

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Coleraine Business Improvement District Levy Administration</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Finance Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>24 October 2019</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For information</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Innovation and Transformation
Outcome	The Council will continuously examine and introduce ways to provide services in more accessible and efficient ways
Lead Officer	Chief Finance Officer

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	Income Generating
Included in Current Year Estimates	<b>YES/NO</b>
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

## **1.1 Background**

Business Improvement Districts (BIDS) are business led partnerships which are created through a ballot process to deliver additional services to local businesses.

They can be a powerful tool for directly involving local businesses in local activities and allow the business community and local authorities to work together to improve the local trading environment.

## **1.2 Detail**

Under the enabling legislation regarding BIDS the local Council is designated as the billing and collection authority for the BID levy which will fund the programme. This will involve raising an invoice to each business and the collection of the levy as set out in the invoice including, if necessary, any debt collection actions against defaulters. The collection process will be handled in line with Council's current Debt Management Policy. Each levy is calculated based on the rateable value of a business' premises the data for each property being held by the BID office. Invoices will be issued on a pre-determined date with the necessary data regarding all businesses being provided to Council finance staff in advance of that date to allow processing. Once the invoices have been issued Council will collect the levy from each business in the same manner as it would from any other customer of Council. Once collected the levy will at prescribed points in time be paid over to the BID team,

## **1.3 Recent developments**

The legislation provides for the ability of Council to make a charge for this service and Council recently agreed that a charge be made for years 2 to 5 of the current BID programme.

As this is a service being provided by the Council's finance department we act on the instructions of the BID Company who are the legal owners of the debt raised through these invoices. At a recent meeting with representatives of the BID Company Council staff have been instructed to progress with the collection of any outstanding debt remaining from the first round of invoicing which was issued last November. It should be noted that the second round of invoices are due to be issued very shortly therefore it is important to try and clear any backlog from the previous cycle.

The recovery process will entail in the first instance with a final reminder being issued to all debtors, this notice will also contain a timeframe for responding and the consequences of not responding.

The purpose of this short report is to inform members in advance that this will be happening given the amount of publicity this initiative has received in the last year. A notice will be placed in the local press during week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019 to notify any businesses involved in the BID that this process will be happening and the final reminders will be issued week commencing 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019.