



## **BID Board Meeting Minutes 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026, ASH Restaurant**

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

BID Chairman Mark Wilkinson welcomed all attendees, including two new BID Board members. Victoria Lawton, owner of I Am Yogi, who joins the Board representing the leisure sector, and Sophie Harrison, Branch Manager of NatWest, joining to represent the retail sector.

Attendees (alphabetical order)

- Alison Clack – Cerda Planning
- Andy Dixon – Ash Restaurant
- Cllr David Barrie – Birmingham City Council
- Dagen Thompson – Sutton Coldfield College
- Mark Wilkinson – Coburg Banks
- Michelle Baker – BID Manager
- Sophie Harrison – Natwest
- Victoria Lawton – I Am Yogi

Apologies (alphabetical order)

- Anna Jackson – Sutton Coldfield College
- Cllr Richard Parkin – Sutton Coldfield Town Council
- David Hemming – Burley Browne
- Mark Harris – Harris Accountants
- Ross Symonov – Gracechurch Shopping Centre
- Stephen Nixon – Enoch Evans
- Stephen Roberts – Shackleton

### **2. BID Overview & Financial Position**

BID Manager Michelle Baker provided an overview:

- There are currently 340 BIDs operating across the UK in towns, cities and business parks. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) replaced traditional town centre management models and have been operating in the UK since the first Kingston, London BID was established in January 2005.

- Sutton Coldfield Business Improvement District is now in its 15th year of operation.
- All BIDs operate for a maximum term of five years and must secure a successful renewal ballot to continue for a further five-year term.
- Sutton Coldfield BID has previously secured three successful renewal ballots.
- Sutton Coldfield BID will go to its fourth renewal ballot in Autumn 2026.
- If successful, the new term will run from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2031.

### **BID Levy – Final Year Adjustment**

Birmingham City Council will issue the final annual BID levy bills in March 2026 to approximately 340 businesses within the BID boundary. As this is the final year before ballot:

- The levy period will cover 1 April 2026 – 31 December 2026 (9 months) instead of 12 months.
- This represents a 25% reduction in levy income, reflecting the shorter billing period.
- Delivery in 2026 will reflect this reduced income.

### **Financial Overview**

#### Actual Income April 2025 – March 2026

- BID Levy Income: £241,831.80
- Farmers & Craft Market fees: £7,429.10
- Sponsorship: £1,630.00
- Total Income: £250,890.90

#### Actual Expenditure April 2025 – March 2026

- BCC Collection Fee: £7,624.75
- BCC Reballot Loan: £6,000.00
- Management, Administration & Overheads: £80,905.00
- Marketing & Events: £110,288.39
- Safe & Secure: £8,192.09
- Clean & Green: £2,056.70
- Other Projects: £16,040.77
- Total Expenditure: £231,107.70

Anticipated Income April – December 2026:  
£196,542.02

#### Proposed Expenditure:

- BCC Collection Fee: £6,484.27

- BCC Reballot Loan: £3,000.00
- Management, Administration & Overheads: £68,801.64
- Marketing & Events: £95,903.77
- Safe & Secure: £6,971.96
- Clean & Green: £1,748.78
- Other Projects: £13,631.60
- Total: £196,542.02

### **Risks to Note:**

Levy Clawback: Birmingham City Council clawed back £11,831.00 of uncollected levy in 2025 (reflected in the 2024/25 accounts). The Council was unable to provide detailed data identifying the relevant debtors (business names and property addresses) and deducted the clawed-back amount from the levy due to be transferred to the BID in the following financial year. There remains a risk of further clawback relating to 2025 and 2026 levy collection periods.

Levy Collection Risk: There is no guarantee that the full £196,542.02 levy invoice raised by the City Council will be collected, due to business closures, insolvencies, non-payment or vacancy (despite vacant units being subject to BID levy as with Business Rates). This presents an ongoing income risk to the BID.

Reballot Costs: Provision must be made within budgets to fund reballot-related expenditure, including marketing literature, production of the new Business Plan, and a launch / engagement event ahead of the Autumn 2026 renewal ballot.

### **3. Birmingham City Council Mayor's Market Fund**

Birmingham City Council invited the BID to apply for the WMCA Mayor's Market Fund (Mayor Richard Parker) to support the launch or enhancement of a street market. As the BID established the Sutton Coldfield Farmers & Craft Market three and a half years ago, an application was submitted to enhance the existing market offer.

An award of £20,900 has been confirmed, although the funds have not yet been transferred to the BID. All funding must be used for the Farmers & Craft Market and must be spent by 31 March 2026 to remain eligible and can only be used for initiatives that directly benefit the market. The enhanced Farmers & Craft Market will take place on Sunday 29 March 2026 which is the first market date of 2026.

Funding will cover:

- Bluey & Bingo giant character appearances
- Free children's face painting

- Live music
- Balloon modeller
- Wooden picnic benches (benefitting March–November markets)
- Branded canvas shopper bags
- Market staff uniforms (branded umbrellas, waterproof coats and tops)
- Colourful street bunting (installed from Santander to Aldi and from Caffè Nero to KFC, March–November)

Direct BID Savings as these are initiatives that the BID would ordinarily fund:

- Bunting: £10,000
- Picnic benches: £2,925

The BID is required to measure an increase in footfall and market trader uptake to demonstrate that the funding has positively assisted and enhanced the market.

***Follow up: MB to email DT to ask if students can assist with measuring footfall on the Sunday prior to the event and on the day of the event.***

#### **4. CCTV – Current Position**

Two years ago, the BID formally raised concerns regarding the absence of functioning public CCTV coverage within the town centre. The BID met with MP Andrew Mitchell and informed both Councils and the Police.

- At that time, only three public CCTV cameras covered the town centre, and these had been non-operational for approximately 2–3 years.
- February 2025: A site visit was undertaken with Birmingham City Council (BCC) and their appointed contractor to view the locations of the three obsolete cameras.
- July 2025: Two temporary CCTV cameras were installed by BCC at The Parade and Lower Parade. Whilst this was positive there is no indication of how long they will remain in place.
- December 2025: A formal proposal was received from BCC for the installation of three permanent replacement cameras at a cost of £45,000 + VAT.

A letter of support was provided to the BID by the local Police Sergeant, recognising the importance of reinstating full CCTV coverage.

The BID contacted the Town Council asking if they would consider funding the CCTV. The Town Council responded that funding would not be considered directly by the Council but should instead be pursued through the Pride in Place

Programme, subject to MHCLG approval and associated governance processes. The Town Council administers the Pride in Place Fund.

The BID is currently awaiting confirmation of next steps; however, there is no guarantee that the Pride in Place Programme will fund the three permanent CCTV cameras.

Following ongoing delays and continued concern regarding public safety, the BID issued a press release on 25 February 2026 highlighting the urgent need for CCTV reinstatement. Coverage has since been published by Birmingham Live.

The BID remains committed to championing the installation of permanent public CCTV infrastructure within the town centre.

#### **5. BID Networking at the Arbour Club**

The BID held a professional services networking event at The Arbour club above Silver Tree Bakery on 3<sup>rd</sup> February and it was well received by BID members. The BID will organise more networking events throughout 2026.

***Follow up: MB to confirm a date with AD for a BID Networking Brunch at Ash Restaurant.***

#### **6. BID Valentine's Globe**

On Saturday 14 February, the BID funded and installed a Giant Valentine's Globe within Gracechurch Centre as a free shopper engagement event and photo opportunity. The event was well received by those in attendance and provided a positive activity for existing visitors. However, it is unlikely to be repeated in future, as it did not generate any measurable increase in additional footfall, despite creating a pleasant in-centre experience.

#### **7. BID Bag Giveaway**

- 200 BID branded tote bags 'The Sutton Coldfield Shopping Bag' were distributed at the Valentine's event
- Additional branded bags to be distributed at the 29 March Farmers Market (funded by Mayor's Market Fund)

#### **8. Harvey Norman**

Michelle and Alison met with Mark Dennis, Head of Marketing for Harvey Norman UK. Key points from the meeting:

- There is no confirmed opening date for the new store at this stage.

- Their opening times of the store will likely mirror House of Fraser.
- Free click and collect parking for customers.
- Harvey Norman is confirmed as a Town Hall and SCT Football Club sponsor.
- The company does not currently operate stores in town centre locations.
- We asked them to join the BID Board to represent National Retail.
- A further meeting is scheduled for 8th April with the Managing Director, BID Manager and two members of the BID Board.

## **9. BID Priorities 2026 (April – December)**

In a ballot year, consistency is crucial. The BID will focus on delivering established, highly visible projects rather than introducing significant new initiatives in its final year of the current term. Alongside this, comprehensive business consultation in preparation for the rebalot will be a key priority.

### ***Vibrant & Green***

- Fourth year of Parade bunting install dates 16–19 March (Santander–Aldi & Caffè Nero–KFC)
- Public art mural on Mill Street (permission granted by BCC) following the success of the public art on the 6 utility boxes
- BID plaques for the three BID-funded litter bins installed on Lichfield Road and Birmingham Road
- Maintain planting (Birmingham Road & Lower Parade)
- Window vinyl installations on vacant units (e.g. former O2 site on The Parade)

### ***Events***

- 9 Farmers & Craft Markets (March–November)
- 2 Food Festivals (10–12 April & 11–13 September)
- Easter Event – Meet the Easter Bunny
- “An Evening with Professor Carl Chinn” – hosted by The Rhodehouse
- Summer family-friendly event (e.g. Saturday car show)
- Halloween Pumpkin Patch
- Annual Business Speaking Event (4th year – following Mary Portas, Sara Davies, Deborah Meaden) – due to budget this year this will be replaced with smaller events with key speakers on topics such as AI
- Christmas Market & Events (subject to ballot outcome)

### ***Business Support***

- Newsletter frequency review (monthly or bi-monthly)
- Bi-monthly networking events
- Explore Mill Street parking restriction extension
- Update BID Food & Drink Guide and distribute to residents (15,000 previously)

- Launch new BID Employee Discount Card
- Online business directory
- Continue to champion for CCTV

### ***BID Reballot***

- Locus support
- BID Business Plan 2027–2031 design and print
- BID launch event

## **10. Unloading on the Parade**

Michelle Baker informed the Board that Ross Symonov at Gracechurch shopping centre had raised concerns about difficulties letting units due to restrictions on unloading times on The Parade. Although there is an unloading bay outside Caffè Nero, businesses have reported enforcement issues if they don't use that and park elsewhere on The Parade to unload stock, which Silver Tree Bakery also highlighted to MB last week.

Birmingham City Council confirmed to MB last week that only a very limited number of exemptions exist under the current Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), applying solely to specific properties (from Santander to Trespass). No permits have been issued in recent years, and no additional permits can be granted without a revised TRO.

Any amendment to the TRO would cost approximately £10,000+, take 6–12 months to implement, and require public consultation. The Council noted that changes would need to balance business access needs with maintaining the area as largely vehicle-free.

## **11. Round Table Updates**

- Birmingham City Council – David Barrie provided an update
- Sutton Coldfield College – Dagen Thompson provided an update on the student debating event on 26 March and careers day on 23 March.

***Follow up: MB to circulate the date of the college careers day to Board members so they can participate.***

## **12. Any Other Business**

In response to Andy Dixon's request for an update regarding the indoor market closure, Michelle Baker confirmed the following:

- The hairdresser and barber are now sharing a single premises in Gracechurch

- The eyebrow specialist is sharing space within an existing business in Gracechurch
- The tailor has opened its own standalone shop within Gracechurch
- The nail technician has relocated to Mere Green
- Six traders have not yet secured alternative premises

**Meeting end.**