

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 4th July 2016

Cardiff businesses vote ‘YES’ to a Business Improvement District (BID)

Cardiff businesses have given their backing and voted ‘YES’ and in favour of setting up a Business Improvement District (BID) for the city centre. The BID will see businesses investing £7.5m over five years in making the city more vibrant, and welcoming, and giving business a stronger influence on how the city centre is managed.

Results announced by Electoral Reform Services on Friday 1st July showed that 84% of those businesses who voted were in favour of the BID. The vote gives the go-ahead for the BID to take forward its five year Business Plan to drive investment in the City Centre and give local businesses a greater say in the way it is marketed, maintained and managed. The BID will deliver £7.5 million of investment in the area over the next five years and will come into operation before the end of the year.

Cardiff is one of a handful of UK cities currently without its own BID, yet it has the potential to become one of the largest BID areas in the country representing over 900 businesses. The business plan explains how the BID will focus on encouraging people to visit the city centre more often, staying longer and investing more in the local economy. There are three key themes set out in the business plan - making the city centre more Welcoming; Vibrant; and Influential. The Plan will work for all business sectors to enhance the overall experience for city centre as a place to visit, study, meet work and invest.

Simon Phillips, Chair of the Cardiff BID Task Group and manager of Marks and Spencer said: *“This is a strong vote of confidence from all types of businesses who trade here and who clearly see the city’s potential for change. The investment from local businesses will be used to improve our area, contribute towards a more successful and profitable future, making the city centre a better place for customers, employees, visitors and businesses alike”.*

Owen Davies, BID Development Manager added *“For the last year businesses have been working incredibly hard to understand business concerns and priorities, and to make sure that the BID proposal demonstrated it would make a significant difference to the local economy. On behalf of the Cardiff BID Task Group, I would like to thank all Cardiff City Centre businesses and stakeholders in the city for their support throughout this process and for backing the BID. Our focus now is very clearly on putting all the arrangements in place for the start of the BID company and on delivering the Business Plan proposal, which businesses have helped design.”*

The confidential, postal BID Ballot was run for 28 days ending on 30th June. Organised by the independent Electoral Reform Services (ERS), the BID ballot papers were sent out to eligible voters in the City Centre BID area.



Detailed figures for the vote were as follows:

Yes by Number: 277

Yes by Rateable Value: £52.8m

A majority in terms of votes cast and rateable value is legally required for a BID to be voted in.

Businesses can find further information by following www.cardiffbid.com or by emailing the BID project manager owen@themosaicpartnership.co.uk.

Notes to Editor:

1. The Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) legislation enables traders and business owners to work with their local statutory agencies to look at improvements their area may need. They then develop a plan of improvements that are additional to statutory service provision. This plan is costed and then put to a vote. If the vote is successful each business involved in the BID area will be required to pay a BID levy for the five years of the plan.
2. The activities included in a BID plan are based on needs and priorities identified by businesses and elsewhere have included, for example, events, joint marketing/PR, collective procurement and physical improvements. The BID only supports activities that are additional to statutory responsibilities and is not intended to displace or substitute what the local authority/other agencies are already doing. Partner organisations can support the BID by providing financial contributions and grants as well as services in kind.
3. For more information on the Cardiff BID please contact Owen Davies on 07809 594524 or email owen@themosaicpartnership.co.uk or visit the website www.cardiffbid.com