

***Report On The Feasibility Of A Business  
Improvement District (BID) For Slough***

***Prepared By Revive & Thrive Ltd***

***On Behalf Of Slough Borough Council***

***July 2018***

REVIVE  
THRIVE



[www.slough.gov.uk](http://www.slough.gov.uk)  
**Slough**  
Borough Council

## **1.0 Executive Summary**

In spring 2018, Revive & Thrive was commissioned by Slough Borough Council to work with them on the production of a feasibility study for the implementation of a Business Improvement District (BID) for Slough.

The team conducted face-to-face surveys with businesses across Slough, including retailers on the high streets, office-based businesses and those operating in the industrial areas. This was complemented by a series of email requests and a presentation to Slough Town Centre Partnership.

In order to establish the feasibility or otherwise of a BID in Slough, two fundamental principles have needed consideration:

- 1) That a BID for Slough has the broad support of the business community. As BIDs are inherently business-led and -driven, any potential BID would need the buy-in of the majority of businesses.
- 2) That a BID for Slough is financially viable. Whilst levy income for BIDs varies significantly from area to area, it is a commonly held principle that an area which cannot generate a minimum of £100,000 per annum is not suitable for a BID.

Further on in this document, you will see some income modelling which demonstrates that a BID in Slough would be financially feasible. This report also sets out the outcomes of the business survey, in which fewer than 8% of respondents did not think that a BID for Slough should be tested at ballot.

These two considerations suggest that a BID for Slough is sufficiently viable for the business community, in partnership with Slough Borough Council and Revive & Thrive to progress to a detailed consultation and development phase, with a ballot likely to take place in summer 2019.

The consultation phase will result in a business plan, which businesses will be asked to vote to adopt and will set out in specific detail:

- The boundary for the proposed BID area
- The levy that businesses will be asked to pay (as well as any caps or exemptions)
- A baseline of services already being provided by the public sector
- The thematic areas and projects that a BID for Slough will deliver
- How the BID will operate

## **2.0 Background**

Slough is a vibrant, diverse and growing town, ideally situated along the M4 corridor between London and Reading.

It has a population of approximately 148,000 residents, which has seen a growth of 23% in recent years and, as a borough, boasts 80,000+ jobs which contribute over £7bn to the national economy<sup>1</sup>.

Education rates are high, and the town is one of the youngest in the UK. Major international businesses are situated in the town and the extension of the Crossrail service, coupled with the planned expansion of Heathrow indicate that, as a whole, Slough is set to see continued developments, growth and expansion.

Additionally, the Borough Council has invested significant sums in redeveloping the wider town centre, attracting further private-sector investment, business and leisure services locating there and has a solid vision for making Slough an attractive and vibrant hub which will provide high quality offices, retail and leisure buildings and cultural opportunities for its diverse communities.

However, the town centre is at significant risk of being left behind and of failing to meet the aspirations of the Council, residents, businesses and workers.

Slough town centre's importance slipped from 57<sup>th</sup> to 147<sup>th</sup> in a ten-year period from 2006 to 2016<sup>2</sup> and a visitor survey conducted in 2016 highlighted some stark results, with consumers visiting the town less often and for less time, citing the quality of the environment and range of shops and services on offer as the primary reasons for this.

Retail provision in the town centre is dominated by a large Tesco's Extra supermarket (16,000m<sup>2</sup>) and the Queensmere and Observatory shopping centres, however declining standards and footfall have seen a similar decline in the provision within these.

Whilst investment in the town centre in sites such as the Curve, Future Works and the railway station and the new Marriott hotel development have encouraged and will continue to encourage improvements to the overall infrastructure of the town centre and the number of workers and visitors, the wider town centre appearance and offer need to improve in line with these larger projects.

Existing BIDs nearby in Reading, Staines and Uxbridge are contributing over £1.3m annually in private sector levies to their local economies and these initiatives, coupled with other threats such as online retail, are having a growing negative impact on Slough town centre.

With the existing investment coming into Slough and the threats to it from further afield, the time is right for the business community in Slough town centre to investigate the opportunities that a BID would bring them.

---

<sup>1</sup> Figures taken from the Review of the Local Plan for Slough Issues and Options Consultation Document 2017

<sup>2</sup> Javelin Group VENUESCORE 2016

### **3.0 Business Improvement Districts**

Since the introduction of Business Improvement District legislation in 2003, around 300 Business Improvement Districts have been created across the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Existing BIDs nearby to Slough include Reading, Uxbridge, Staines, an industrial park BID in Marlow and several in West London.

The majority of BIDs focus upon town and city centres, although they are not confined to these areas, with many being formed in out of town industrial or commercial areas.

BIDs operate through the levy of a small percentage on national non-domestic rates (commonly referred to as business rates), with the actual levy percentage varying depending on the area in question.

In most towns and cities, the BID levy tends to lie between 1% and 1.5% of rateable value (RV), meaning that a business would pay an annual levy of between 1% and 1.5% of the rateable value of their business premises. There are locations where this figure is higher, although a higher levy risks receiving less support from businesses and so we would not generally recommend setting the level above 1.5%.

All BIDs have a clear and focused role, contained within a business plan which all eligible businesses are asked to vote upon in a ballot. The development of the plan will almost always have been led by the business community within the area in question and will have involved extensive consultation to ensure that it includes the priority improvement actions identified by local businesses, which tend to include:

- **Marketing and promotional activities**
- **Car parking improvements**
- **Public event management and development**
- **Streetscene improvements**
- **Public safety and security initiatives**
- **Business cost reduction projects**
- **Local priority improvement actions**

Under current law, any BID needs to be established via a ballot of those eligible business listed on the rating database held by the local billing authority and the vote is conducted entirely by post. The votes are sent to either the tenant of the business or the landlord (in the case of vacant units), within a defined boundary and this report highlights several potential boundary options for the Slough BID.

For any BID ballot to be successful, there needs to be a majority of positive votes within the total number of votes cast and these positive votes also need to form a majority of the total aggregate rateable value of all the votes cast.

It is important to note that the intention of a BID is to add projects and activities to a town or city over and above those which are already taking place. A BID is not, therefore, a mechanism for any public or private sector body to cease to provide established activities.

The maximum term covered by a BID business plan is 5 years and the continuation of any BID beyond its initial term is reliant on the production of a renewed business plan and a renewal ballot of the

businesses within the BID area. Over 80 BIDs have achieved a successful renewal ballot and several are within their third BID term, having achieved two subsequent renewal ballots.

The growth in the number of BIDs continues to rise and they are increasingly considered as the model of best-practice for high quality town and city centre management.

The number of hereditaments within each BID also varies vastly, from fewer than 100 to nearly 1,000. The majority, though, have around 300-400 levy paying businesses within them.

BIDs generally involve the creation of a company limited by guarantee, which limits the financial liability of any company director. A board of between 12-16 company directors is usually formed from BID levy paying organisations to create a representative and business-led group of directors to oversee the financial, managerial and operational arrangements for the BID.

In Slough, the existing Town Centre Partnership would make an appropriate group to oversee the development of a BID, either directly or via an offshoot which could be known as the Slough BID Development Steering Group. This group would have the responsibility of making final decisions on the content of the BID proposals, with support from others on the Town Centre Partnership, the Town Centre Manager and other officials from Slough Borough Council and any appointed consultants.

If a BID is successful at ballot in Slough, this body could become the shadow board until a full board could be ratified.

#### **4.0 Business Survey**

The survey was designed to include the following:

- **Background information on BIDs and the benefits they can bring about**
- **The ability for key business information to be gathered**
- **The inclusion of suggested BID projects, with respondents able to rank their priority importance**
- **Extensive opportunities for businesses to provide further information and feedback – including their views of the town, their attitude towards a BID and their willingness to engage further in the BID process**
- **Bespoke questions relating to Slough town centre, with respondents able to include their views on competitor towns and possible BID boundaries**

A full summary of the survey responses is included as Appendix 1, with the key findings being:

- Just over half of survey respondents (54%) operated independent businesses or run a franchise, with these covering a wide range of business types, from traditional retail to manufacturing, facilities management and specialist business services
- Business confidence in Slough is generally good, although a quarter of respondents expected levels of trade to drop in the short-term
- Two thirds of respondents thought that Slough has got worse over the last five years, with the levels of trade, anti-social behaviour and the quality of the local environment being the major issues affecting their business' performance
- Less than one business in five was aware of BIDs prior to completing the survey
- The top 10 most important issues facing businesses in Slough were:
  - 1) Level of trade
  - 2) Problems associated with anti-social behaviour
  - 3) Rent and rates
  - 4) Quality of the local environment
  - 5) Staff recruitment and retention
  - 6) Availability of car-parking
  - 7) Competition from other businesses in the area
  - 8) Security issues
  - 9) Competition from elsewhere
  - 10) Other overheads
- Issues such as business support, finance and business development were deemed to be less of a barrier to operating a successful business in Slough
- The only aspects of Slough town centre that more respondents viewed as good rather than bad were safety during the day and the way that businesses work together
- Safety (during the evenings and at night), crime and security the general shopping environment and the quality and range of shops and services available were heavily viewed as being either "bad" or "very bad"
- When asked what measures could be employed to improve the area, the answers were ranked as follows:
  - 1) Increased choice/range of shops
  - 2) More national retailers
  - 3) Improved public spaces
  - 4) Improved security

- 5) More quality restaurants or cafes
  - 6) Cheaper/more flexible parking
  - 7) Improved street cleaning
  - 8) More independent and specialist retailers
  - 9) More sport/leisure/entertainment facilities
  - 10) Greater promotion and marketing of Slough town centre
  - 11) More organised events
  - 12) Better street lighting
  - 13) Improved public transport
  - 14) More arts or cultural facilities
- Other suggestions included:
    - 1) Free wifi in the town centre
    - 2) Address anti-social behaviour
    - 3) Improve frontages
    - 4) Subsidise rent/rates
    - 5) Improve traffic flow
  - In a free text question asking how income from a BID could be most effectively spent, over 60 ideas were put forward which, broadly speaking, fell into the following categories:
    - Crime, security and safety (17)
    - Improving the business (primarily retail) mix (16)
    - Improving the quality of the environment (10)
    - Business support initiatives (9)
    - Accessibility and car-parking (7)
    - Marketing and events (4)
    - Improving the image of the area (3)

## **5.0 Boundary Options**

For the purposes of this feasibility study, we have used the existing town centre boundary map as the basis for a possible BID area.

It is unlikely that a proposed BID would be smaller in size than this as this area encompasses the main retail and business core of Slough town centre. However, there are opportunities to look at enlarging the proposed BID area:

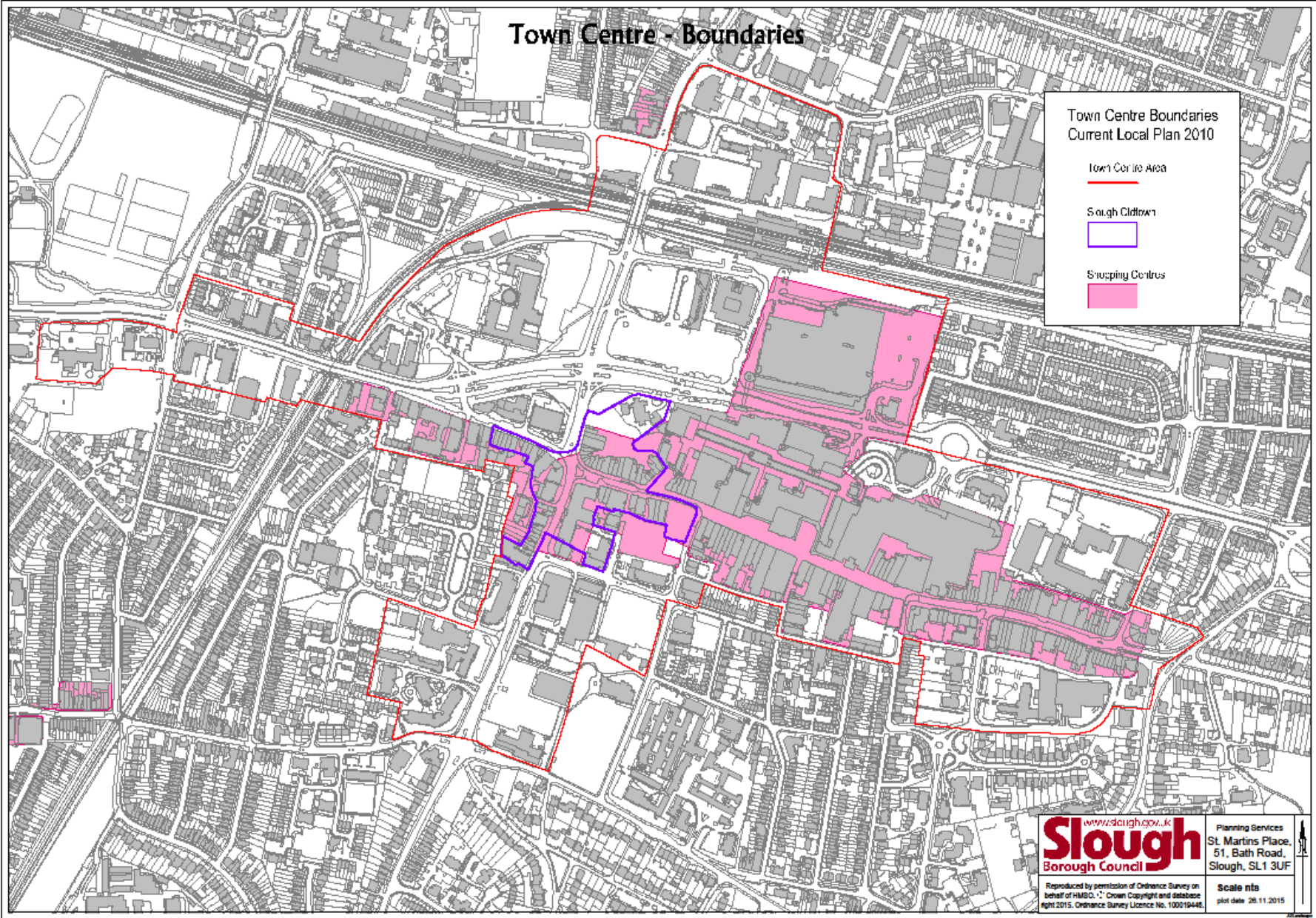
- To the west of the town centre along Bath Road (A4)
- To the south of the town centre encompassing Upton Park and the hospital
- To the east of the town centre on either side of the A4 (Wellington St/Sussex Place) to include the Grammar school, Sainsbury's and other businesses
- To the north of the railway line that bisects the town, bringing in industrial and trading estates

Further consultation is needed with businesses across all parts of the potential BID area to establish which of the options above is most likely to meet the needs of the local business community, is a logical and easy to define BID area, is likely to see its businesses benefit from BID projects, produces the most viable income opportunities for the BID and is likely to result in a positive result at ballot.

The potential BID area that businesses will be asked to vote on will be refined during the next phase of the BID development, with the final boundary being included (including a list of all streets falling within the area) in the BID business plan



# Town Centre - Boundaries



## 6.0 Levy Options

Industry guidelines and best practice state that levy rates should be both kept to a minimum and should assure value for money for levy payers.

Given the likely income levels for Slough, a proposed levy of up to 1.25% would fall well within these guidelines, although a levy of up to 1.5% *could* be considered.

Depending on the final boundary, there are likely to be a small but significant number of hereditaments for which any levy based on a percentage of rateable value is unlikely to prove economically advantageous. A maximum cap would therefore need to be considered and agreed with the levy payers in these properties.

As an example, the large Tesco store in the town centre has a rateable value of £4,200,000. Even at 1%, the levy for this site would be £42,000 per annum, which is both unreasonable for any individual levy payer in a BID and disproportionate in relation to all other potential levy payers in Slough.

Equally, there are a number of businesses with rateable values within the proposed BID area for whom it is not cost-effective for Slough Borough Council to collect any BID levy. Given the overall rateable values in the town, the BID Development Steering Group will need to consider exemptions for these businesses and the cut-off point could be set anywhere from £5,000 to £10,000.

If the BID boundary does not expand beyond the core town centre, income for the BID could therefore be between £330,857<sup>3</sup> and £543,358<sup>4</sup>, depending on which of the boundary options and levy rates are finally decided upon.

The table below sets out possible levy-income figures for the BID, excluding hereditaments with rateable values below £5,000 and above £1m.

|             | 1% levy  | 1.25% levy | 1.5% levy | No. businesses (approx.) |
|-------------|----------|------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Min RV £5k  | £320,238 | £400,298   | £480,358  | 628                      |
| Min RV £8k  | £315,103 | £393,879   | £472,655  | 546                      |
| Min RV £10k | £310,857 | £388,571   | £466,286  | 499                      |

Potential income for a Slough BID is further complicated by other considerations:

- Exempted listings. BIDs are designed to support and improve businesses trading within the BID area. As such, “rated” items such as telecommunications masts, advertising hoardings and other inappropriate items are generally removed from BID listings
- Schools, especially primary schools are often removed from BID listings as they, generally, provide no commercial activity
- Businesses that already pay some form of management fee, such as those in shopping centres often benefit from a discount on the standard levy imposed. For Slough, this scenario could potentially arise
- Early BIDs often offered concessions or exemptions to businesses with charitable status. Over time though, and given the vital role that charity retail in particular plays on the UK’s high

---

<sup>3</sup> Assumes a levy of 1% imposed on hereditaments with a rateable value in excess of £10,000 and a maximum cap of £20,000

<sup>4</sup> Assumes a levy of 1.5% imposed on hereditaments with a rateable value in excess of £5,000 and no maximum cap

streets, these concessions are becoming less frequent, with generally only smaller local and regional charities that do not have a retail operation being exempted from the BID levy

All of the considerations set out above, including various percentage options will be fully refined and consulted upon with the business community in Slough in the next phase of the BID's development and final BID levy rules will be included within the BID business plan.

It is important to note that the BID levy and BID boundary are the only two rules within BID proposals that cannot be altered without asking businesses to vote in an alteration ballot.

It is anticipated that the majority of the BID's income will be derived from the BID levy over the five-year term of the BID. Generally, collection rates for BID levies are good and Slough should expect to receive 95-98% of the total levy available.

It is considered best practice for BIDs to supplement their levy income to provide additional value for money for their levy payers. Whether through grants, sponsorship, voluntary business contributions or trading activity, the likelihood is that the Slough BID should generate an additional 10-20% income by the end of its first five-year term.

## **8.0 BID Projects**

In terms of the results of the business survey, several themes were consistently highlighted as being major issues or problems that were affecting businesses or that they would like to see addressed. Primarily, these were issues around crime, security and anti-social behaviour, the quality of the business mix and environment, accessibility and the cost of doing business in Slough.

These are thematic areas that are highlighted in BID areas up and down the country and whilst they tend to be issues that are harder to address or resolve easily, or even within a five-year time period, they are areas where BID have successfully delivered projects elsewhere.

The majority of businesses responding to the survey indicated that they would like to see more joint (or joined-up) marketing of the area and also that more investment should be made into better events, two areas that BIDs focus on which are designed to generate footfall and additional traffic and to increase resident and visitor affinity with an area.

We would suggest that a focus should be made on developing projects under the following five themes:

- 1). Representation
- 2). The reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour
- 3). Environment
- 4). Business support
- 5). Marketing Slough

Specific projects will need to be developed within each thematic area and will need to be done in conjunction with businesses in Slough.

In other BID developments carried out by Revive & Thrive, we have carried out a successful “post-it note” exercise, whereby businesses are invited to attend a workshop and simply write down ideas on different coloured post-it notes for each category of potential projects.

These can then be written up and form the basis of projects, to be further refined, via consultation with the Steering Group and other businesses, prior to completing the business plan

## **9.0 Regulatory Milestones**

For a BID development to proceed to ballot, there are a number of statutory milestones that must be met<sup>5</sup>:

- Notification to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government of the intention to hold a BID ballot and request to the local billing authority to hold the ballot. This needs to take place a minimum of 84 days before the Notice of Ballot is issued
- The request to the local billing authority should include details of the BID proposals, including details of consultations undertaken, financial proposals and proposed financial management arrangements
- A Notice of Ballot must be issued and sent to both the Secretary of State and voters a minimum of 42 days before the date of ballot (this being the last date on which votes can be received and counted)
- Ballot papers must be issued to all eligible voters a minimum of 28 days prior to the date of ballot
- The results of the ballot must be issued publicly once they are known

---

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 2: BID Development Regulatory Milestones

## **10.0 Impacts on Slough Borough Council**

Inevitably, a BID development in Slough will have a number of impacts on Slough Borough Council, both financial and in terms of resources, in both the immediate and longer terms.

Within the initial boundary concepts, there are around 15 hereditaments owned by the Council. These have an aggregate rateable value of £2,527,150, representing an annual expenditure to the Council on BID levy of approximately £31, 589<sup>6</sup>, against a private-sector income to the town via the BID levy of at least £300,000 per annum.

This also represents 15 votes in the BID ballot.

Additionally, there are the costs associated with developing a BID. These are set out in section 15.0 below and will vary, in part, dependent on internal recharges, how much of the work is outsourced and to whom and the level of engagement and involvement of Council staff.

The BID development will need to be “approved” by Slough Borough Council either at executive level or with delegated authority, but it is important to note that a local billing authority does hold the right to veto BID proposals should they be deemed to be in conflict with existing Council policies.

During the development of the BID, it is likely that many service areas within Slough Borough Council will come into contact with the BID. Service areas such as Elections, Revenues, Legal and Finance will have a direct role to play and will continue to do so should the BID be approved at ballot.

As stated in section 3.0 above, though, BIDs are designed to provide additionality and should not be viewed as mechanisms for replacing public sector services. In order to protect this aspiration, as well as to provide transparency to voters, it is a requirement in BID developments for public sector agencies who provide services into BID areas to submit baseline information. Usually, this information is collated post-ballot into a Baseline Services Agreement which protects both the BID and the local authority for the lifetime of the BID.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)<sup>7</sup>, in partnership with British BIDs, produced a useful guidance document for councils regarding BIDs in 2015, “Business Improvement Districts Technical Guidance for Local Authorities<sup>8</sup>, which should be read by any officers involved with the BID development.

The underlying principles of BIDs are that they are designed to improve and support the sustainability, viability and economy of the places that they represent. In this sense, the long-term benefit for Slough town centre, and therefore the Borough Council, should only be viewed as one which brings a positive impact to the town.

---

<sup>6</sup> Based on a levy set at 1.25% and within the other BID rules set out elsewhere in this document

<sup>7</sup> Now the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

<sup>8</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/415990/BIDs\\_Technical\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415990/BIDs_Technical_Guidance.pdf)

## **11.0 Next Steps**

To progress the Slough BID from an initial level of interest by businesses in the area to test the concept at ballot to a fully worked up set of proposals that businesses can be asked to vote on, the following, important next steps will need to be taken:

- Develop and strengthen a BID Steering Group, equipping its members with the skills to make important decisions as to how the final BID will look and encouraging them to champion the BID to the wider business community
- Carry out sustained, in-depth consultations with all business types across all areas of the potential BID area to establish business needs and the BID boundary
- Implement a further business survey to refine BID themes, project areas and priority projects for the BID
- Implement an agreed plan of one-to-one business visits
- Finalise the BID database
- Establish a communications plan for the coming months up to and including the ballot
- Agree key dates and meet statutory deadlines
- Develop the BID's digital marketing – creating a website and growing social media channels
- Refine project plans to incorporate into a comprehensive final business plan which businesses will be asked to vote on

## **12.0 Risks**

Notwithstanding the next steps required to progress the BID to ballot, there remain a number of key factors which will need to be considered throughout the development phase:

1). Budget – a budget will need to be identified to take the BID through to ballot. This will need to include any costs for required consultancy in addition to marketing, design and print and other development costs. Subsequent to a successful outcome at ballot, the Council should consider a bridging loan to the BID to enable it to start operations prior to coming into effect. This will include company start-up costs, such as office accommodation, equipment and recruitment costs and can be recouped via the first tranche of levy payments.

2). Timescales – A full BID development timeline will need to be worked up to provide concrete milestones and deadlines and to give the BID the best chance of a successful outcome at ballot. From the commencement of a BID development process, this would typically be between six and twelve months and would need to allow for extensive consultations and business engagement, developing and finalising the BID business plan and the establishment of and support to a steering group/shadow board.

3). Engagement & Consultation – It will be vital that the majority of businesses in Slough support the BID proposals and play a central role in developing them. There will be much work to be done to strengthen support from the business community for the BID to ensure a strong turn out and positive outcome at ballot. This will need to come from Slough Borough Council, any appointed consultants, the BID Development Steering Group, BID Champions and others.

4). Council Processes – support for the BID will need to be secured at the highest level within Slough Borough Council and experience of working with other local authorities has shown that this can be a time-consuming process. Additionally, the BID will need the support of the Council's Revenues, Legal and Elections departments for specific elements of the BID development along with information from several other departments to ensure that baseline agreements are in place by the time the ballot begins

5). Boundary – the boundary options for the Slough BID remain open to refinement as the BID may ultimately incorporate just the town centre core or one or more of the suggested extensions set out in section five. For the BID to succeed at ballot, it will be imperative to understand the support that the BID has from businesses in all parts of the proposed BID area.

6). Failed ballot – the outcome of a BID ballot can never be assured or assumed. There is always the chance that businesses will vote against implementing a BID. In the unlikely scenario that this becomes the case in Slough, the Council and BID proposers will need to consider alternative arrangements for future support to the business community in Slough as well as the reputational impacts on both the Council and BID proposers. A failure at ballot is the most inherent risk in any BID development.



### **13.0 Recommendations**

Having analysed the responses to the business survey, and based on our knowledge and experience of BID developments in other towns, Revive & Thrive offers the following recommendations:

- Develop plans for the BID to cover the widest BID area and narrow the BID boundary if it becomes apparent that certain geographic areas of Slough are likely to be against forming part of a BID
- Develop the BID on the assumption of a 1.25% levy to be imposed on all hereditaments with a rateable value in excess of £9,999
- Implement a discount for tenants of serviced properties of 0.25% to compensate them for products and services they are already benefitting from that are likely to be enhanced or complemented by a BID
- Impose a maximum cap so that no hereditament will be required to pay a levy that is disproportionate to the services received
- Review the timescale to ballot to ensure that all parties are confident of achieving a successful outcome given human and financial resources available to the project
- Agree and adhere to an extensive consultation plan to ensure that all businesses are engaged throughout the BID development process
- Develop a business plan for a full five-year BID term and ensure that it contains projects and themes that will offer opportunities for a return on investment for all businesses in the BID area
- Investigate opportunities for additional income for the BID, to include commercial activity, sponsorships and voluntary membership contributions

These recommendations would therefore result in:

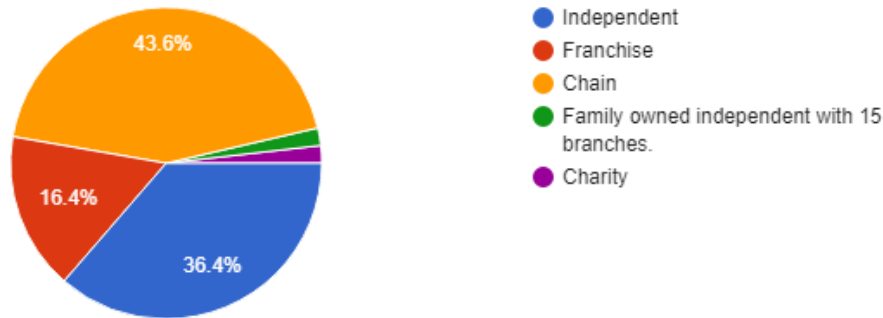
- Approximately 500 business premises being part of the BID
- An annual BID levy income of approximately £410,000
- A total BID levy income over five years of approximately £2,050,000

**Appendix 1**

**Results of the Slough Business Survey**

1. Is this business an independent, a franchise or part of a chain?

55 responses

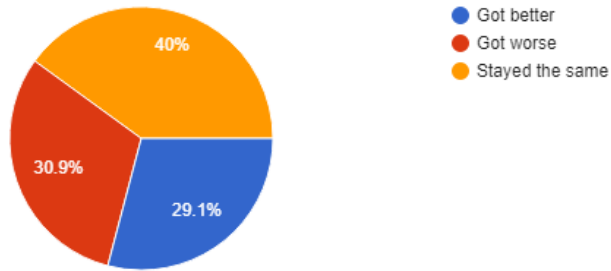


2. What type of business is the main business operating from these premises?

|                               |    |   |   |
|-------------------------------|----|---|---|
| Non-food retail               | 24 | Pub/bar   | 2 |
| Motor vehicle repair          | 6  | Supermarket/convenience store                   | 2 |
| Business to business services | 4  | Cafe/Coffee shop/Restaurant/Takeaway            | 1 |
| Real estate activities        | 4  | Cigarettes/Vape                                 | 1 |
| Accommodation                 | 2  | Dog Walking & Dog Boarding                      | 1 |
| Arts/entertainment            | 2  | Fire Safety Maintenance (Facilities Management) | 1 |
| Charity                       | 2  | Industry/manufacturing                          | 1 |
| Health & beauty services      | 2  | Leisure (e.g. cinema)/Travel and Tourism        | 1 |
|                               |    | Restaurant                                      | 1 |

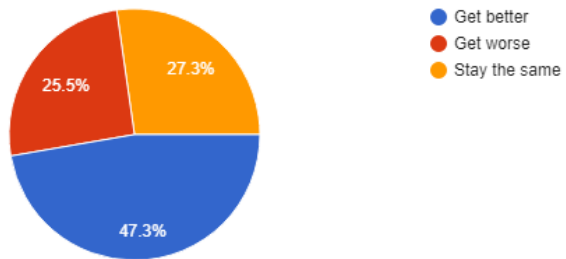
### 3. How has business been for the last six months?

55 responses



### 4. How do you expect things to go over the next six months?

55 responses



5. What are the three most important issues affecting the operation and performance of your business?

|  |    |  |   |
|--|----|--|---|
| Level of trade                                 | 21 | Quality or size of premises                    | 3 |
| Problems associated with anti-social behaviour | 17 | Shortage of skilled labour                     | 3 |
| Rent/rates                                     | 16 | Quality of shopping offer                      | 2 |
| Quality of the local environment               | 10 | Poor accessibility                             | 1 |
| Staff recruitment and retention                | 9  | Charity shops                                  | 1 |
| Availability of car parking                    | 9  | Support from the council                       | 1 |
| Competition from other businesses in the area  | 9  | Area problems                                  | 1 |
| Security issues                                | 9  | Yellow lines                                   | 1 |
| Competition from elsewhere                     | 7  | Theft  | 1 |
| Other overheads                                | 5  | Commute  | 1 |
| High energy bills                              | 4  | Business finance                               | 0 |
| Transport links                                | 4  | Access to business advice and support          | 0 |
| Vacancy rates                                  | 4  | Inability to find time to develop the business | 0 |

6. How do you feel the issues you selected could be addressed?

Improving the standards of central slough

Improved local/town area.

Borough need some sort of check and balance where they are investing

The first two are just a downturn in the market/economy and uncertainty over Brexit, interest rates and taxing of landlords. The third can be resolved by SBC policy and policing.

Better support from the council

Local enviroment needs to be improved, tramp issues, level of trade has dropped because lack of business/shops in the high street/rents are high for commercial premesis

Training of unemployed in skills relating to high street stores. Selling skills, communication skills etc

As estate and letting agents we are used to changing markets.

We would have more customers if there was more decent nice shops on the high street

Concerning to say the least

Reduce business rates, improve car parking

WE NEED REGENERATING

The changes cant be rectified. When Burnham Station Bridge was closed I lost 40% of my business overnight as I didn't have the time to sit in hours of traffic to get across the A4. These clients have had to find a replacement and now I need to find replacement dogs. I live on the Council border and competitors are as close as 2 major roads away - I am licenced and they are not so they can run their businesses as they see fit where as I have rules to comply with. RWMB have told me for the last 5 years that licencing will commence next year but that will never happen so I'm competing against 100s of companies that in my opinion shouldn't be in business as home boarders. I have mentioned these matters during visits

from Slough Council and I currently have my house on the market to move away from the idiots running this type of business without any regard to animal welfare.

lower rate paint over yellow lines find your money some other way

I think we took on a unit that was bigger than required

Reduced rent rates

Reduced Rates

Bus service is appalling

The police dealing with thieves better

The police are poor when dealing with thieves. It is a common occurrence

Employing more staff, having more than one security guard, minimum pay is not worth it

871-872 Plymouth Road

No business rates and create more parking spaces

working as one community

Increase of salary as no increase of wages for years

More street cleaning and rubbish collections the area is full of litter where ever you look. Vans are parked in Galvin Road they are not being moved and being used to live in, bottles of urine are scattered around which i have reported to the council already. It would be nice to say that slough is a nice place to come to.

More police

more incentives for businesses rates are high and always going up

Reduce the amount of furniture shops in the area

Job fairs

More car parks locally and free parking

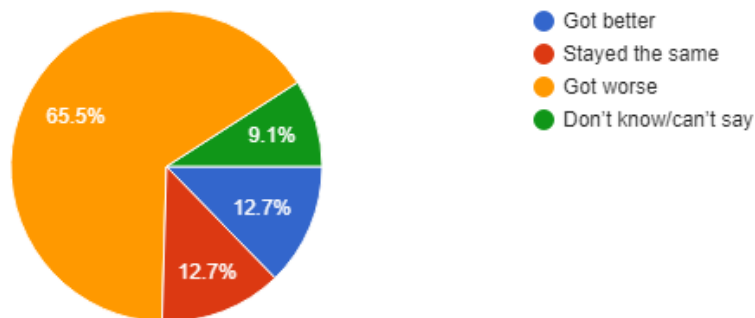
Make the town a better and friendlier place to shop

Move premises and recruit junior staff to train into the position

| How would you rate the following aspects of Slough town centre? |         |                  |  |                         |   |                      |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |   |                                |                                       |  |   |                                    |                             |
|---|---------|------------------|--|-------------------------|---|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | [Rents] | [Business rates] | [Availability of staff/customer parking] | [Safety during the day] | [Safety during the evenings and at night] | [Crime and security] | [Range of shops and services available] | [Quality of shops and services available] | [Range of leisure and entertainment facilities] | [Quality of leisure and entertainment facilities] | [Quality of public open spaces, street furniture and landscaping] | [Liveliness and character of the area] | [Level of street cleansing and litter] | [Condition and appearance of buildings] | [General shopping environment] | [Support from Slough Borough Council] | [Marketing and promotion of the town centre] | [Interest shown by landlords and property owners] | [The way businesses work together] | [Events in the town centre] |
| Very Good   | 1       | 1                | 5  | 2                       | 2   | 1                    | 4                                       | 3   | 2   | 0   | 0   | 0                                      | 0                                      | 0                                       | 0                              | 2                                     | 2  | 0   | 0                                  | 2                           |
| Good  | 3       | 4                | 14                                       | 18                      | 5   | 5                    | 6                                       | 6   | 11  | 13  | 14  | 6                                      | 16                                     | 13                                      | 7                              | 9                                     | 10   | 6   | 14                                 | 14                          |
| Neither Good nor Bad  | 18      | 16               | 7  | 13                      | 12  | 11                   | 10                                      | 11  | 20  | 19  | 21  | 22                                     | 14                                     | 17                                      | 9                              | 27                                    | 15   | 23  | 27                                 | 18                          |
| Bad   | 12      | 14               | 16                                       | 17                      | 17  | 24                   | 15                                      | 17  | 15  | 14  | 14  | 15                                     | 17                                     | 18                                      | 19                             | 9                                     | 17   | 16  | 6                                  | 14                          |
| Very Bad  | 7       | 7                | 11                                       | 2                       | 17  | 14                   | 20                                      | 18  | 6   | 6   | 5   | 11                                     | 8                                      | 6                                       | 19                             | 7                                     | 7  | 5   | 5                                  | 5                           |

### 8. In general, do you think that over the last five years Slough town centre has...?

55 responses



### 9. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

|                            | The paving and street scene need improving | Festive lighting is important for the town centre | The festive lighting needs to be improved | Hanging baskets play an important role in improving the appearance of the area | Vacant shops are detrimental to the area | The appearance of both occupied and vacant units could be improved |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| Agree                      | 25   | 22  | 13  | 25   | 16                                       | 19   |
| Disagree                   | 5  | 5   | 6   | 5  | 1  | 0  |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 14   | 9   | 19  | 11   | 2  | 2  |
| Strongly Agree             | 11   | 17  | 14  | 14   | 36                                       | 32   |
| Strongly Disagree          | 1  | 2   | 2   | 0  | 0  | 0  |

10. What measures do you think would help to improve Slough town centre?

|   |    |                               |    |
|---|----|-------------------------------|----|
| Increased choice/range of shops                       | 44 | Other (please specify)        |    |
| More national retailers                               | 37 | Free town wifi                | 28 |
| Improved public spaces                                | 34 | Address anti-social behaviour | 2  |
| Improved security                                     | 33 | Improve frontages             | 2  |
| More quality restaurants or cafes                     | 32 | Subsidise rent/rates          | 2  |
| Cheaper/more flexible parking                         | 31 | More housing                  | 1  |
| Improved street cleaning                              | 28 | Improve traffic flow          | 1  |
| More independent and specialist retailers             | 26 |                               |    |
| More sports/leisure/entertainment facilities          | 22 |                               |    |
| Greater promotion and marketing of Slough town centre | 22 |                               |    |
| More organised events                                 | 19 |                               |    |
| Better street lighting                                | 19 |                               |    |
| Improved public transport                             | 18 |                               |    |
| More arts or cultural facilities                      | 15 |                               |    |

11. Which of these marketing activities/channels do you currently use?

|  |    |  |    |
|--|----|--|----|
| Website                                | 46 | Your own events                        | 20 |
| Flyers/leaflets/posters                | 30 | Advertising in other printed media     | 15 |
| Social media (please specify)          | 29 | Vouchers                               | 14 |
| Email newsletters                      | 28 | Networking                             | 14 |
| Online advertising                     | 27 | Special promotions (e.g. competitions) | 14 |
| Business cards                         | 26 | Loyalty cards                          | 13 |
| Brochures                              | 21 | Joint promotions with other businesses | 4  |
| Advertising in local or national press | 20 | Other (please specify)                 | 0  |

12. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about local area marketing:

|                            | Marketing activities play an important role in attracting customers to the local area | Further marketing activities are required to attract local area visitors | I would be prepared to get involved in local area marketing campaigns |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| Strongly Agree             | 26  | 27   | 12  |
| Agree                      | 21  | 17   | 17  |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 8   | 10   | 19  |
| Disagree                   | 0   | 0  | 4   |
| Strongly Disagree          | 0   | 0  | 2   |

13. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about marketing for your business:

|                            | Marketing activities play an important role in attracting customers to my business | Further marketing activities are required to attract more customers to my business | I would like to invest more time and resources into improving the marketing of my business |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Strongly Agree             | 30   | 25   | 16   |
| Agree                      | 18   | 19   | 15   |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4  | 8  | 18   |
| Disagree                   | 1  | 1  | 4  |
| Strongly Disagree          | 1  | 1  | 1  |

14. Your online marketing.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| There is a website for my business                                      | 54 |
| The business website is effective                                       | 38 |
| The business website generates plenty of trade for my business          | 28 |
| The business makes good use of social media marketing                   | 21 |
| The website is e-commerce enabled                                       | 17 |
| An effective website would significantly increase trade for my business | 8  |
| The website requires an upgrade   | 6  |



15. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about events:

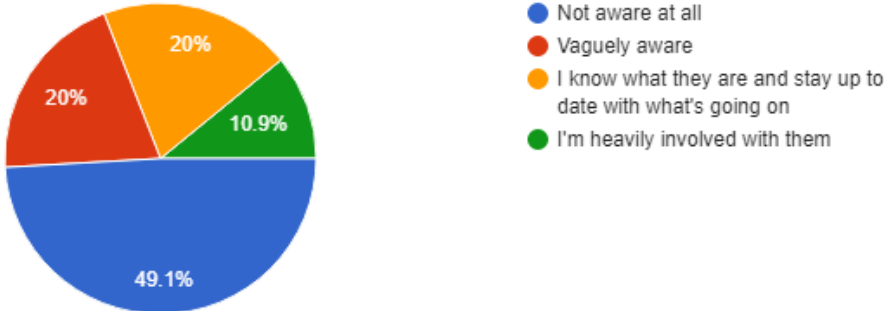
|                            | Events play an important role in attracting customers to the town centre | More events are needed to attract more visitors to the town centre | I would be prepared to get involved with supporting/organising events in the town centre |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Strongly Agree             | 22   | 20   | 11   |
| Agree                      | 26   | 25   | 13   |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 6  | 8  | 20   |
| Disagree                   | 1  | 1  | 7  |
| Strongly Disagree          | 0  | 0  | 3  |

16. Are there any business support or training topics that would be of benefit to your business?

|                              |    |                             |   |
|------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|---|
| IT basics                    | 14 | Data protection             | 6 |
| Sales/customer service       | 10 | Employment/HR               | 5 |
| Business development         | 10 | Food hygiene                | 3 |
| Marketing (on and off line)  | 9  | E-commerce                  | 2 |
| Health and safety            | 7  | Visual merchandising        | 2 |
| Website creation/maintenance | 6  | Finance and accounting      | 2 |
| Leadership and management    | 6  | Selling to other businesses | 1 |
| Winning contracts            | 6  | International trade         | 0 |
| First aid                    | 6  | Other (please specify)      | 0 |

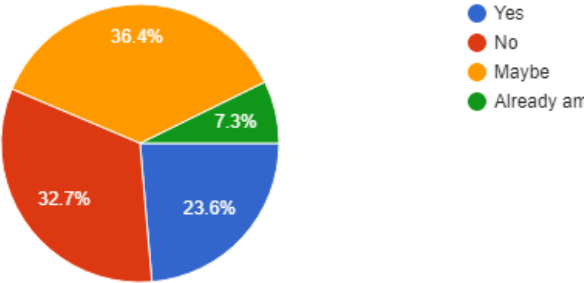
17. Are you aware of Slough Borough Council's town centre management team and the Slough Town Centre Partnership?

55 responses



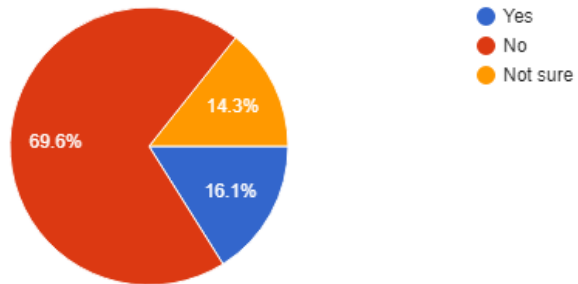
18. Would you like to be part of a group that looks after the interests of your business and your town centre?

55 responses



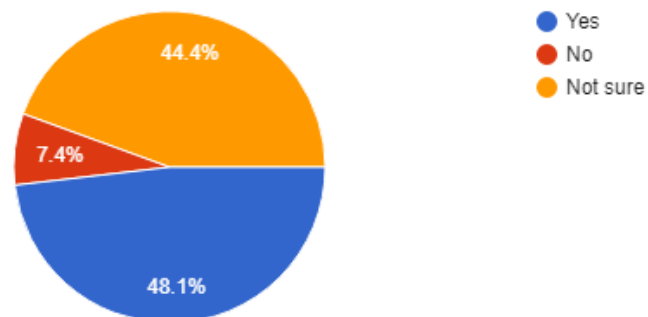
19. Prior to completing this survey, did you know what BIDs (business improvement districts) are and what they do?

56 responses



20. There are around 300 BIDs across the country, they raise sums of money from £100,000 upwards annually ...n centre should be tested at ballot?

54 responses



21. What types of businesses do you think should be included in a possible BID for Slough?

|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| Retail                 | 33 |
| Leisure                | 18 |
| Office                 | 3  |
| Industrial             | 3  |
| Charities              | 7  |
| Public sector          | 2  |
| Other (please specify) |    |
| All businesses         | 19 |

22. If a BID for Slough town centre were to be implemented and it generated approximately £200,000 per year, what three projects do you think would make the biggest difference to your business/the town centre?

Vacant shop wrap around  
 better shopping centre  
 better security and  
 more local events going on  
 Business development for retailers,  
 Businesses to work together and  
 visual arts  
 Cleaning,  
 more litter patrols,  
 dedicated policing and  
 SBC wardens.  
 All projects  
 Parking  
 Traffic  
 town centre shops  
 Improved range of retailers.

More events to bring people to the high street.  
 Policing and SBC presence in town centre.  
 rebuilding town centre and allocate new shops, restaurant and bars  
 The Wheatsheaf  
 More Retail shops, restaurants  
 cheaper rates  
 no yellow lines  
 cheaper pension fees  
 Security,  
 cleanliness,  
 quality of shops and cafes  
 Access to fire safety projects,  
 Fire Training and upgrading alarm systems  
 More branded shops,  
 more parking (Free)  
 more jobs for younger people and

open more businesses

lower rates

Lower Rent,

make it cleaner and safety

Transport,

Leisure,

Shops

more variety shops.

Road works need to be completed quicker

Job Fairs

remove homeless,

tidy up town,

better shops

Restore/improve facades and structures of old high street shops

Give long term vacant shops to charities/youth/Arts organisations on

short term leases to a) fill them and b) Try out which improves business

and why

Commission street art with an interactive Element"

Security and

improve leisure facilities

SECURITY AND

SELECTION OF THE RIGHT SHOPS (RETAILERS)

Cleanliness,

security,

shopping centre

security,

cleanliness,

more branded stores,

better parking

security,

environment,

more shops

events in the town centre block the entrance to shops

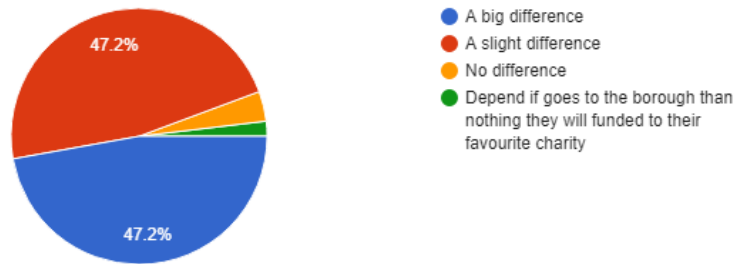
security

more security,

improvement to build new shops

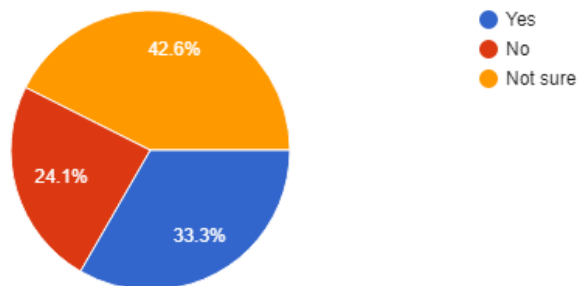
23. If a BID for Slough town centre were to be implemented and it generated approximately £200,000 per year, how ...ference do you think this would make?

53 responses



24. Would you be interested, in principle, in getting more involved with determining the outcomes of the feasi... and possible future BID development?

54 responses



**Appendix 2**

**BID Development: Regulatory Milestones**

