

***Report On The Feasibility Of A Business  
Improvement District (BID) For the Rassau  
and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates, Ebbw  
Vale***

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

***On Behalf Of Blaenau Gwent County  
Borough Council***

***February 2019***

REVIVE  
THRIVE



## **1.0 Executive Summary**

In autumn 2018, Revive & Thrive was commissioned by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to work with them on the production of a feasibility study for the implementation of a Business Improvement District (BID) for the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates. Dependent upon the outcome of the feasibility stage, the commission was to then see the BID through to ballot and subsequent BID Company set-up, if the ballot is successful.

The funding for the project has come from a Welsh Government allocation of £270,000 to support the establishment of up to ten new BIDs across Wales and, if it is successful at ballot, the Rassau and Tafarnaubach BID would become the first industrial BID in Wales.

In developing this report, the Revive & Thrive project team has conducted face-to-face, telephone and online surveys with businesses across the two estates. This has been complemented by a series of email requests and an introductory presentation on BIDs, to which all businesses were invited.

In order to establish the feasibility or otherwise of a BID on the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates, two fundamental principles have needed consideration:

- 1) That a BID for the estates 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 the estates 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 for the industrial estates would be financially feasible. This report also sets out the outcomes of the business survey, in which over 60% of respondents agreed that a BID for the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates should be tested at ballot<sup>1</sup>.

These two considerations suggest that a BID for the industrial estates is sufficiently viable for the business community, in partnership with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Revive & Thrive to progress to a detailed consultation and development phase, with a ballot likely to take place in late 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 will deliver
- How the BID will operate

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<sup>1</sup> 62% of 21 respondents agreed that a BID should be tested at ballot. 24% (5) disagreed and 14% (3) were unsure.

## **2.0 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. 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 (these represent around 10% of the total number of BIDs in the UK).

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 BID areas, 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, the exception being on industrial estates where there can be fewer levy-paying businesses, with lower rateable values. The highest levy percentage that we have identified is on an industrial estate in Scotland, where the levy is set at 3%.

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**

Many industrial BIDs have similar thematic areas of work, although projects delivered under them may look significantly different:

- **Marketing and promotional activities** – a website, inward investment, gateway signage, etc.
- **Car parking improvements** – better public transport, car sharing initiatives
- **Public event management and development** – not a priority for industrial BIDs
- **Streetscene improvements** – improved quality of roads, better lighting
- **Public safety and security initiatives** – CCTV, crime reduction partnerships, roving security
- **Business cost reduction projects** – collective trade agreements, better broadband
- **Local priority improvement actions** – litter, accessibility, staff recruitment, retention and development

We have identified 28 other BIDs across England and Scotland that are classified as “industrial” BIDs. These represent either traditional industrial estates or business parks. See section 3.0 below for further information on these BIDs.

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, in this instance, the two industrial estates of Rassau and Tafarnaubach.

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 the area it represents 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 place 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.

Any early challenge for the next stage of the BID development will be to establish a BID Steering Group as this group would have the responsibility of making final decisions on the content of the BID proposals, with support from other businesses and Blaenau Gwent Council and Revive & Thrive.

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

### 3.0 Industrial BIDs Across the UK

<u>BID</u>	<u>Reg ion</u>	<u>Website</u>	<u>ter m</u>	<u>heredita ments</u>	<u>levy rate</u>	<u>levy incom e</u>
<u>Longhill &amp; Sandgate</u>	<u>NE</u>	<a href="http://www.investinhartlepool.com/">http://www.investinhartlepool.com/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>220</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>£600,000.00</u>
<u>Manor Royal (Crawley, Gatwick)</u>	<u>L</u>	<a href="http://www.manorroyal.org/">http://www.manorroyal.org/</a>	<u>2</u>	<u>514</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>£400,000.00</u>
<u>Brackmills</u>	<u>EM</u>	<a href="http://www.brackmillsindustrial-estate.co.uk/">http://www.brackmillsindustrial-estate.co.uk/</a>	<u>2</u>	-	<u>1</u>	<u>£328,000.00</u>
<u>Langthwaite Business Park</u>	<u>NE</u>	<a href="http://www.rcp21.com/index.php?page=langthwaite-business-park-business-improvement-district-bid">http://www.rcp21.com/index.php?page=langthwaite-business-park-business-improvement-district-bid</a>	<u>2</u>	-	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£216,195.00</u>
<u>Beddington</u>	<u>L</u>	<a href="http://www.beddingtonforbusiness.co.uk/">http://www.beddingtonforbusiness.co.uk/</a>	<u>1</u>	<u>230</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>£190,000.00</u>
<u>Segensworth Industrial Estates</u>	<u>S</u>	<a href="http://www.sbfl.co.uk/">http://www.sbfl.co.uk/</a>	<u>3</u>	-	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£190,000.00</u>
<u>Blackburn EDZ</u>	<u>NW</u>	<a href="http://www.blackburnedzbid.co.uk/">http://www.blackburnedzbid.co.uk/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>260</u>	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£161,700.00</u>
<u>Astmoor</u>	<u>NW</u>	<a href="http://www.astmoor.co.uk/astmoor-bid/">http://www.astmoor.co.uk/astmoor-bid/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>163</u>	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£160,000.00</u>
<u>Riverside</u>	<u>L</u>	<a href="http://www.londonriversidebid.co.uk/">http://www.londonriversidebid.co.uk/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>299</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>£140,000.00</u>
<u>Ferndown and Uddens</u>	<u>SW</u>	<a href="http://www.ferndownanduddens.co.uk/">http://www.ferndownanduddens.co.uk/</a>	<u>1</u>	-	<u>1.25</u>	<u>£120,000.00</u>
<u>Witham</u>	<u>SE</u>	<a href="http://www.withamindustrialwatch.co.uk/">http://www.withamindustrialwatch.co.uk/</a>	<u>2</u>	<u>350</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>£119,000.00</u>
<u>Marlow Globe Park</u>	<u>SE</u>	<a href="http://www.marlowchamber.com/globe-park-bid/">http://www.marlowchamber.com/globe-park-bid/</a>	<u>1</u>	-	<u>1.25</u>	<u>£118,250.00</u>
<u>Hainault</u>	<u>L</u>	<a href="http://www.hainaultbusinesspark.com/">http://www.hainaultbusinesspark.com/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>197</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>£105,750.00</u>
<u>Clackmannanshire</u>	<u>S</u>	<a href="http://www.clacksfirst.co.uk">http://www.clacksfirst.co.uk</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>240</u>	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£100,000.00</u>
<u>Newham (Cornwall)</u>	<u>SW</u>	<a href="http://www.newhambid.co.uk/">http://www.newhambid.co.uk/</a>	<u>2</u>	<u>118</u>	<u>2.5</u>	<u>£84,000.00</u>
<u>Garratt Park</u>	<u>L</u>	<a href="http://www.garrattbusinesspark.com/">http://www.garrattbusinesspark.com/</a>	<u>2</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>£60,000.00</u>
<u>Willow Lane</u>	<u>L</u>	<a href="http://www.willowlane.org.uk/">http://www.willowlane.org.uk/</a>	<u>2</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£60,000.00</u>
<u>Cowpen</u>	<u>NE</u>	<a href="http://www.cowpenindustrialestate.com/">http://www.cowpenindustrialestate.com/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>£57,500.00</u>
<u>Argall</u>	<u>L</u>	<a href="http://www.argallbid.co.uk/">http://www.argallbid.co.uk/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>350</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>£55,000.00</u>
<u>Lancing</u>	<u>SE</u>	<a href="http://www.lancingbusinesspark.co.uk/">http://www.lancingbusinesspark.co.uk/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>159</u>	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£47,811.00</u>
<u>Halebank</u>	<u>NW</u>	<a href="http://www.bidintel.co.uk/halebank-industrial-estate-bid/">http://www.bidintel.co.uk/halebank-industrial-estate-bid/</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£47,000.00</u>
<u>KIPPA BID</u>	<u>L</u>	<a href="http://www.kippabidltd.co.uk/">http://www.kippabidltd.co.uk/</a>	<u>3</u>	-	<u>Ban ded</u>	<u>£45,000.00</u>

<u>Vale of Leven</u>	<u>S</u>	<a href="http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/business/regeneration/vale-of-leven-industrial-estate/">http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/business/regeneration/vale-of-leven-industrial-estate/</a>	<u>cea</u> <u>sed</u>	-	<u>Ban</u> <u>ded</u>	<u>£34,20</u> <u>0.00</u>
<u>South Wimbledon</u>	<u>L</u>	-	<u>1</u>	<u>186</u>	-	<u>Not</u> <u>Known</u>
<u>Winsford</u>	<u>NW</u>	<a href="http://www.winsford1-5.co.uk">http://www.winsford1-5.co.uk</a>	<u>3</u>	<u>170</u>	<u>Ban</u> <u>ded</u>	<u>Not</u> <u>Known</u>
<u>Cater</u>	<u>SW</u>	<a href="http://www.caterbusinesspark.co.uk/">http://www.caterbusinesspark.co.uk/</a>	<u>2</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Not</u> <u>Known</u>
<u>Gadbrook Park</u>	<u>NW</u>	<a href="http://www.gadbrookpark.com/content.php?pageID=7">http://www.gadbrookpark.com/content.php?pageID=7</a>	<u>2</u>	-	-	<u>Not</u> <u>Known</u>
<u>Linlithgow Mill Road</u>	<u>S</u>	<a href="http://www.linlithgowbid.com/">http://www.linlithgowbid.com/</a>	<u>1</u>	-	-	<u>Not</u> <u>Known</u>
<u>Penrith</u>	<u>NE</u>	-	<u>1</u>	-	-	<u>Not</u> <u>Known</u>

#### **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**
- **An understanding of the issues on the estates and the challenges faced by businesses operating there**
- **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 industrial estates, their attitude towards a BID and their willingness to engage further in the BID process**

The key findings of the survey were:

- Over three quarters of businesses who responded (76%) are independent businesses, with the majority involved in some kind of manufacturing process
- Business confidence on the estates is generally good, with only a small number expecting trade to be difficult this year (4%)
- Over half of the respondents (52%) thought that trading conditions on the estates have declined over the last five years, with business overheads (primarily rent and rates), staffing issues and the environmental quality being the major issues affecting their business' performance
- 38% of respondents had no knowledge of BIDs prior to completing the survey
- The top 10 most important issues facing businesses on the industrial estates were:
  - 1) Rent/rates
  - 2) Staff recruitment and retention
  - 3) Shortage of skilled labour
  - 4) Quality of the local environment
  - 5) High energy bills
  - 6) Level of trade
  - 7) Security issues
  - 8) Competition from elsewhere
  - 9) Quality/size of premises
  - 10) Inability to find time to develop the business
- Issues such as European regulations, car parking and access to business advice and support were deemed to be less of a barrier to operating a successful business on the estates
- The only aspects of the industrial estates that more respondents viewed as good rather than bad were safety during the day and the availability of staff and visitor parking
- Safety during the evenings and at night and the level of street cleansing and litter 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) Improved street cleaning
  - 2) Mobile Security Patrols at night
  - 3) Better lighting
  - 4) Increased CCTV coverage
  - 5) Improved public transport links

- 6) Improved internet speeds
- 7) Improved public spaces
- 8) A website to promote the estates
- 9) Access to training for staff
- 10) Better networking opportunities
- 11) Mobile security patrols during the day
- 12) Enhanced gateways to the industrial estates
- 13) Better representation with and to the public sector
- 14) Maintenance of border fencing
- 15) More/better car parking
- 16) Improve condition of the roads



## **5.0 Boundary Options**

At this stage of a BID development project, BID boundary options would be investigated and proposed with the proviso that these would continue to be refined and adjusted until the BID business plan is finalised.

However, for the proposed BID for Rassau and Tafarnaubach industrial estates, the boundary is already clear and distinct and, whilst this will not ultimately be finalised until later on in the year, the natural boundaries of the two estates will form the boundary of the BID.

The BID business plan will need to contain a comprehensive list of all streets falling within the BID area and will need to be clearly identified on a map so that it is completely clear to businesses which BID area they are being asked to vote on.

## **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 the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates, a proposed levy of up to 1.5% would fall well within these guidelines, although a levy of up to 2% *should* be considered.

Whilst not currently deemed as “best practice” a banded levy may also be considered. These are more common in industrial BIDs given the smaller number of hereditaments and limited range of rateable values.

There are currently no hereditaments within the estates for whom a maximum cap needs to be considered as a 2% levy charged on the largest hereditament would result in an annual levy liability of under £8,000. This, though, will remain subject to negotiation until the final levy rates are set.

There are though, a number of businesses with rateable values within the proposed BID area for whom it is not cost-effective for Blaenau Gwent Council to collect any BID levy. If the BID is to progress to ballot, the BID Development Steering Group will need to consider either exemptions for these businesses or minimum annual payments.

Based on these scenarios, levy income for the BID would range between £53,000<sup>2</sup> and £125,000 per annum.

A banded levy for the estates could look like this:

<b>RV</b>	<b>Number of businesses</b>	<b>banding</b>	<b>highest and lowest % rates per band</b>
u5k	7		
5k-10k	10	£200	4.0-2.4
10k-15k	17	£365	3.7-2.5
15k-25k	13	£500	3.2-2.0
25k-35k	10	£750	2.9-2.2
35k-50k	3	£1,000	2.5-2.2
50k-75k	13	£1,500	3.0-2.2
75k-100k	5	£2,000	2.0-2.6
100k-200k	11	£3,000	2.9-1.7
o200k	5	£7,500	3.4-1.9
	<b>94</b>	<b>£125,205</b>	

A further consideration/complication for the BID Steering Group would be the rated wind turbine sites across the estates. These are not strictly commercial premises but they have a financial value to add to the BID's potential income.

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<sup>2</sup> A 1% levy would generate £53,000, at 2% income would therefore be in the region of £106,000

All of the considerations set out above, including various percentage options will be fully refined and consulted upon with the business community on the estates 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 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 BID should generate an additional 10-20% income as a minimum by the end of its first five-year term.

## **7.0 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 the quality of the public environment, security, staffing issues and business overheads.

These are thematic areas that are common to existing industrial BIDs in Scotland and England and whilst some of these are longer-term, more complex issues to solve, there are many examples of where BIDs are delivering enhanced security and business crime reduction partnerships, training programmes and business support and costs reduction initiatives to businesses on industrial estates and in business parks.

Projects relating to the public realm, dealing with road surfacing, litter, lighting, etc., will necessarily be delivered in partnership with the local authority, but a BID gives businesses representation and authority to do this.

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

- 1). Business Costs Reduction
- 2). Crime reduction and security
- 3). People
- 4). Representation

Specific projects will need to be developed within each thematic area and will need to be done in conjunction with businesses on the industrial estates as the BID business plan is refined.

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

## **8.0 Regulatory Milestones**

For a BID development to proceed to ballot, there are a number of statutory milestones that must be met:

- Notification to the Welsh 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

## **9.0 Impacts on Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

Inevitably, a BID development on the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates will have a number of impacts on Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, both financial and in terms of resources, in both the immediate and longer terms.

There are very few, if any, properties owned by the Council within the BID area. This means that levy payments will be low or zero, and if there are any such properties at the time of ballot, they will represent one vote per hereditament for the council.

Additionally, there are the costs associated with developing a BID. These will vary 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 Blaenau Gwent County 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 several service areas within Blaenau Gwent County 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>3</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>4</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 the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates, and therefore the Council, should only be viewed as one which brings a positive impact to the estates.

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<sup>3</sup> Now the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

<sup>4</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)

## **10.0 Next Steps**

To progress the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates 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

## **11.0 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. engagement
2. maximising the levy
3. council processes
4. failed ballot
5. start-up

Engagement & Consultation – It will be vital that the majority of businesses on the estates 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 the Council, Revive & Thrive, the BID Development Steering Group, BID Champions and others.

Council Processes – support for the BID will need to be secured at the highest level within Blaenau Gwent County 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

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 Rassau and Tafarnaubach, the Council and BID proposers will need to consider alternative arrangements for future support to the business community on the estates 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.



## **12.0 Recommendations**

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

- Develop the BID on the assumption of either a 2% or banded levy to be imposed on all hereditaments with a rateable value, including a minimum payment level
- 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 100 business premises being part of the BID
- An annual BID levy income in the region of £106,000 - £126,000
- A total BID levy income over five years of approximately £530,000 - £630,000

