
Report to Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 14 September 2023

Subject: Alloa First Ltd Ballot

Report by: Chief Executive

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update members on the Alloa First Business Improvement District (BID) activities and priorities, to establish a Council position on its vote for the upcoming ballot and to seek approval for a new governance process for future BID ballots.

2.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council notes:

- 2.1. The contextual information which describes the scope and context of a BID (paragraphs 3.1-3.4)
- 2.2. The purpose, activity and priorities of the Alloa First BID both in its previous 5 years and as proposed for the next 5-year term, including the proposed levy increase (paragraphs 3.5-3.12 , Table 1 and Appendix 1)

It is recommended that Council:

- 2.3 Individually vote 'yes' or 'no' to Alloa First BID proposals as set out in the Business Plan 2023-28
- 2.4 Approves new governance arrangements for future BID ballots as set out in paragraph 5.1.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. **Business Improvement Districts** are geographically defined areas where businesses come together and agree to invest collectively in projects and services that the businesses believe will improve their trading environment. BID projects are new and additional projects and services and do not replace services already provided by the Council and other statutory bodies. The BID is independent of the Council.

- 3.2. BIDs act as revenue generating vehicles for town centre improvement, security and management. They are able to apply for funding from various sources and generally have a higher chance of success because they have been elected by local businesses and have approved Business Plans setting out proposals for each five year term.
- 3.3. BIDs are developed, managed and paid for by the non-domestic sector by means of a compulsory levy. The BID is established by a positive vote of the eligible persons in the proposed BID area. Each eligible person liable to pay the BID levy is able to vote every five years on the continuation of the BID and participate in a formal ballot process which, in Clackmannanshire, is administered by the Council and the Chief Executive acting in the capacity of Returning Officer.
- 3.4. For the ballot to be successful there must be a minimum turnout of 25% by both the number of eligible voters and rateable value. The majority of voters by both number and rateable value must vote in favour. This process aims to protect both small and large businesses as the voting system requires all four conditions to be met. Each BID term lasts for 5 years.
- 3.5. There are currently two BIDs in Clackmannanshire; Alloa First Ltd for Alloa town centre businesses, and Clacksfirst Ltd which covers Clackmannanshire's business and industrial parks. The Boards consist of levy paying businesses, managers and people with a vested interest in the BID area. Each BID has a board of directors who make decisions on BID activity.
- 3.6. The Alloa First Board consists of up to 12 directors. Any owner, manager or employee representing a business or organisation within the BID area is welcome to join the Board, providing the levy for that property is up to date. Every effort is made to ensure that a varied range of sectors is represented on the board such as retail, leisure, office and third sector and that there is a wide geographical spread across the BID area. Board members make decisions on matters such as the Business Plan, where levy funds will be spent, the types of activities the BID will carry out and engagement with property owners. The Council has an advisory, non decision making director role on the Board, providing an important link between the Council and town centre businesses.
- 3.7. Alloa First Ltd became operational in October 2008. Over the past 15 years the BID has invested over £1,500,000 of levy payer's money into Alloa Town Centre.
- 3.8. In the past 5 years a wide range of activity has been carried out, designed to promote the town centre as an attractive, safe place to visit and to increase footfall. This includes the following:-
 - a) Events such as STORM visit, Friday market, town centre trails, Christmas light switch on, Easter and summer activity events
 - b) Annual Christmas light display
 - c) Free weekly recycling service
 - d) CCTV coverage by 18 cameras providing 24 hour town centre coverage, in regular contact with the police

- e) Attracted additional grant funding from sources such as Scotland Towns Partnership for BID activity
- f) Funding for gold award winning Alloa in Bloom
- g) Provision of hanging baskets with a free watering service
- h) Dedicated project manager to support businesses
- i) Free advertising for businesses in Love Local Magazine
- j) Promotion of businesses through large social media following
- k) Regular surveys and face to face meetings with businesses on town centre issues
- l) Covid 19 – businesses were supplied with free PPE and social distancing material
- m) Worked in partnership with CTSI and Clackmannanshire Council to deliver Alloa Hub, an active travel, tourism, retail and heritage hub which also has a toilet for public use. The Hub is part of the Living Alloa project which won a prestigious SURF award in December 2023.

3.9 The current Alloa First Ltd term is coming to an end and a ballot is being held from the last week in August until 5 October 2023. This ballot process will determine whether the BID will operate for a further 5 years 2023-2028. Alloa First Ltd has prepared and launched a Business Plan (attached as Appendix 1) which sets out past and current activity alongside some proposals for the new BID term, if successful. Much of the activity listed in paragraph 3.8 will continue and it is also proposed to introduce new initiatives such as an Improvement Grant for businesses to improve their shopfronts, training for local businesses, windows projects for vacant properties and welcome packs for new businesses.

3.10 A proportion of the activities carried out by Alloa First such as Christmas Light Display, CCTV, town centre planting, weeding and floral displays were previously provided by Clackmannanshire Council. At present there are no Council budgets for these activities/services.

3.11 Should the ballot process result in an unfavourable outcome, the BID would cease and these services would also potentially cease unless alternative funding/ delivery models could be identified. Additionally, there is a risk that additional income generated through funding applications currently led by the BID, may also cease. Local businesses are able to collaborate to carry out similar activity outside of a formal BID; however, at the time of writing, officers are not aware of any such plans.

3.12 The Council also supports the operation of the BID as follows:

- approximately £19k support to administer the Alloa First BID levy
- additional £1k system change fee on BID levy rate renewal
- £9,900 UK Shared Prosperity Funding for Summer Events
- £10k COVID signage, social distancing measures etc.
- £10k Scottish Government LACER funding.

3.13 The Alloa First Ltd Board has maintained the BID levy at the same level for the past 15 years, however, like many other organisations, including the Council, it is also facing cost pressures. In order to deliver the aspiration and activities set out in the Business Plan (Appendix 1), the Board has proposed to increase the levy for the next five year term.

3.14 Table 1 below sets out the proposed levy compared with current levy levels. It is understood that the Board's Strategy was for small businesses the increase was to be kept to an increase of £1 per week. In practice, businesses can opt to pay either in full annually or in 10 monthly instalments.

Table 1: Comparison of current and proposed levy levels

PROPERTY BAND	Property Rateable Value Range	Current Annual BID Levy 2008 - 2023	Current Monthly Instalment (based on 10mths)	Proposed Annual BID Levy 2023 - 2028	Annual Increase	Proposed Monthly Instalment (based on 10mths)	Monthly Increase
A	0 - £6,000	£240	£24	£312	£72	£31.20	£7.20
B	£6,001 - £8,449	£340	£34	£416	£76	£41.60	£7.60
C	£8,500 - £13,100	£540	£54	£624	£84	£62.40	£8.40
D	£13,101 - £22,250	£740	£74	£832	£92	£83.20	£9.20
E	£22,251 - £36,250	£940	£94	£1,040	£100	£104.00	£10.00
F	£36,251 - £50,000	£1,040	£104	£1,352	£312	£135.20	£31.20
G	£50,001 upwards	£1,040	£104	£1,872	£832	£187.20	£83.20

3.15 Clackmannanshire Council is the owner/occupier of 14 properties within the BID area. This amounts to an annual levy payment to Alloa First of £9,360. If the forthcoming BID renewal ballot is successful, this payment will increase to £13,000.

3.16 Scotland's Town's Partnership emphasises the links between an effective BID and meeting the aims of Scottish Government's economic policy, including Town Centre regeneration. Effective partnership with a BID has the potential to better integrate local economic regeneration plans and promote targeted partnership work to address both social and economic challenges locally.

4.0 Voting process for Alloa First BID ballot renewal

4.1 The timetable of actions and the voting process for BIDs is set out in legislation under the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 (Business Improvement Districts) and The Business Improvement District (Scotland) Regulations 2007.

4.2 The renewal process starts 196 days in advance of the proposed ballot date at which point the BID proposer has to inform the Local Authority and Scottish Ministers of their intention to go to ballot.

4.3 At 126 days the BID proposals should be agreed and be found to be achievable. At 98 days submissions are sent to the Local Authority and Scottish Ministers including all consultations and results, the full BID business plan for the next 5 years, agreements with the Local Authority of services they will provide the BID and all supporting documents. By day 70, the Local

Authority must confirm if it is content for the ballot to go ahead or whether it wants to apply a veto, in writing, to both the BID proposer and Scottish Ministers.

4.4 A ballot veto can only be applied if the local authority considers that the BID proposals are likely:-

a) to conflict with any structure plan, local plan, strategic development plan or local development plan which has been approved or adopted under the principal Act and which applies to the proposed business improvement district or any part of it,

b) to conflict to a material extent with any policy formally adopted by and contained in a document published by the authority (whether or not the authority are under a statutory duty to prepare such a document), or

c) to lead to a significantly disproportionate financial burden being imposed on:-

i. any person entitled to vote in the ballot on the proposals, or

ii. any class of such persons, as compared to other such persons or classes.

4.5 Thereafter the dates all apply to the actual voting process – issues of ballot papers, proxy deadlines and replacement papers are as per any other election. Ballot date is 5th October with the declaration being made on 6th October.

4.6 The BID has been in existence for 15 years (three terms) and until now the Chief Executive of the Council has made the decision on how the Council placed its vote, under delegated authority. This approach is consistent with that adopted in many other areas. In preparing for this ballot, the Chief Executive has not identified any explicit delegation by Council to her and has, therefore, proposed that, on this occasion, the Council's vote is secured by means of an individual councillor vote.

4.7 For this ballot, Members are, therefore, being asked to consider for the 14 properties for which we pay levy, should the Council vote yes or no to the proposals set out in the Alloa First Ltd Business Plan 2023-28 (Appendix 1), taking into account the additional information set out in this paper. The Council's voting position in the forthcoming BID Ballot process will be determined by taking a straight majority of the total votes cast by individual councillors.

5.0 Future Governance of Business Improvement District Ballots

5.1 For all future BID renewal ballots, it is proposed that a report will be presented to Council as soon as BID advises the Council of its intention to go to ballot. This will be done 196 days before ballot date to allow Council 126 days to determine its position regarding the veto and how it will vote in the ballot.

6.0 Sustainability Implications

6.1. N/A

7.0 Resource Implications

7.1. Financial Details

7.2. Clackmannanshire Council is the owner/occupier of 14 properties within the BID area. This amounts to an annual levy payment to Alloa First of £9,360. If the forthcoming BID renewal ballot is successful, this will increase to £13,000 per annum.

7.3. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate.

Yes

7.4. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report.

Yes

7.5. Staffing

None

8.0 Exempt Reports

8.1. Is this report exempt? No (please detail the reasons for exemption below)

9.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

9.1. **Our Priorities (Please double click on the check box)**

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all

Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life

Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential

Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

9.2. Council Policies (Please detail)

10.0 Equalities Impact

10.1. Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes No

11.0 Legality

11.1. It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

12.0 Appendices

12.1. Appendix 1 - Alloa First Business Plan 2023-2028

13.0 Background Papers

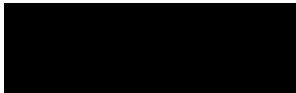
13.1. Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes (please list the documents below) No

Author(s)

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Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Nikki Bridle	Chief Executive	



Business Plan 2023-2028



What is a Business Improvement District (BID)?

Business Improvement District (BID) is a geographically-defined area, where businesses come together and agree to invest collectively in projects and services that the businesses believe will improve their trading environment. BID projects are new and additional projects and services; they do not replace services that are already provided by Clackmannanshire Council and other statutory bodies.

BIDs are developed, managed and paid for by the non-domestic sector by means of a compulsory levy, which the eligible persons in the proposed BID area must vote in favour of before the BID can be established. Each eligible person liable to pay the BID levy will be able to vote on whether the BID goes ahead.

For the ballot to be successful there must be a minimum turnout of 25% by number of eligible voters (the headcount) and rateable value, with the majority voting in favour by both number and rateable value. This protects the small and large businesses as the voting system requires all four conditions to be met.

Alloa's Town Centre BID first became operational in October 2008. Over the past 15 years, the BID has invested over £1,500,000 of levy payer's money into Alloa town centre; the highlights and achievements are documented in this business plan.

The continuation of Alloa First and the services it provides are not a certainty. In August 2023, along with all eligible businesses in the Alloa Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) area, you will be invited to vote on whether you would like to see the proposals detailed in the Business Plan delivered over the next five years.

This is your opportunity to continue to make a difference.

Vote YesVote Alloa First



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Business or variations of the word business are used throughout this document and the use of this terminology refers to property owners or tenants and occupiers of properties who are liable to pay the non-domestic rates, whether they pay business rates (NDR) or not. The word 'business' refers to all properties included in the Scottish Assessors website database which includes properties where the occupier or eligible person liable to pay the non-domestic rate may be a charitable organisation, public sector organisation, social enterprise who may not consider themselves a 'business'.

Introduction from the Chair of Alloa First



Alloa First (Alloa Town Centre BID) has been operating for the past 15 years and in August 2023, you will be invited to vote for a fourth term.

In 2018 you asked us to focus on these key areas:

- Making Alloa more vibrant, welcoming, and better promoted.
- Providing a collective voice for businesses and organisations.
- Improving the look of the town centre to create a better first impression.
- Increasing the additional investment and improvements to Alloa Town Centre.

We managed street and sign-post cleaning, weed clearing, sign and lamp post painting, street banners, secured a grant to fund street art, installed a comprehensive CCTV system, supported the much-used recycling, enhanced the hanging baskets and street floral displays, introduced and manage a town Facebook group, supplied business guidance and advice, supplied Covid PPE and signage, gift bags, secured a grant to develop a town centre website shop, introduced a monthly market, introduced Love Local magazine, fully-fund the Christmas tree, street lights, switch on events, town centre entertainment during school holidays, family treasure hunts and Easter trail, Santa's Grotto, STORM parade, and this year's Dinosaur Day event to name a few projects and activities.

Over the next five years Alloa First would continue to focus on the key areas, enhancing the town and introducing many more new projects that will make Alloa more vibrant, welcoming, and promoted. We want to deliver more day and evening events that will bring increased footfall and business opportunities to the many Alloa businesses. We would investigate fully new projects where operating as a 'single group' could reduce administration or bring day-to-day cost savings to many businesses.

Over the past 15 years, through Alloa First, businesses have invested into the town centre. I am sure many businesses want to maintain this effort and look to bring further enhancements that will continue to boost the economy and continue to make Alloa Town centre better for businesses and its visitors.

Your opportunity to vote for the future of Alloa town centre is now. I urge you to vote YES and put Alloa First!

Kind regards,

Hugh McMichael
Chair
Alloa First



Who we are

Alloa First is operated by a Board of Directors who are business owners and employees of various businesses in the town, all of whom volunteer and typically provide over 40hrs of unpaid time each year in the decision making and planning of projects. Diane is the town centre manager and responsible for planning, communication, and execution of any activity that the board may decide on.

Your BID team



Diane Brown
Project Manager
(part time)



April Campbell
Marketing &
Digital Media
(part time)



Darren Mclean
Environment &
Engagement Officer
(part time)

Your BID board

Any owner, manager or employee representing a business or organisation and prepared to take on the commitment and responsibility is welcome to join the board, providing the levy for that property is up to date. We do try to maintain a diverse mix of businesses so that each of the business sector is covered and has a voice, but it is not restricted to this.



Hugh McMichael
(Chair)
McMichael's Sony Centre



Leeann Currie
JW Aitken



Alison Turner
The Ladybird
Tearoom



Rhona McCallum
Rhona McCallum Hair



Neil McFarlane
G.R. McFarlane
Watchmaker, Jeweller &
Art Gallery



Bradley Pow
Alloa Hub



Emma Fyvie
(Advisory Position)
Clacks Council



Aldo Pia
Bar Aldo



Ian Matchett
IKL Care

Achievements 2018-2023



Welcoming & Vibrant



Alloa In Bloom won Gold two consecutive years at Keep Scotland Beautiful Awards



160 hanging baskets provided annually free to local businesses and organisations with a free watering service



The new Alloa Hub opened its doors in October 2022, providing business information, free family events and a Made In Clacks shop



Living Alloa Project won Scotland's Most Improved Town at the annual SURF Awards 2022 and was the winner of Scotland Loves Local Award for Town Centre Living



Christmas and Jubilee yarn bombing on the High Street



Dedicated Environment & Engagement Officer



Instillation of a town centre mural



Seasonal lighting on trees

Annual Christmas Lights



Town centre lamppost banners displaying local heroes



COVID-19 social distancing, shop local signage, poster campaign PPE supplies



Experience



Annual town centre trails:

- Elf trail
- Summer Trail
- Easter Trail
- Book Trail



STORM visits, attracting over 3,000 visitors to the town in 2021



First Friday market launches in 2019 with 12 stalls and continues to grow



Annual competitions:

- Burns - 313 entries
- Shop local - 3000 entries
- Valentines & Mother's Day - 400 entries



Annual Christmas Switch-on event



Clackmannanshire Whisky Festival sponsor 2022-2023



Santa's post box and letters



Santa Mail

This year Santa has flown in from Iceland and put a special magic post box in Alloa Town Centre.

We would encourage all the children in the local area to come to the performance space on the High Street and post their letters to Santa in his special post box located beside the Christmas tree.

Please ensure you include your name, age and address so

Free Santa's Grotto - visited by over 120 families in 2023



Platinum Jubilee Celebration



2023 Easter family fun



Pride & Promotion

Bi-annual Love Local Magazine distributed throughout Clacks, promoting town centre businesses, events and organisations



Bespoke pages created on our website to promote seasonal deals: Fiverfest, Mother's Day, Valentine's and Easter

Valentine's Deals

Social Media followers

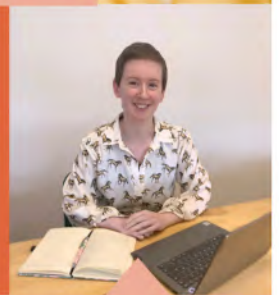
Facebook - 6.6k followers (from 3.8k)
Twitter - 1059 (from 330)
Instagram - 817 (from 370)



Scottish Food & Drink Facebook campaign



Clacks Good Food Charter launched



Fiverfest bespoke video and banner campaign



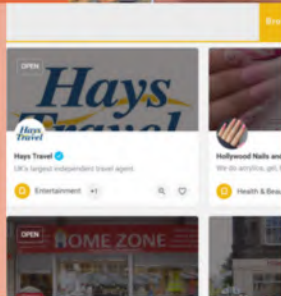
Pub and restaurant trail



Dedicated part time Marketing & Digital Media Administrator



New business directory



Shop Local Gift bags - 10,000 distributed for free



Welcome to your new home brochure created for Townhead House, Primrose Street in partnership with CTSI



Alloa town centre continues to be part of the Scotland Loves Local campaign



Alloa Advertiser - Business Spotlight Campaign



Welcome to your new home in Alloa
Townhead House, Primrose Place, Alloa
Guide to local services, activities and businesses in Alloa
Produced by Alison Firth & CTSI

Support & Engage



Free weekly recycling service:
Cardboard
Aluminium
Plastic
Paper



Regular e-bulletins to keep members updated



CCTV
18 cameras providing 24 hour coverage of the town centre
Regular contact with local police



CLACKS BUSINESS WEEK 2022

Participated in Clacks Business Week



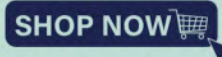
Online training including 1:1 digital support



Application of anti-climb paint & signage



Alloa First Marketplace - Supporting local businesses to sell online with a dedicated delivery driver and digital support



2020
Provision of free PPE, signage and social distancing barriers



Regular e-bulletins & 1:1 support to keep members updated with Covid guidelines and support

Key point of contact with Clacks Council and Clacks Business Support Partnership



Dedicated Project Manager to support your business or organisation



Consultation: What did you say?

We've been speaking to our members in the BID area and the most important areas our businesses and organisations would like to see continued or introduced are:

Pride & Promotion

- Alloa First social media platforms
- Scotland Loves Local and Shop local campaigns
- www.alloafirst.co.uk business directory and What's On Guide
- Bi-annual Love Local magazine
- Promotional space in the town centre



Experience

- Annual Christmas Switch-on
- Smaller seasonal events
- Monthly Alloa First Friday market
- Annual free family friendly summer events



Welcoming & Vibrant

- Weekly recycling uplift
- Christmas and seasonal lighting
- Supporting Alloa In Bloom with planters and hanging baskets
- Continued maintenance and upgrade of the CCTV
- Window dressing of vacant buildings



Support & Engage

- Continue to act as the point of contact with Clackmannanshire Council
- Attract additional funding
- Actively work to attract new businesses to locate in the town centre
- Continue to work with Clackmannanshire Business Support Partnership
- Promote relevant business support initiatives
- Business Improvement Grants



Carole Harper
Director of Partnerships, Co.Lab Hub

The town experiences noticeable benefits whenever Alloa First organises events.

On market days, during the Christmas lights ceremony, and at major town gatherings like the one when Storm visited, the atmosphere becomes vibrant and bustling with people.

I also appreciate that the town centre looks great with the addition of the light post banners and flowers, resulting in a significantly improved appearance. While there is still progress to be made, with the right support and a positive attitude, we can turn this small town into a fantastic destination of choice for both businesses and visitors.

The top 3 projects to be introduced or continue are:

- Local and regional marketing campaigns
- More events
- Free weekly recycling uplift



The top 3 challenges facing businesses over the next 5 years are:

- Increasing costs
- Reduced footfall
- Staff recruitment and retention



In addition to the questionnaire we have been conducting face-to-face meetings as well as inviting feedback by email via our regular e-news bulletins. The feedback from this engagement has confirmed the themes for the next BID term.



Anne-Marie Macklin
Owner of Smart
Specs Optical
Dispensary

As the owner of a small business in Alloa, I am grateful to the BID Board for all they do to improve the appearance and safety of the town centre.

The floral arrangements, tubs and hanging baskets help to bring colour to the Town Centre, and in conjunction with the voluntary groups they coordinate, there is a great pride taken in keeping various areas weeded etc.

As a business I am happy to know that by paying my BID Fee I am contributing to the overall appearance of the area and helping to provide various events including The Christmas Tree & Street Lights, New Security Cameras and many family orientated events which would NOT happen without The BID. The monthly Market is also a welcome addition, recycling and waste collections.

As we all know in the current economic climate the local Council is constantly making cuts to services they provide not only to local households but also to the business community, The BID is helping to soften the impact this has on our businesses.

Our BID works for US



Lorna Montgomery
Funeral Operations
Manager
Fosters Family
Funeral Directors

In recent years, town centres have faced a number of challenges, including the rise of online shopping, the decline of traditional retail and less residential areas.

However, we believe that there is a growing recognition of the importance of town centres, and look forward to working with Alloa First to help keep Alloa the vibrant hub of the community that it is.

In many ways Fosters share the same core values, from understanding the importance of employing local people that know the area well, to investing in our high street premises so that we can try to make the one of the most difficult experiences that our customers will have to face, just a little bit more comfortable. We couldn't support the local community in this way without working in partnership with local organisations and businesses that provide high quality services that help families say their final farewells to their loved ones.



Proposed Project Themes 2023-2028



Pride & Promotion

A better-promoted town centre we are all proud of with a 5-year investment of £161,000.

Project Activity	Timing	Measurement	Benefit to levy payer
Town Centre specific Marketing Campaign. A targeted campaign to attract visitors and residents from local and neighbouring areas. This will raise the town's profile, develop loyalty to the town centre and build community spirit as well as creating many business opportunities.	Years 1 - 5	Customer survey of increase of footfall, parking usage and website & social media activity.	Promotion of town locally and nationally. Improved perception. Increased footfall, dwell time and sales.
Scotland Loves Local and shop local campaigns	Years 1 - 5	Feedback survey Digital traffic	Encourage visitors to spend locally. More promotion opportunities.
Work with the Alloa Hub to promote Alloa's heritage. Interpretive themes and media can be used to tell the story of Alloa's historic environment, the events, the people and the characters, encouraging visitors to linger longer and spend more.	Years 1 - 5	Visitor survey Footfall count Shop sales	Website and social media activity. Increase of visitors staying longer and spending more money. Instil community pride. Give a sense of place to the town centre and improved perception.
Attract new businesses to the Alloa BID area by promoting the benefits and success of other businesses located in the town centre.	Years 1- 5	Vacancy rate	Vibrant town centre. Investment in BID area.
Provide training for local businesses and organisations on how to better-promote themselves, products and service.	Years 1- 5	Increased confidence and better online interactions	Better business promotion. More engaged customers. Training for managers or staff.
Continue to promote the Alloa online marketplace and encourage more businesses to sell online.	Years 1- 5	Sales rate Online shop listings	Reach more customers. Online promotion. Support to build an online shop.





Experience

To provide a safe and enjoyable experience for visitors, workers and residents to enjoy in Alloa town centre with a 5-year budget of £130,000

Project Activity	Timing	Measurement	Benefit to levy payer
Annual programme of events including Summer Fun Day, Christmas Switch-on event and monthly Friday market	Years 1 - 5	Crowds and increased traffic into shops	A busier town with more potential customers. Visitors from outside Clacks.
Footfall driving and circulating activities spread across the year	Years 1 - 5	Take up of events	Promotion during events More footfall.
Implement robust event evaluation and increase business opportunities around each event	Years 1 - 5	Evaluation results	Increased business opportunities.
CCTV cameras - maintain and upgrade where required	Years 1 - 5	Police report Number of reported incidents	Security and peace of mind - Incidents will be recorded and police can view footage.

Environment



To ensure that the town centre and all its different areas present a distinctive, accessible and appealing environment which attracts business investment, encourages visitors to stay longer and fosters a pride in the town centre with a 5-year investment of £125,000

Project Activity	Timing	Measurement	Benefit to levy payer
Vacant premises project - work with property owners to tidy, clean and improve appearance of vacant properties.	Years 1 - 5	Tidier, more attractive streets Number of vacant properties	More visitors to town. Increased chance for new businesses to move in. A better-looking town.
Vacant shop windows project - seasonal displays will be printed on window vinyls and pop-up shop / gallery opportunities investigated.	Years 1 - 5	Public perception	Improved appearance of streets and surrounding properties.
Continue to improve the floral enhancement programme and implement town centre maintenance of eyesore spots, working in partnership with Alloa In Bloom volunteers.	Years 1 - 5	Keep Scotland Beautiful Awards	A vibrant, colourful town centre.

Project Activity	Timing	Measurement	Benefit to levy payer
Recycling - continue to offer this service and investigate additional services such as glass and food waste.	Years 1 - 5	Take up of service	No need for third party contracts - the cost is all included in your levy payment.
Continue the services offered by our Environmental and Engagement Officer.	Years 1 - 5	Health of hanging baskets and engagement with businesses	A friendly point of contact with Alloa First. Watering of hanging baskets.



Engage & Support

An engaged and supported business community working together for the same goal with a 5-year investment of £110,000

Project Activity	Timing	Measurement	Benefit to levy payer
Powerful partnerships - Ensuring we have a strong collective voice and seat at all decision-making tables in particular planning and transport forums that impact on the town centre.	Years 1 - 5	Alloa First will attend meetings with our partners to ensure town centre representation	The chance to make your voice heard and ensure decisions benefit your business or organisation.
Attract additional funding and create sponsorship opportunities. Source funding pots businesses and local organisations can access.	Years 1 - 5	Awards of additional funding	Additional funding will be available for businesses.
Look at voluntary membership for organisations out with the BID area i.e. Tesco, Asda, Aldi	Years 1 - 5	Take up of offer	More businesses working together.
Business Improvement Grant - small grants available for match funding external property improvements.	Years 1 - 5	Regular surveys to monitor numbers and grant awards	Grants will be available for businesses who wish to improve their property.
Calendar of free training events, business networking, social events and encourage cross-promotion of businesses.	Years 1 - 5	Take up of service	Free training for your business/organisation.
Utility Audit - continue to offer this free service.	Years 1 - 5	Saving money for businesses Testimonials	Help save you money and lessen the burden of bills.
Create a 'Welcome' pack to ensure all new businesses are aware of Alloa First and the service we provide	Years 1 - 5	Awareness of our services	Ensure all new businesses can access Alloa First and are aware of what services we provide.



Finances

It is calculated that there are approximately 249 eligible properties located within the BID area (this figure may change as businesses move, expand or close). The BID levy income is calculated to be approximately £160,000 per annum. An amount has been set aside in the budget under 'contingency' to allow for any bad debt.

The improvement levy will make it easier to obtain other sources of funding for specific projects and these opportunities will be pursued. Alloa First aims to attract other investment, sponsorship, and trading income to increase the amount available to spend on projects as they develop. Funds will be sought from but not restricted to Visit Scotland, Scotland's Towns Partnership, The BIG Lottery and Zero Waste Scotland.

Applications for additional grant funding from Clackmannanshire Council to support specific projects will be considered on their merit.

As the BID progresses, more income will be attracted, and this will be invested in improving the town centre for the benefit of the businesses and the local community.

Over the last five years Alloa First have secured over £65,000 in additional grant funding to invest in town centre projects.



Rhona McCallum
Owner, Rhona McCallum Hair

We've had a business in Alloa for over 30 years. For 15 years of that we've had the support of Alloa First.

I don't think the people of Alloa realise how much Alloa First does for the town centre and the businesses in it.

It will be deeply missed if we don't get the Yes vote.

Alloa First - Project Income and Expenditure 2023-2028

Income	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
BID Levy	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£800,000
Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Promotion	£32,200	£32,200	£32,200	£32,200	£32,200	£161,000
Experience	£26,000	£26,000	£26,000	£26,000	£26,000	£130,000
Environment	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£125,000
Engage & Support	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000	£22,000	£110,000
Operating Costs	£42,000	£42,000	£42,000	£42,000	£42,000	£210,000
Contingency	£12,800	£12,800	£12,800	£12,800	£12,800	£64,000
Total	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£800,000

The BID levy explained

Who will pay the levy?



A BID levy is an equitable and fair way of funding additional projects and services, which the local authority and other statutory bodies are not required to provide. There are approximately 269 commercial properties in the BID area which will generate a BID investment levy income of approximately £166,400 per annum and an estimated total levy income of £832,000 over 5 years.



It has been agreed by the BID Board:

- The levy structure will be based on a banded system fixed on the rateable value (RV) of the property on the day of the ballot 5th October 2023 and remain the same throughout the 5-year term of the BID.
- There will be no increase in the levy throughout the the BID term because of a non-domestic rateable evaluation occurring during the BID term.
- The BID levy will be paid by the property occupier - the person liable to pay the non-domestic rate.
- All eligible occupiers (of eligible properties) i.e., the eligible person liable to pay the non-domestic rate that are listed on the Local Assessors Valuation Roll on the ballot date will be liable to pay the levy.
- The levy payments are not linked to what businesses actually pay in rates but are based on the rateable value of the property.
- The levy must be paid either in one payment within 28 days from the date of the levy invoice or in 10 instalments by arrangement with Clackmannanshire Council billing body.
- If there is a change, in occupier to a property, until a new occupier is found, the property owner will be responsible for paying the levy.
- Any new commercial development, subdivision of existing properties or merging of properties or new business with a non-domestic rateable valuation coming into the area during the 5-year term of the business improvement district will be liable for the BID levy.
- If a property is vacant on the day the levy invoice is issued for any subsequent vacant periods, the property owner will be liable to pay the levy.
- The levy will apply to all properties with a rateable value. Levy bandings will be applied with a maximum banding at £50,000 and above.
- The levy will rise with inflation, linked to the Government's CPI unless the BID Board of Directors vote against.
- The BID Board decided that there is no benefit from being part of the BID to the following categories of property and therefore are exempt from paying the levy e.g., Ad-spaces, ATM's, Store rooms.



The Levy Table

Property Band	Property RV range	BID Levy	Weekly
A	0 - £6k	£312	£6
B	£6001 - £8449	£416	£8
C	£8500 - £13100	£624	£12
D	£13101 - £22250	£832	£16
E	£22251 - £36250	£1,040	£20
F	£36251 - £50000	£1,352	£26
G	£50001 upwards	£1,872	£36

Collection of the BID Levy

Clackmannanshire Council will collect the investment levy on behalf of the Alloa First BID, as this will be an efficient, safe and cost-effective method of collection.

Clackmannanshire Council will lodge the levy within a BID Revenue Account. The BID levy can only be drawn down by the Board of Directors of the BID to allow the delivery of the business plan.

The BID Revenue Account and levy cannot be accessed by Clackmannanshire Council nor can it be used by the Council as an additional source of income.

In the event of any non-payment of the BID improvement levy, it will be strongly pursued by Clackmannanshire Council (as the billing body) using the recovery powers available to the Council to ensure complete fairness to all the businesses that have paid. Clackmannanshire Council will be entitled to charge an additional fee to the levy amount to meet any additional costs incurred in the recovery of the levy.

Baseline Services Agreement

A baseline service agreement ensures that Alloa First will not use the levy money to duplicate any services provided by Clackmannanshire Council and Police Scotland. The services directly delivered by Alloa First will be additional to any statutory services. The baseline services agreement gives an assurance that the levy payment will only be used for additional projects as outlined in this Business Plan and voted on in the renewal ballot in October 2023. A baseline agreement avoids the risk that public agencies including Clackmannanshire Council will not reduce its statutory level of service to the BID area following a successful ballot.

Example Baseline Services include:

Street lighting, car parking, estate management, street furniture, public conveniences, trading standards, traffic enforcement, public transport services.

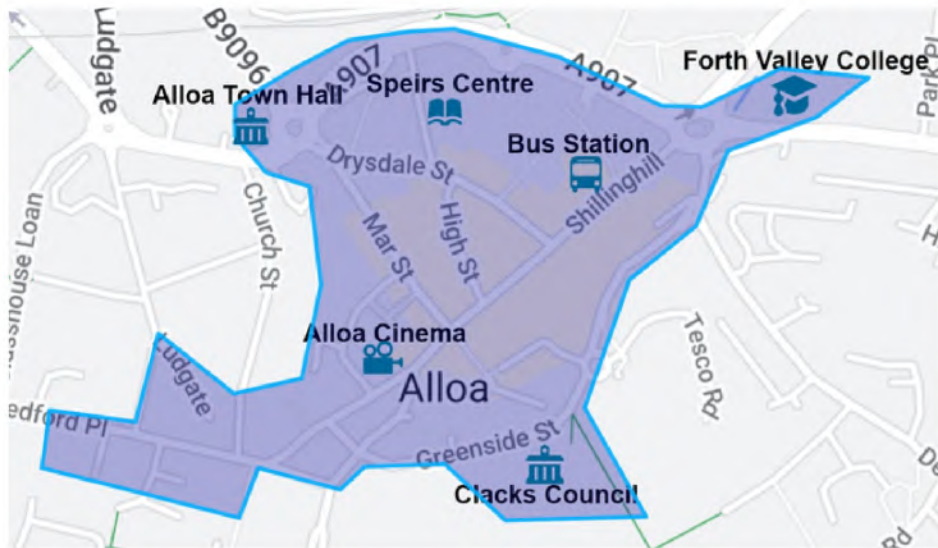


Chief Inspector Audrey Marsh
Police Scotland Local Area
Commander for
Clackmannanshire

Police are now located in the heart of the town centre, and we will continue to support Alloa Town Centre BID by preventing and detecting criminality, being visible and accessible to our residents, and providing public reassurance. By collaborating with businesses and key local partner agencies, we aim to enhance the reputation of the town centre as a safe and welcoming place to live, work, visit and socialise in, to attract more investment and visitors to the area, and help boost the local economy.

The Alloa First BID Area

The Alloa First area includes all businesses and organisations within the purple boundary line. There are approximately 249 properties located within the boundary.



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Streets which are contained within the Alloa First Area are:

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Auld Brigg Road | Devon Road | Mill Road |
| Bank Street | East Vennel | Mill Street |
| Bedford Place | Greenside Street | Ochil House |
| Burgh Mews | High Street | Primrose Street |
| Candleriggs | King Street | Primrose Place |
| Church Street | Maple Court | Shillinghill |
| Coalgate | Mar Place (part) | Union Street |
| Drysdale Street | Mar Street | The Junction |
| | Marshall (part) | |



Carmen MacIver
Partner, Caesar & Howie

Many community based town centre initiatives tend to concentrate on participation from retail outlets, however, my experience of Alloa First has been complete inclusion to all sectors in the town.

The enthusiasm shown by the team to motivate everyone to become more community orientated has shown no bounds.

With constant reports of rapid decline in Scottish town centres I firmly believe that the project has made a vast difference to Alloa. The various events and markets to simple things like floral displays makes it a more pleasant experience to come to work every day.

In a world where we are all so used to communicating digitally as opposed to in person it has to be said that Alloa First works hard to bring everyone in the town centre together.

They are also committed to understanding the needs of each individual business and have heavily supported our efforts in raising awareness of legal issues for the over 50s.

The Voting Process



You will receive a notification of the ballot in mid-August.

On the 24th August, the eligible person with the authority to vote in each business will receive a ballot paper and Alloa First Business Plan 2023 - 2028.

Ballot papers are easy to complete, with either a cross for YES or NO to the question “Are you in favour of a Business Improvement District”? Ballot papers must be signed by the person eligible to vote and returned in the pre-paid envelope provided. All votes must be received by CES(London) no later than 5.00pm on Thursday the 5th October.

For the ballot to be successful there must be a minimum turnout of 25% (the headcount) by number of eligible persons and by combined rateable value; and of those who turnout, the majority must vote in favour by number and rateable value. This protects the small and large businesses as the voting system requires all four conditions to be met.



Marie Campbell
Branch Manager, Hay's Travel

I have been a trader in the High Street for nearly 50 years, and can remember well what the town looked like before the BID team arrived.

We have much to be thankful for such as hanging baskets, seasonal events, CCTV, Christmas activities and a much needed voice to feedback traders concerns with the local council. The levy is fair on all traders and we all benefit from the activities that the BID Team provide. Foremost is the interaction we have as a town with our customers and local community by listening to what they would like to see their town centre provide which is a safe, pleasant and thriving environment to spend their leisure and shopping time. I am looking forward to the next 5 years to see what new ideas we can come up with to encourage more people to shop in Alloa.

The results of the ballot must be declared within one week of the count by Clackmannanshire Council. Following a successful ballot, the decision is binding on ALL eligible levy payers within the BID area regardless of how they voted.

Following a successful ballot, the BID will commence on the 18th October and will run for a period of 5 years until 17th October 2028.

Alloa First BID Management

Following a successful 'YES' vote, the management and operation of the BID will continue under the existing company structure and name, Alloa First Limited, Company Registration No. SC353754 which will operate from 18th October 2023.

The Company will continue to be managed by its Board of Directors operating in an open and transparent way and answerable to the businesses in the area. The Directors are committed to the highest standards of management, governance and accountability; recognizing good governance helps deliver the strategic objects of the company.

There will be a detailed set of protocols (the Operating Agreement) which will cover, as well as other items, the billing, collection and transfer of the levy to the Company.

The Board of Directors may consist of up to 12 directors, of which there are currently 9 in office. An active campaign will be launched after the successful ballot to recruit additional directors to the Board. Every eligible person that pays the levy will have the opportunity to nominate themselves or someone else from within the BID area to be elected to the Company Board but limited to one eligible person from each eligible property.

Nominations of directors, representatives, or advisors from outside the BID, who do not pay the levy and who may or may not represent those making voluntary or other financial contributions toward the BID, will be strictly at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

The Company will continue to be run by the businesses for the businesses. This Board will be responsible for all decisions relating to staff, contracts, the delivery of the approved business plan and other activities generated by the BID.

The Board will be representative of the businesses and stakeholders in the area. The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected from the directors of the Board. The Board will include one representative from Clackmannanshire Council in an advisory role. Other non-voting members or local groups may be co-opted onto the Board at the Board's discretion.

The Alloa First Board of Directors will have the authority to adapt or alter the projects and services from year to year to reflect any change in economic circumstances or any new opportunities that may arise. This will be in the best interests of the levy payers and without recourse to an alteration ballot.

Additionally, the Alloa First Board of Directors reserve the right to consider creating a charitable arm of the company to enable it to secure additional funding, which can only be sourced with charitable status.



Measuring the success of the BID

Throughout the lifetime of the BID, all work on the BID projects will be monitored to ensure the projects proposed in the BID Business Plan achieve a high level of impact and are progressing to the satisfaction of the businesses that voted for the BID.

The BID Board of Directors will monitor and oversee the efficient delivery of the BID projects.

The BID will undergo an independent evaluation and or Assessment and Accreditation Interim Review (AAIR) of its activities at the halfway point and towards the end of the fourth term.



Keeping you in the loop

Alloa First will have an open and transparent approach to all aspects of the business ensuring all our levy payers are fully informed. This will include:

- One-to-one meetings
- Business briefings
- B2B Networking
- Digital media campaigns
- Press releases and local newspaper columns
- On-going website and social media updates
- Weekly e-bulletins
- Quarterly newsletter (print and digital)
- Directors' Meetings agenda and minutes are available on request
- Annual Report and AGM

Contact Information

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If the BID ceases to exist you will lose:



Investment of over £832,000 in the town centre.



A strong voice for businesses to lobby the local authority and other agencies.



All town centre events and marketing.



Christmas lights, tree and switch-on event.



All town centre CCTV.



Free weekly recycling service.



Floral enhancement or improvements for the town centre.



Dedicated team working to support you.

A new BID term will ensure:



An established, influential, business-led body that keeps you informed and represents your needs.



The continued powerful partnerships ensuring we have a collective voice.



A town centre that is welcoming and safe.



A 5 year program of events and marketing which benefits all.



An engaged and supported business community.



Continued investment to deliver real improvements to the town centre.



A better promoted town we are all proud of.

