to the east by the River Thames. This alteration makes the Whitehall BID boundary contiguous with the neighbouring Victoria Westminster BID.

The alterations to the BID arrangements will commence on the same date as the renewal of the BID arrangements, namely 1st April 2023.

Budget

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	%
BID Levy Collection 95%	£635,000	£651,000	£667,000	£684,000	£701,000	
Voluntary Contributions	£11,000	£11,000	£11,000	£11,000	£11,000	
TOTAL	£646,000	£662,000	£678,000	£695,000	£712,000	
Cleaning & Greening	£108,500	£111,000	£114,000	£117,000	£119,000	17%
Community Safety & Business Resilience	£93,000	£95,000	£98,000	£100,000	£103,000	14%
Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)	£97,000	£99,000	£102,000	£104,000	£107,000	15%
Destination	£99,000	£102,000	£104,000	£107,000	£109,000	15%
Strategic Placemaking	£84,500	£87,000	£88,000	£91,000	£93,000	13%
Staffing	£90,500	£93,000	£95,000	£97,000	£100,000	14%
Overheads	£40,000	£41,000	£42,000	£43,000	£44,000	6%
Contingency	£33,500	£34,000	£35,000	£36,000	£37,000	5%
TOTAL	£646,000	£662,000	£678,000	£695,000	£712,000	100%

What Happens Next

Businesses in the Whitehall BID area will now be asked to vote on whether they endorse this proposal with a simple 'yes' or 'no' during a formal ballot.

Westminster City Council is responsible for managing the process and sends out a ballot paper to each eligible business.

It is important that each business nominates a named contact who will receive the ballot paper and is authorised to vote on behalf of that organisation.

For any BID to proceed, two independent outcomes must be satisfied:

- Those voting in favour must exceed those voting against in terms of number of votes cast (essentially 51% of votes are 'yes').
- The total rateable value of those properties/hereditaments voting in favour must exceed the total rateable value of those voting against i.e. the aggregate rateable value of 'yes' votes must also be 51% or above.

All you need to do now is:

- Take time to read, understand and consider what this Business Plan means to your business and the wider Whitehall area; members of the BID executive team will be in touch to discuss this further if you wish.
- Prepare for your notice of ballot which will be sent to you no later than Thursday 19th January 2023.
- Your ballot papers will be sent to you by Electoral Reform Services, who run the ballot on behalf of Westminster City Council, on Thursday 2nd February 2023 and will contain all voting procedure information and proxy or replacement paper information;
- All voting papers must be returned to Electoral Reform Services (ERS) by Thursday 2nd March 2023.

Remember that voting YES will deliver the services in this plan to your business and the area; a 'no' vote would see all of the current provision come to an end.

The result will be announced on Friday 3rd March 2023.