

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1 January to 31 December 2019

INTRODUCTION

What is Kingston First

Kingston First is a business improvement district (BID) which operates within Kingston town centre. Set up in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, it is a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee and principally funded by a levy.

This levy is used to provide additional projects and services to those provided by Kingston Council and other public agencies.

The company is governed by a voluntary board of directors who represent a cross-sector of the town's business community. They are responsible for overseeing the delivery of the agreed

business plan. A dedicated team is delegated responsibility for its delivery and the management of the company.

Kingston First was the first BID set up in the country and is currently in its third term, which runs from 2014-2019. The company needs to seek a renewal ballot to operate for a further term.

Kingston First focuses on three themes:

- **Supporting and shaping**
- **Marketing and promoting**
- **Enhancing and managing Kingston**

Full details of our projects and services, and our business plan can be found on our website.

How is Kingston First funded?

Kingston First is principally funded through a levy on non-domestic premises operating within the BID area. The BID area can be viewed on our website. The levy is set at 1% of the rateable value of properties on the 2010 Non-Domestic Ratepayers rating list in accordance with the business plan. The business plan allows for the multiplier to be increased each year by up to 3% at the Board's discretion. In 2019, the multiplier has been increased by just less than 3% to 1.09 pence in the pound.

The projected levy income for 2019 is approximately £931,898. In addition to the levy, Kingston First is able to

generate additional funding to contribute towards the delivery of the business plan; this includes running commissioned services and applying for grants, project and service contributions.

Our indicative financial overview is overleaf.

How do I pay?

Payment instructions are found on your bill. The Royal Borough of Kingston issues the BID levy bills, collects the levy and transfers the funds to Kingston First.

For all billing queries, contact the Council team shown on your bill.

OUR WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2018

Supporting and Shaping

- Saving our Kingston First Members money by providing a free recycling service 7 days a week and reduced-rate trade waste scheme
- Working with local car parks to provide exclusive parking discounts for the town's workforce. Over 220 people are using the daily parking deal and 35 signed up to the discounted season ticket
- Delivery of the Keep it Kingston card scheme that both rewards local workers for spending in the town, whilst offering a marketing platform for businesses to promote their services, products and offers.

Marketing and Promotion

- Delivery of seasonal campaigns including summer and Christmas ensuring Kingston is promoted locally and regionally
- Promotion of Independent Retailers in the town through a printed directory of businesses, voucher booklet and bespoke-branded tote bags
- Installation of floral 'selfie spots' to drive coverage and awareness of Kingston across social media

- Installation of a temporary exhibition celebrating Kingston's history and heritage, and marking the 100 year anniversary of the end of World War One
- Delivering the Kingston Children's Literary Festival, an event to help drive awareness and press coverage of the town whilst inspiring young minds.

Enhancing and Managing

- Working in collaboration with volunteers from Kingston First members to reinvigorate some of the town's flower beds with sustainable planting, helping to reduce pollution and support pollinating species
- Managing and delivering the Christmas Market as a major footfall driver, adding to Kingston's Christmas offer and investing in the Christmas lights across the town
- Providing a dedicated team of Rangers to respond to day-to-day issues in and around the town centre, 7 days a week.



Working with volunteers to reinvigorate the flower beds



Kingston Children's Literary Festival saw 9 events over 3 days, filled to capacity with nearly **250** children



Distributed over **11,000** Keep It Kingston Cards with offers from over 180 business



Our Rangers respond to over **9,000** incidents a year



Installed townwide floral enhancements and greening



Ran **21** business events and workshops with over **300** members in attendance

PLANS FOR 2019

In 2019, the last year of the current BID term, we continue to work against the business plan priorities and the delivery of Kingston First's programme of projects and services. These will include:

- The refurbishment of the 'Out of Order' sculpture, returning the famous and much-photographed installation to pristine condition
- Ensuring we work with the Council, TfL and others to support the town through highway and development works in the town centre
- Further developing our calendar of business workshops and business support activities, helping businesses save time, money and resource.

In 2019 we will also be holding a ballot to renew for a fourth term as a Business Improvement District. Following our recent consultation, we will be preparing our business plan in the new year and sharing this ahead of the renewal ballot in June.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In 2018, levy received is forecast as £917,326, and £624,013 in additional funding (including Commissioned Services). Spend against business priorities is forecast as follows: Supporting Kingston: £268,288; Marketing Kingston: £433,159; Enhancing Kingston: £437,462; Overheads and Operations: £226,133; Commissioned Services: £444,560.

In 2019, levy due is budgeted as £931,898, and £609,560 in additional funding (including Commissioned Services). Spend against business priorities is budgeted as follows: Supporting Kingston: £240,286; Marketing Kingston: £367,743; Enhancing Kingston: £375,503; Overheads and Operations: £201,647; Commissioned Services: £400,689.

The above forecast and budget are indicative. Full year-end 2018/19 accounts will be provided in Spring 2019, alongside 2018/19's Annual Report.

Commissioned services includes running and managing the Ancient Market Place, markets and other commissioned activities on behalf of the Council.

For enquiries about Kingston First,
please contact:

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