

1 JANUARY TO 31 DECEMBER V2

2020

EXPLANATORY NOTES

UPDATED AUGUST 2020



INTRODUCTION

CHIEF EXECUTIVE - KIRSTEN HENLY

Covid-19 has affected our lives, our businesses and our local communities and, like you, we have adapted during this time, adjusting and finding our way to ensure we continue to engage with and support you. It's been an incredibly challenging time; with many members facing hardship and uncertainty but we've also seen fantastic examples of innovation, community spirit and kindness throughout Kingston town.

Throughout lockdown and as restrictions have gradually lifted, we have supported members in a variety of ways. **We co-ordinated a town wide re-opening campaign** which included providing guidance on how to operate safely and working closely with the Council, Police, industry experts and our MP, **we ensured members had the most up to date information in a timely way. We created in-store and social media assets to support members re-opening safely** and delivered these to hundreds of businesses. **We canvassed your views and listened to feedback** which led us to locally sourcing PPE equipment such as face shields and hand sanitisers. **We have moved our communication and training online** and delivered seven webinars with twelve guest speakers and sent out thirty-three e-newsletters and policy updates. **We have also lobbied for much-needed financial support** to help our independent businesses who missed out on the government's early grant schemes and, through funds from Kingston Council, many will now benefit from locally issued grants.

We continue to adjust to the 'new normal', but what remains a priority for Kingston First during these unprecedented times, is supporting our members by continuing to listen, respond and learn. **Over the next few weeks and months we will build and foster town centre resilience by encouraging knowledge sharing and strengthening partnerships.** We will bring more in-depth insight, access to industry experts and training based on your needs and champion your voice at a local and national level. As a town centre community, we understand that we need to bring back the community spirit to Kingston and will encourage and welcome back local residents, employees and visitors to Kingston.

We will look to the future as we support the new vision for Kingston town centre. And at the heart of our approach, will be working together to build back Kingston into a thriving and prosperous community.

#inkingstonttogether

WHO WE ARE

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 following a successful renewal ballot in June 2019, the company will start its fourth five-year term on 1 January 2020.

As set out in the Renewal Proposal 2020-24, our work will focus on four key themes;

- Attractive Streets & Spaces
- Supporting & Informing
- Marketing the Town
- Influencing & Representing

To view the Renewal Proposal and details about our projects and services in more detail, please visit 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. For 2020, the levy is set at 1% of the rateable value of properties on the 2017 Non-Domestic Ratepayers rating list in accordance with the Renewal Proposal.

The projected levy income for 2020 is approximately £902,305. In addition to the levy, Kingston First is able to generate additional funding to contribute towards the delivery of the Renewal Proposal; this includes running commissioned services and applying for grants, project and service contributions.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The below forecast and budget are indicative and based on our Financial Year (April to March). Full year-end 2019/20 accounts will be provided in Spring 2020, alongside 2019/20's Annual Report. Business priorities reflect the third-term

business plan themes (2019/20) and Renewal Proposal themes (2020/21). Commissioned services includes running and managing the Ancient Market Place, markets and other commissioned activities on behalf of Kingston Council.

2019/20 FORECAST

Levy income	£930,698
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Additional funding (including commissioned services)	£643,329
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Spend against business priorities is forecast as follows:

Supporting Kingston	£263,450
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Marketing Kingston	£395,973
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Enhancing Kingston	£411,846
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Overheads and Operations	£199,131
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Commissioned Services	£419,194
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2020/21 BUDGET

Levy income	£902,305
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Additional funding (including commissioned services)	£633,859
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Spend against business priorities is budgeted as follows:

Attractive streets & spaces	£365,000
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Marketing the town	£361,500
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Supporting & informing	£185,000
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Influencing & representing	£45,000
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Overheads	£198,664
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Commissioned Services	£418,500
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Contingency	£35,000
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HOW DO I PAY?

Payment instructions are found on your bill. Kingston Council 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 2019

2019 has been a busy year of achievements for Kingston First, culminating in the successful renewal ballot for our next term, 2020-24. Some of the key projects and initiatives we've delivered throughout the year include:

CREATING COST SAVINGS

- Further growth of the Keep it Kingston scheme that both rewards 14,000+ local workers for spending in the town, whilst offering a marketing platform for businesses to promote their services, products and offers. This year will also see the launch of a new smartphone app that will enhance the user experience and help track usage statistics for businesses.
- Our programme of free workshops and training courses grew with over 330 employees attending sessions throughout the year and 122 businesses making use of the events. Workshops this year covered topics such as mental health awareness, conflict management, business crime reduction and a presentation on motivation and leadership.

330

EMPLOYEES
ATTENDED SESSIONS

122

BUSINESSES USED
THE FREE TRAINING
SESSIONS

- We provided continued savings for Kingston First Members through a free recycling service 7 days a week and reduced-rate trade waste scheme.



Artist David Mach helped us relaunch the town's famous tumbling telephone boxes

INVESTMENTS IN ART AND CULTURE TO DRIVE FOOTFALL AND PROFILE

- We coordinated and co-funded the complete refurbishment of Kingston's famous David Mach sculpture, Out of Order, restoring it to its former glory and providing a much-improved photo opportunity to be shared on social media.
- In collaboration with Kingston Council's Heritage Team and local organisations we have worked to shine a spotlight on the town's history with the installation of a second 'Streets of History' exhibition and the launch of a dedicated Heritage Festival in September with a series of events and open house days.

REPRESENTING TOWN CENTRE BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS

- We were delighted to receive 92% 'yes' vote for us to continue into the new term. During the year, we consulted extensively and engaged with hundreds of businesses to ascertain your priorities for the next five years.



Motivation and leadership talk by star of SAS: Who Dares Wins, Matt 'Ollie' Ollerton

PROFILE-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

- To highlight Kingston's unique offering we have continued with targeted campaigns such as independent retail and Thumbs Up Its Thursday. Plus in 2019 we launched Kingston After Dark to promote the evening and night time economies and collaborated with the Kingston Student Union to provide a 'Welcome to Kingston' booklet as part of their activity for new students.
- Across both summer and winter, we executed large-scale marketing campaigns to highlight the full variety of things to do in Kingston, each including local doordrops to audiences of 65,000, adverts in magazines and outdoor poster sites and targeted online advertising.



Floral installations, banners and bunting help bring colour and vibrancy throughout the summer. Our Christmas Market helps cement Kingston as a top destination at Christmas time.



PROVIDING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

- With the aim of increasing dwell time and improving consumer sentiment, this summer we dressed the town with some eye-catching colourful banners and bunting along with over 200 hanging baskets, faux flower garlands and 178m² of astroturf.
- For the festive period, we invest in the Christmas lights, tree and decorations for the town and we continue to deliver Kingston's Christmas Market which is now widely recognised as one of the best in London.
- Twice this year, we arranged the deep cleaning of the town centre pavements.

PLANS FOR 2020

Following the successful renewal ballot, 2020 sees the first year of our fourth term and we will start delivering against our new business plan, whilst continuing with many of the day-to-day projects and services that we know are so popular. These will include:

- Enhancing navigation and wayfinding around the town centre, looking at new initiatives and concepts to link the train station, town centre and riverside.
- Full roll-out of the new Keep it Kingston app to encourage more users to sign up to the scheme.
- New Christmas lights and seasonal decorations for the festive period.
- Development of the InKingston.co.uk website to include regular online editorial content that spotlights various business sectors, seasonal events and campaigns – along with a new business directory that provides a free marketing platform for all businesses to promote themselves.
- Working with Kingston School of Art, we will install printed vinyl artwork onto a number of ground-floor shops that are currently vacant, adding some more colour to the streets whilst providing a fantastic canvas for students to display their work.

FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT OUR PROJECTS, SERVICES AND PLANS FOR THE NEW TERM CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE AT KINGSTONFIRST.CO.UK

For enquiries about Kingston First,
please contact:

Kingston First

3rd Floor Neville House
55 Eden Street
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey KT1 1BW

T 020 8547 1221

info@kingstonfirst.co.uk

kingstonfirst.co.uk

For payment and billing enquiries:

Royal Borough of Kingston Council

Guildhall 2

Kingston upon Thames
Surrey KT1 1EU

T 020 8547 5007

bids1@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

kingston.gov.uk

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