

middlefield **BID**

Ballot Prospectus 2015-2020

Middlefield Industrial Estate
BID Vote





“ B S Motors has been based on Middlefield Industrial Estate for 30 years. We support the BID because if all the companies speak with one voice we will have much more power to get things done and tackle issues as and when they arise. One of the problems is poor signage on the estate and this needs addressing as we have customers coming from far and wide to collect car parts. ”

Nick Daldry – BS Motors

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BID Vote



The Middlefield BID vision

Through a business-led programme of investment our vision is:

‘To create a safe, secure, effective and smart operating environment on Middlefield Industrial Estate which supports and attracts businesses and investment’.

This prospectus should be read in conjunction with the full Business Improvement District business plan, accessible on the Central Bedfordshire Council website www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Working with Others

The BID investment programme will be delivered through the two key strategic objectives and their related activities identified in this prospectus.

None of these will be done by the BID alone but through its collective voice and influence and working closely with other businesses the local authority, organisations and agencies.

Middlefield Industrial Estate – Current BID Steering Group Members

The BID Steering Group which has coordinated this project and acts as the BID Proposer, will, subject to a positive ballot, form a company, Middlefield Industrial Estate Ltd. This will be the BID body for the purposes of the BID Statutory Provisions and will be a company limited by guarantee. The board of the company will be open to all businesses in the BID area. The current group members are as follows:



Name	Company
Group members	
Michael Tucker	Manor Concepts
Bill Freeman	Format Print
David Howard	DW Mouldings
Darren Bishop	ELS Displays
Sian Pritchard	Harry Major Machine UK
Mark McKeown	Impulse
Chris Annis	Marshalls plc
Ian Parker	Harvey Wire
Susan Attew	Watkiss Automotion
Mark Chapman	Marshalls plc
Nick Daldry	B S Motors
Cllr Naomi Shepherd	Central Bedfordshire Council
Advisors	
Donna Wilkinson	Central Bedfordshire Council
Ian Ferguson	Partnerships for Better Business UK



Middlefield BID Ballot 2015 to 2020

Middlefield – a strong base for a strong future Message from the Chair

Middlefield Industrial Estate is one of the most significant employment areas in eastern Bedfordshire and yet it has no profile, little support and faces increasing challenges. Everyone has been hit by the recession and we need to make sure that we have as much help as possible to grow and develop turnover and profit here in Middlefield. Moving away due to growth of our businesses or because the area is no longer suitable is a very costly exercise and may not be an option for some.

I know that if we pool our collective commercial skills in taking control of the development of this estate as a key industrial area, then the prospects for us all will be that much better. With the smallest business only paying around £200 a year and the potential of seeing a at least a two-fold return on investment, then a BID has to be the answer.

We have and will have some serious challenges on this estate. Where we are hidden a way it gives rise to security issues. In some ways this will be helped by the closer proximity of the new housing development but this may also present other challenges such as noise at night. It is important that we all work together to present a really influential voice so that we can work with the Police and other agencies to ensure that we have an effective working environment and we can raise the profile of the companies based here.

Over the last few months the Steering Group has met with individual business people across the estate to identify the improvements that will be addressed through the BID.

The Steering Group has also worked closely with Central Bedfordshire Council to baseline the services provided through the rates and this information has been used to help draw up this BID Business plan.

It is essential that the activity delivered by the BID is additional to the work of the Central Bedfordshire Council. In places where BIDs are already established such as Brackmills Industrial Estate, Northampton, it has been proven that if the BID works with the local authority it can drive even more value from the services they deliver in addition to the activity of the BID itself.

With your help we have created a business plan which is fit for the next five years, and which will enable businesses to tackle the challenges together and take advantage of new opportunities which emerge. So please read this plan carefully and consider your future. This is all of our futures and I urge you to take hold of this opportunity, look out for the ballot papers which will be in the post at the end of February and make sure that you tick the box that says 'YES' to a Middlefield which provides a great base for your business.

Michael Tucker

Chair of Middlefield BID Steering Group
MD of Manor Concepts



Michael Tucker

Activities for 2015 to 2020 If you vote 'YES'

- Extra winter gritting
- CCTV and ANPR system
- Security patrols and policing of the area
- Business crime and news bulletins
- Managed parking
- Improved signage
- Better appearance of vacant sites
- Improved broadband supply
- Better maintenance of footpaths, verges, roads
- Managed litter and waste
- Web site for all businesses
- Increased profile of Middlefield
- Investment and development of estate
- Cost reduction for businesses



“ We are voting YES for the BID. Even though we are the largest business on the estate we will still benefit from working together with other businesses to protect and improve our business interests in Middlefield. ”

Chris Annis – Marshalls





A Business Improvement District (BID)

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are the fastest growing partnership framework we have seen for decades in the UK. A BID is a geographically defined area where businesses pay into a collective pot of money to fund additional services they feel will benefit themselves and the local community.

Each business pays according to its size (by rateable value: R.V.) and all the money collected goes to buying the extras by common consent. The process is managed by the businesses themselves and lasts for up to five years.

Research and Consultation

Research results – current situation

In response to the question about whether businesses thought the area had declined in the last two to three years, 86% of businesses declared that the area had either stayed the same or become a worse place to do business and 14% said that the area had improved.

It is also evident that, despite the improvement in economic circumstances businesses are still relatively cautious about the future with two thirds of businesses not planning for any growth or change in their premises and more than half of businesses anticipating no change in staff numbers in the next 12 months or so.



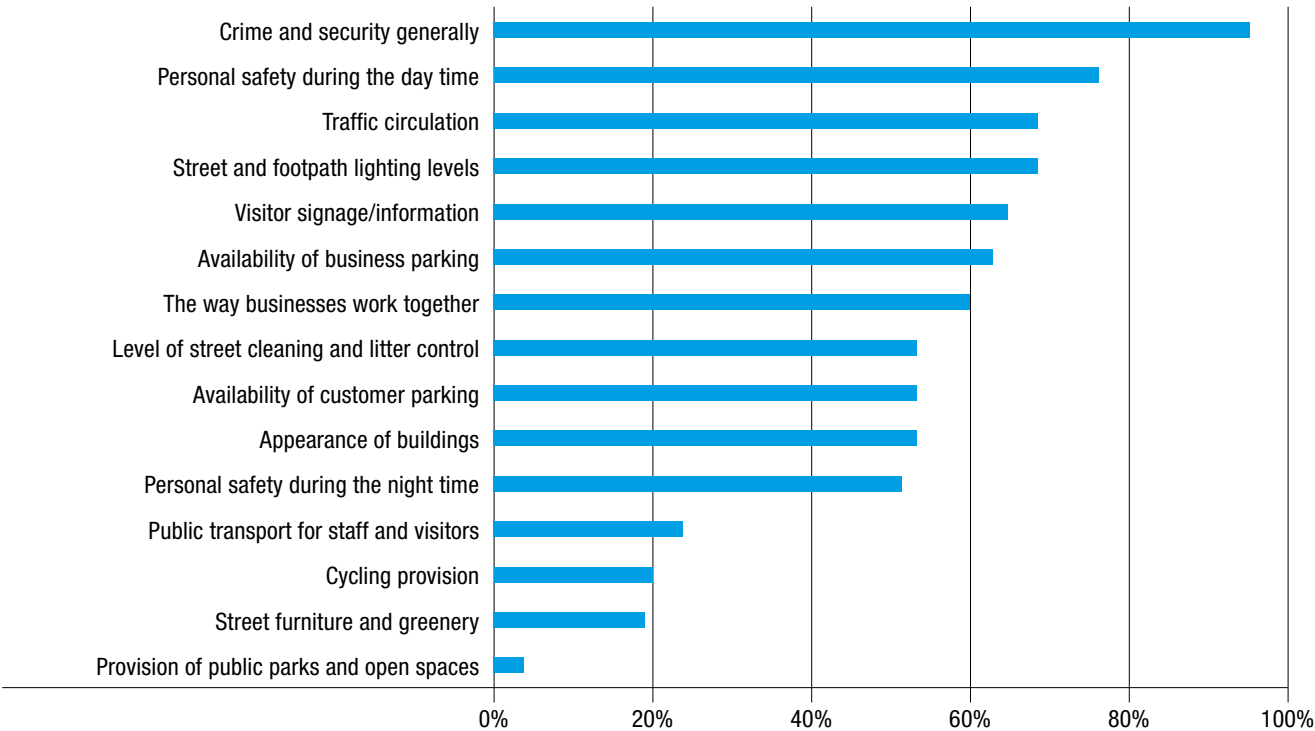
Research results – the future

Businesses have told us that they want the operating environment of Middlefield to be as functional and as effective as possible.

Businesses asked the BID to address key issues: estate security, access for people and goods and the environment.

This was reflected in the way businesses rated the current status, importance and relative priority of different types of aspects of the estate which affect the access, security and attractiveness of the area.

Factors important to businesses



Security for businesses – the highest priority

96% of businesses say that crime prevention and security is the most important issue they think about as a business. Although the incidence of crime on the estate was perceived to be relatively low with only a third of business considering the situation to be either poor or very poor, prevention of crime activities featured in two

of the top three activities in terms of being the highest priorities. Security is seen as a continuous potential threat by businesses and creates a cost to keep it under control. Any estate wide scheme not only has the potential to reduce crime but also has the potential to reduce costs to businesses.

The installation of an estate wide CCTV system with a scheme for business watch alerts was considered by two thirds of businesses as being important to their business.

Good access for freight and visitors – essential requirement

Signage and information for deliveries and visitors ranked the highest in terms of being poor or very poor by around three quarters of the businesses. Some identified there is the additional challenge when large lorries cannot find their destination and try to turn-around within the relatively narrow roads which run through the estate. 'Occupier lists and maps at key points on the estate' was ranked as the second most important activity for three quarters of businesses and 'Improved street name plates across the estate' was considered the fifth highest priority.

Additional winter gritting was the most important factor identified by 83% of businesses and it ranked third in terms of priority of issues to be tackled.

Parking varied from area to area across the estate as to whether it was an issue or not. Where it was an issue it created serious problems and potential hazards for business deliveries and staff vehicles. Although it only featured as a being poor or very poor by around a quarter of the businesses the problem was serious enough to pull it up the overall rankings so that it featured in the top ten issues of importance and priorities to be addressed.

Smart and functional environment – needs addressing

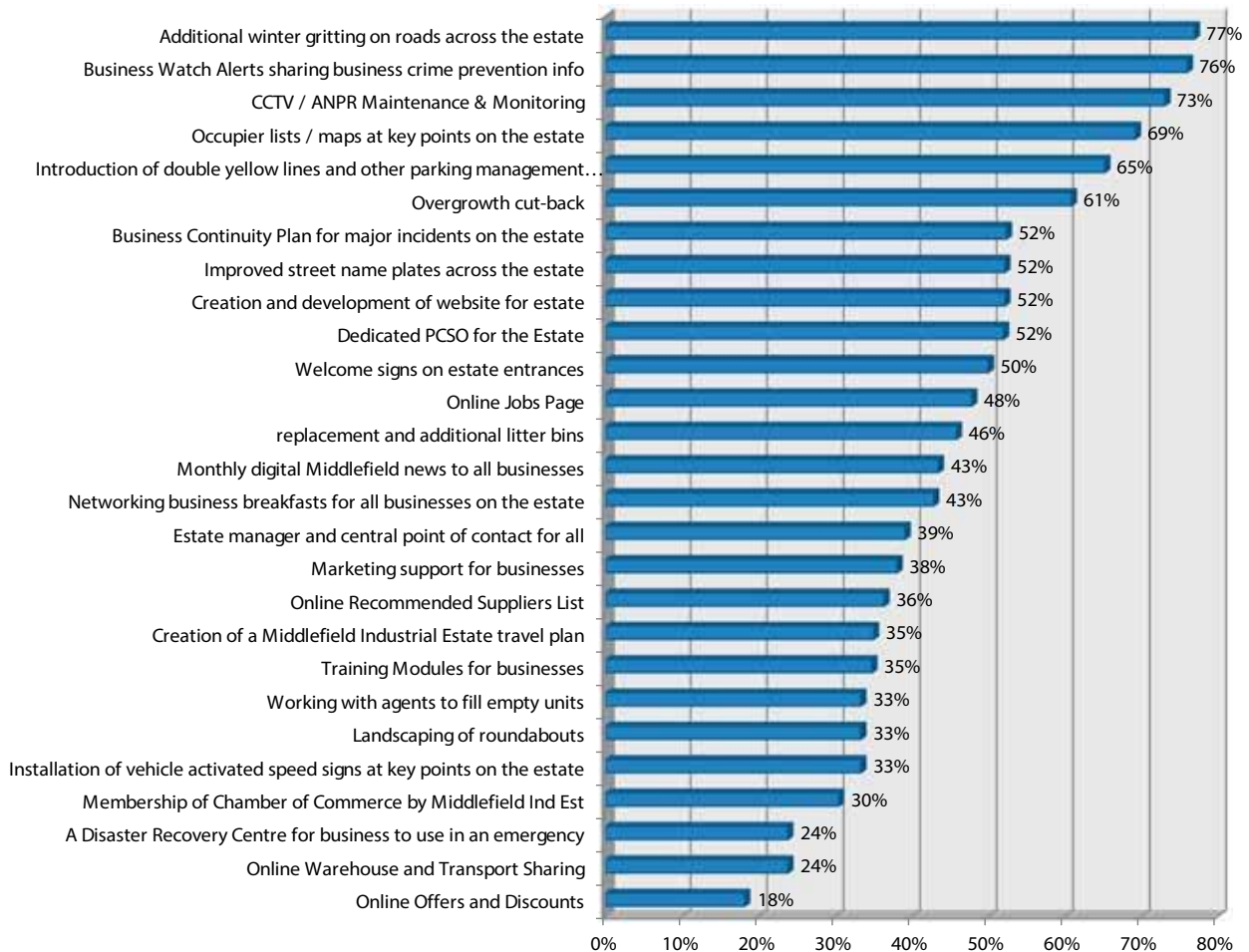
The overall feeling of the environment of Middlefield is determined by a number of aspects including the state of the roads, lighting levels, traffic management and the feeling of safety as well as landscaping and litter control. All these aspects of the environment directly impact upon business operations and are clearly important to businesses.

Two thirds of businesses consider the way in which the estate looks from a litter and landscaping, important to their business. Two thirds of businesses considered that the state of greenery on the estate was poor or very poor and a third of businesses consider, lighting, the appearance of buildings and street cleaning and litter control were all poor or very poor. It is a feature which has a positive impact upon reduction of crime and it is considered important to retain a tidy estate. Nearly two thirds of businesses considered this to be a medium or high priority.



Priorities of BID Activities

How do you rate the priority of the following?
Medium and High Priority



Objective 1 – Safe and secure working environment

To provide a safe and secure working environment for all businesses, vehicles, visitors and people who work in Middlefield Industrial Estate.

£172,000 over the five year life of the BID

Activities

1. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
 - a. Install and integrate CCTV systems with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)
2. Support from additional policing presence
 - a. Create a visible policing presence in Middlefield and an important link between the businesses and the Police
3. Crime prevention information, bulletins and alerts
 - a. Develop information and intelligence flow between partners and businesses



Benefits

- Increased police support for businesses on Middlefield Industrial Estate
- Integrated and additional coverage of CCTV at key locations
- Regular flow of information and sharing of intelligence to support business crime prevention
- Lower than average crime reported on Middlefield Industrial Estate
- Reduced costs for businesses for security and crime prevention measures
- Reduced costs for businesses from lower insurance premiums and reduced crime



BID Vote



Objective 2 – Smart and effective for businesses

To provide a smart and effective operating environment for businesses and for people who work in Middlefield Industrial Estate.

Expenditure **£152,000** over the five year life of the BID

Activities

1. Transport and access
 - a. Additional gritting of roads in the winter
 - b. Improve condition and appearance of roads, footpaths and verges
 - c. Manage and improve parking and provide appropriate stopping and turning places
 - d. Improve signage across Middlefield
2. Broadband and internet access
 - a. Improve broadband and the IT infrastructure
 - b. Web and on-line presence to provide a Middlefield website with recruitment advertising, list and profile of all Middlefield businesses and highlight cost effective group/shared buying opportunities.
3. Smart and Safe
 - a. Maintain signage and all street furniture in a good, clean condition
 - b. Maintain and improve the management of the grass, shrubs and trees on roads, verges and footpaths.
 - c. Manage and eliminate rubbish and other waste products from the public environment.
4. Opportunities to increase trade and reduce cost
 - a. Identify and take advantage of opportunities to reduce business overheads
 - b. Joint business initiatives both to reduce costs and target new and current markets
5. Maintenance and investment
 - a. Develop Middlefield as a respected industrial estate and a hub for manufacturing, engineering and distribution.
 - b. Improve appearance of vacant sites and properties across Middlefield.

Measures and results

- Safer and easier access for all vehicles during periods of ice and snow
- Safer and improved parking in Middlefield industrial estate
- Reduction of pot holes and cracks in roads and footpaths
- Sign management scheme to improve navigation to businesses and consolidate and reduce sign 'clutter'
- Decreased business costs as a direct result of BID initiatives
- Reduced levels of vacant and derelict properties in Middlefield
- Improved download and upload access speeds for broadband connections to businesses on Middlefield industrial estate
- Improved perception of physical attractiveness of the area measured through surveys of businesses in Middlefield Industrial Estate
- Increased numbers of businesses in Middlefield
- Increased numbers of people employed in Middlefield
- Raised business profiles,
- A sense of identity for Middlefield
- Improved navigation to, from and around the Industrial Estate
- Options to access effective digital communication.
- Feeling of 'community' and 'belonging' to Middlefield between those who work in the area

The BID Area

The shaded area represents the full extent of the Middlefield Industrial Estate BID.



Streets included in the BID Area (Listed Alphabetically)

Beamish Close
Blaydon Road
Cuckoo Close
Darlington Close
Gosforth Close
Stockton End
Sunderland Road
Tyne Road
Woodcock Close



BID Vote





How much will you pay?

The Steering Group of the Middlefield Industrial Estate made up of business representatives from across Middlefield have tried to balance the wishes of businesses to address the objectives identified in the plan with the need to ensure that the businesses see a return on their investment in these activities. As a result the BID levy has been set at 2% of rateable value of businesses in the BID area, capped at a rateable value of £200,000. Businesses with a rateable value between £3,000 and £10,000 will pay a charge of £200 per annum.

The BID is a statutorily compulsory payment and is regulated in a similar way to business rates.

The investment being sought from businesses in the BID area is still modest in relation to what can be achieved. For the smallest business in the business improvement district, the daily cost is less than the cost of a postage stamp and even for a large business, the daily cost is less than the price of a sandwich.

The indicative costs to a business at a 2% levy would be:

Rateable Value	Annual Levy @ 2%	Weekly Sum	Daily equivalent
£200,000	£4,000	£76.92	£10.99
£100,000	£2,000	£38.46	£5.49
£90,000	£1,800	£34.62	£4.95
£80,000	£1,600	£30.77	£4.40
£70,000	£1,400	£26.92	£3.85
£60,000	£1,200	£23.08	£3.30
£50,000	£1,000	£19.23	£2.75
£40,000	£800	£15.38	£2.20
£30,000	£600	£11.54	£1.65
£20,000	£400	£7.69	£1.10
£10,000	£200	£3.85	£0.55
£3,000 to £9,999	£200	£3.85	£0.55

Sources of Additional funding

The Middlefield BID Company is committed to seeking additional funding to increase the benefits that can be delivered by the BID to businesses. Additional income will be generated by way of voluntary contributions from property owners, companies and organisations outside the BID area, those companies not liable for the levy and grants.

We estimate that this could be around £50,000 over the five-year period.

Discussion will be held with property owners and other stakeholders of the area who will be invited to participate in the Business Improvement District and improve delivery against the business plan objectives even further.



Finance and Budget

There will be an annual inflationary increase of all levy charges year on year for the duration of the Business Improvement District. This will be a minimum of 3% increase year on year or the inflation percentage as determined by the Consumer Price Index as at the 1st February of the year of the next billing process, whichever is the greater, rounded to the nearest tenth of a penny. Negative inflation will not apply. Inflation will not apply for the first billing cycle in 2015.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total	% to total
Income							
Bid levy revenue (Note 1)	£70,000	£72,100	£74,263	£76,491	£78,786	£371,640	88%
Other Income (Note 2)	£10,000	£10,300	£10,609	£10,927	£11,255	£53,091	13%
Total Income	£80,000	£82,400	£84,872	£87,418	£90,041	£424,731	100%
Expenditure							
Objective 1 – Safe and secure working environment	£33,000	£33,2729	£34,479	£35,252	£36,049	£172,509	41%
Objective 2 – Smart and effective for businesses	£30,000	£30,663	£31,345	£32,048	£32,772	£156,827	37%
Central Management Costs, Administration, Office (Note 3)	£9,500	£9,785	£10,079	£10,381	£10,692	£50,437	12%
Levy Collection Costs	£4,000	£4,120	£4,244	£4,371	£4,502	£21,237	5%
Contingency (Note 4)	£3,500	£3,605	£3,713	£3,825	£3,939	£18,582	4%
Accrual for Renewal (Note 5)	£ –	£499	£1,012	£1,542	£2,087	£5,139	1%
Total Expenditure	£80,000	£82,400	£84,872	£87,418	£90,041	£424,731	100%

Notes

1. Assumes a 95% collection rate and 3% per annum inflation
2. Including income from landlords, associate members of the BID and other sources (including in-kind)
3. Central admin, office and fixed overheads
4. Calculated as 5% of total levy billed
5. Accrual retained from levy revenue to provide for costs of renewal of the BID for any additional term, otherwise they will be spent on additional projects in the final year

Ballot and Voting

Businesses within the Middlefield Industrial Estate area will be asked to vote on whether or not they wish the Middlefield BID implement the business plan over the next five years 2015 to 2020.

Ballot papers will be sent out on 18th February 2015 to the person identified in the specially prepared register of potential voters held by the Central Bedfordshire Council.

Each rateable property has one vote. A proxy vote will be available. Completed ballot papers are to be returned no later than 5pm Thursday 26th March 2015. The result will be announced the following day.

To succeed the ballot has to pass two tests:

1. A simple majority vote of those who vote must register a 'YES'

AND

2. The aggregate rateable value of those who vote 'YES' must be greater than that of those that vote 'NO'



“ We will be voting YES for the BID as working together in Middlefield will help improve the profile of the estate and help us save costs. ”

Mark McKeown – Impulse Point of Purchase

Monitoring success

Working with key partners

In order to deliver exceptional value for money within the framework of the aims and objectives of the plan, the BID will work closely with other key stakeholders such as property owners, developers, the Central Bedfordshire Council and the Police. It will seek, wherever possible to influence and shape larger projects to the benefit of its own aims while supporting others to achieve their own objectives.

In working with others, the over-riding principle of the BID should not be compromised i.e. that the BID is providing services and benefits additional to those which would have happened if the BID had not been in existence.

Monitoring of basic service provision

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to sustaining core or basic services to the area for the duration of the BID so that the activities of the BID will be totally additional and complementary. Provision of Baseline Agreements will allow the BID Company to regularly appraise the delivery of core services and compare them with the details stated in the Baseline Agreements. From experience elsewhere we know this has an impact on that delivery and helps to guarantee that money provided to the authorities via the business rates mechanism is well spent and that standards are maintained. So, local businesses have some direct control of Business Rates investment in their area and the quality of local authority service provision.

Monitoring BID delivery

Monitoring and measuring the performance and effectiveness of the BID activities is an integral and essential part of the plan. Businesses need to be confident that their levy money is being invested as productively as possible to maximise results.

The effectiveness of the measures undertaken will be gauged by relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each project area. They will include business surveys, photographic evidence, vacancy levels, new investment into the area and the ability of businesses to recruit people with the right skill levels.



Governance

The preparation of this plan has been managed by the Middlefield BID Steering Group which is made up of a cross section of businesses from across Middlefield together with representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council. The 'BID Steering Group' will form a company to act as the BID Company. It will be a not for profit BID company, limited by guarantee which will be legally and operationally responsible to the businesses in the BID area for all for the delivery of the BID business plan and its associated activities and will act on their behalf.

The management structure of the BID will be a Board responsible for governance and coordinating activity and delivery. There will be working groups responsible for developing the individual projects which will report to the Board.

The Board will be elected by the members of the BID Company, drawn predominantly from those paying a levy in the area ensuring that there is a representative cross-section of the businesses in Middlefield by both business type and

geography of the BID area. It will be completely driven by the private sector and will include one Councillor from Central Bedfordshire Council as a Director and one Council Officer who will act as an advisor, but not as a Director. Other stakeholders of the area and key agencies who may be valuable in supporting the successful delivery of the BID project, such as the Police, will be invited as advisers to the Board as appropriate.

The main role of the Board is to safeguard the interests of levy payers, ensuring that the business operates in line with the BID plan, is professional and offers consistent value for money in line with its targets. The Board will ensure that the implementation of the BID will be monitored and delivered cost-effectively; keeping overheads to a minimum and using methods which will optimise the use of the revenue budget and add real value to the delivery of the plan. They will also assist in attracting additional income from external sources to build the BID's available budget beyond merely the income from the levy.



We have been here for two years. At our previous location we saw problems with local housing residents and other businesses. If we had had a BID I feel a lot of the issues would not have arisen. The BID will give us a large lobbying voice on things from residential problems to fibre optic internet.

For a relatively small amount of money this BID could give us greater security and make a nice safe area which we can all care about and be proud of. That can only be good for us which is why we are voting 'YES'.

Darren Bishop – ELS Displays





All businesses will be encouraged to be actively involved in the Board and associated working groups to represent the levy payers. Through specific working groups, the Board will be instrumental in prioritising the requirements of the levy payers into deliverable projects which address their needs, within the framework of the business plan.

The Board will provide a consistent, collective and effective voice for the businesses in the Middlefield Industrial Estate on all matters of concern to the levy payers.

The role of 'Director' on the Board and roles on the specific working groups will be voluntary and undertaken with a commitment to represent the interests of all businesses in the BID area and must take into consideration that businesses all

have the right to input into the delivery of the BID.

Collaborative working will be actively encouraged to build upon the sense of business community taking into consideration all business's needs, ensuring wherever possible that there are no measures put in place that may be detrimental to their day to day operation, and that the skills and resources available for delivery of the BID are enhanced and deliver the best value.

There will be hands-on Project Management to support the initiatives from the working groups. This role will provide administrative support and project delivery for the BID Company as well coordinating activity with partner organisations and ensuring cost-effective delivery of projects through tendering and careful management of contracts.

Risk Analysis

The BID mechanism

BIDs have been proving their worth and commercial value across the UK over the last nine years as effective mechanisms to improve trading environments for all sorts and types of businesses. Where BIDs have reached the end of their first term the majority have seen even greater votes in favour and larger turn-outs than the first time of voting. They are seen as providing businesses with very effective returns on investment. Many are in towns and cities but there are some in industrial estates and most notably the largest is Manor Royal, Gatwick which has 500 businesses employing over 30,000 people, gaining BID status in April 2013. Brackmills industrial estate near Northampton has had a BID since 2009 and in 2014 the businesses voted again in strength to continue with a second BID term due to the success of the first BID in delivering against the objectives set by the businesses.



“ A BID will help us with parking issues around our factory, get fibre broadband and help with security in the area. We will be voting YES. ”

Susan Attew





Sustainable mechanism for the development of this important employment area

The BID is a unique mechanism which combines solid business support with a compulsory payment scheme which creates benefit for all on an equitable basis. It also guarantees constant cash flow to deliver the projects and priorities identified by the businesses. It provides a solid platform for the BID Company to control costs, plan over the longer term and rise to the expectations of its stakeholders.

A contingency is contained within each of the project areas, meaning, that should the income from the additional voluntary contributions fall short of those budgeted for any period, costs can be adjusted accordingly.

In the unlikely event that circumstances beyond the control of the BID Company mean that it fails to bring about the

benefits envisaged, the business electorate will have the final say. At the end of the 5 years, if no discernable difference is detected then a vote against renewal can simply “switch off” the BID and with it all business contributions.

There is no plan to rely upon bank or other financial support other than the levy and so there is no prospect of financial insecurity. In any event, the Company will produce regular management accounts and financial forecasts for information of the Board, nominated by the levy payers. Appointed auditors will produce end-of-year accounts, made available to all contributors and the local authority and these will be filed at Companies House in the normal way.

The Company will be VAT registered to ensure that the tax can be reclaimed on expenditure. It is also anticipated that it will benefit from mutual trading status meaning that it is exempt from any Corporation Tax liability.

Final thoughts

I have been privileged, over the last year to work closely with businesses who have been committed to creating a new opportunity for all Middlefield businesses, in an increasingly competitive and challenging world.

Middlefield is hidden away at the back of a small Bedfordshire town, but this industrial estate has the potential to raise its profile and the profile of the businesses which exist here. If we work together we can address issues which directly impact upon our operating environment and which will be provide us with a much more effective and profitable base.

There are some exciting developments planned for this area in the future and together we can play an important role in how these developments can benefit our businesses.

This plan has a clear focus and as a result of listening to your challenges it has identified and prioritised the activities which will make the most difference to your business whether large or small. I urge you to consider this plan and the potential benefits of working together and vote YES in the ballot in March.

Chris Annis – Business Unit Manager, Marshalls
Middlefield BID Steering Group Member

Middlefield Industrial Estate
BID Vote



This prospectus should be read in conjunction with the full Business Improvement District business plan accessible on the Central Bedfordshire Council web site www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/middlefield or by phoning Julie Brown of Manor Concepts on Tel 01767 222100.