



## **Destination Watford**

### **Management proposals – February 2019**

#### **Proposal summary**

The proposal is for Watford BID to manage and be responsible for the Destination Watford Team and the delivery of the Watford Destination Marketing Plan.

We propose the team would have different governance structure to the BID, reporting to a Board made up of key stakeholders with a vested interest in the successful delivery of the Destination Marketing Plan.

The staff would be based with the BID team in the offices in Kings Court (this has been agreed in principle by intu). The BID have the offices secured with intu until 31 March 2021.

Budgets would be managed separately from the BID and tracked/recorded accordingly. Budgets need to be secured prior to the appointment of staff.

The BID would initially provide: basic admin support to the team; professional advice and guidance; management of the team and a broad knowledge and understanding of Watford and the stakeholder relationships currently in place.

The initial appointments would be fixed term until March 2021, the term of the BID. If the contract is not renewed or the ballot is unsuccessful redundancy costs would be met by the BID via the budget allocated to manage the Destination Watford team. Following the winding up of the company any residue Destination Management budget remaining would be returned to Watford Borough Council.

#### **Why the BID?**

The BID currently manages Watford For You, the current consumer facing brand for the town, and have been since April 2016, utilising it to support various projects, including partnership projects such as Winter in Watford. The BID has a good working knowledge and understanding of the town, and the consumer networks currently operating in the town.

The BID manages footfall data across the town and GPS tracking, which are used to support different marketing campaigns, there would be costs associated to other organisations accessing this information. The BID are also responsible for the Welcome Ambassadors which will start in October 2018. The Ambassadors will be the public facing link between Watford and the consumer and the BID and local businesses.

The BID has an excellent working relationship with Visit Herts, and the Visit Herts Destination Manager has approached the BID about hot-desking in the office one day/week. The BID is a Visit Herts partner.

The BID has a highly experienced and qualified team of staff, who will be able to offer local advice and professional support. The team have experience in destination marketing (award winning), public

relations, communications, marketing & comms, legal & technical editing, company management & governance (national recognition & award), financial management and office management.

The BID is local to Watford and has an understanding of the local, regional, national dynamics.

### **Current arrangements**

The current town brand Watford For You (WFY) is managed on a day to day basis by Watford BID, the BID has managed Watford For You since April 2016, when the past local partnership funding run out.

The BID has committed time and financial resources to the development of Watford For You, over and above that identified below, however, it is fair to say that since 2016 this investment has been limited and focused on developing the profile of the town centre with consumers. The BID's primary responsibility is to levy payers and ensuring we deliver against the five year Business Plan.

It is estimated that in an average week 7hrs are spent on the management and development of Watford For You via Facebook and other social media outlets. This increases when the BID is running a campaign or project which requires consumer buy-in/awareness. This time and spend is allocated to a project rather than to Watford For You development.

The minimum investment from the BID to WFY in relation to manhours equates to £7,0000/annum.

The BID has also spent £4,800 on the website development over the past 2 years, this does not take into account incidental spend which may be associated to other projects; we also have an agreement with Penknife design agency for the placement of news items and small editorial changes - significant changes incur a cost. As mentioned above, the majority of other costs have been absorbed within other BID projects and are difficult to separate out.

**In total this equates to a BID minimum financial commitment of £9,400/annum**

There are no other contributions, financial or time, by any other partners to Watford For You.

### **Opportunities**

This paper only looks at B2C, inward investment will be managed by Watford Borough Council. Although, we would see the two elements working closely together and supporting each other, especially in areas such as promotional activities, events and marketing.

The new brand and website provide the opportunity for key businesses in the town to commit to an overarching brand and destination marketing plan for the town, both through the appropriate use of the brand and through a financial commitment to its development.

### **Benefits of being associated with the BID**

The BID was established in April 2016 following a successful ballot in 2015. It represents approx. 496 businesses/levy payers in the town centre (2017/18 figure). Plus we also have some voluntary members from outside the BID area. The company is run on a day to day basis by a team of 5 staff, two are part time. BID terms are for 5 years, prior to the term coming to an end the BID will go to ballot in October 2020. If successful it will run for another 5-year term. All staff are on fixed term contracts until 31 March 2021.

- The BID now has an established reputation in Watford with businesses and partners, it's profile regionally and nationally is growing. Locally it is a member of the Chamber of Commerce and a Visit Herts partner; nationally it is a member of British BIDs, Institute of Place Management/BID Foundation and ATCM.
- The BID is well placed and connected with town centre businesses to ensure effective and efficient dissemination of information.
- The BID is one of only 17 in the country which has been awarded the British BIDs accreditation for its management, governance and communication with businesses.
- In 2018 Watford BID won the British BIDs national Place Making Award
- Watford holds a Purple Flag Award for its management of the early evening and night time economy – the only one in Herts. This is led and managed by the BID.
- The BID successfully manages the Business Against Crime Scheme, this transferred from the Chamber of Commerce in April 2017.
- The Chief Executive is a Director of West Herts & Watford Chamber of Commerce; on the Visit Herts Partnership Group; Chairs the Hertfordshire Vibrant Towns forum; is a member of the Cultural Leaders Group; ONE Watford; Watford – Our town; and Big Business Connect.
- The Chief Executive has a background in tourism and regeneration.
- The Marketing Comms Manager has a background within the cultural sector in Watford.
- The Head of Operations & Development has a background in press and public relations and political management.
- The BID Administrator is fully conversant with office management and day to day company financial management.
- The BID employs a professional company secretary.
- The BID team on a day to day basis report to a Board of Directors.
- The BID operates on a five-year cycle, which provides the opportunity to review how it operates, is managed, governed and its key priorities for delivery. All staff are on fixed term contracts.

### **Proposed Structure**

**Location:** It is proposed the new destination team will be based with the BID team in the town centre offices, utilising the office currently used as the Board room.

The advantages of this is its central location and the sharing of existing resources. There would be no office rental costs for the new team, as these would be met by the BID.

Costs for equipment would need to be met from the new structure, along with any additional telephone/broadband costs. Other utility costs would be met by the BID.

**Management of staff:** Staff would on a day to day basis be supported and managed by existing BID staff, the primary point of contact would be the Chief Executive. This would help any staff hit the ground running.

The advantages of this is the support of experienced staff, familiar with Watford, and with marketing, PR and tourism experience. The balance of experience and ideas will also provide the team with people to bounce ideas off, they won't be working in isolation. The BID team have an excellent working relationship with Visit Herts, with the Visit Herts Manager to hot desking from the BID office. We will continue to encourage this to further help develop the relationship between Visit Herts and the Watford destination team.

The team would report bi monthly to a Destination Management Board comprising of key stakeholders. The Manager would report progress to the Cultural Leaders Group .

The branding team would have their own budgets, which could be managed either within or out of the BID company. This is similar to the Business Against Crime Scheme, where the budget is held by the BID but reported and identified separately.

A proposed staff structure is attached.

The advantage of the proposal is that it provides the ability to maintain lower staff costs, due the BID taking on a part managerial role. This cost and time element could be met by the BID as we currently commit time and resources to the current WFY.

Consideration could be given to the appointment of apprentices to support the manager.

**Governance:** It is proposed the Destination Management team would report to a small Board of Directors (Destination Management Board) comprising of partners and stakeholders from across Watford, with an interest in the promotion and marketing of Watford. This structure would be completely independent of the BID. We would recommend this Board should comprise of representatives from:

- Key attraction based in or associated with the Watford area
- Key major business based in Watford
- Hotel/accommodation provider
- Visit Herts
- Local Authority
- Watford BID
- Cultural Sector representative

The Board would meet every two months, and full updates would be provided by the Team Leader.

The team would also report to the Cultural Leaders Group which meets on a quarterly basis.

### **Staffing structure & responsibilities**

All staff will be on fixed term contracts

Watford brand Manager f/t 37hrs up to £35,000 (with on costs £46,000)

Responsible for the overall development of the Watford brand, changing perceptions of Watford.

Stakeholder development

Social Media Officer: p/t 20 hrs £20,000 pro rata ( with on costs £15,600)

Communications Officer: p/t 20hrs £20,000 pro rata (with on costs £15,600)

Estimated total annual staff (including on costs): £77,200

There is an option to consider full time apprentices to support the development of the DMO.

The Ambassadors are employed (via Welcome People) by the BID, however we would see this as a resource which Destination Watford could utilise for specific campaigns, although the priority for work allocation would be with the BID and within the BID area.

### **Costs**

Based on the above staffing costs we have estimated the following annual running costs for yr 1 and 2.

Staff costs	£77,200
Memberships (including Visit Herts)	£7,500
Equipment (yr 1 only including licenses)	£6,000
Accountancy services	£2,000
Marketing, comms, print, exhibitions/support, on social media & misc including travel & expenses	£25,000
<b>Total budget per annum</b>	<b>£111,700 (£117,700 yr 1)</b>

We would hope to see a level of partner commitment and contributions established for 2 years, this would enable the team to initially focus on delivery of projects rather than chasing money from partners – which will be time consuming, and may change the focus of the priorities for the team.

#### **Performance and performance monitoring**

The Manager would be supported on a day to day basis by the BID Team, and report directly to the Chief Executive.

Performance indicators would be put in place in consultation with the Destination Management Board, with the sense checking being provided by the BID team and Visit Herts.

Performance would be reported to the Destination Management Board and to Cultural Leaders. We would also suggest a quarterly partners newsletter, which detailed activities and progress.

#### **Prepared by:**

Maria Manion  
Chief Executive, Watford BID  
February 2019