



BELFAST ONE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

YEAR ONE ANNUAL REPORT
2016-17

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CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME



I am delighted to welcome you to the first Annual Report from Belfast One Business Improvement District.

Year One has seen our business plan come to life. Our first three cost saving initiatives have been launched, we've delivered three major advertising campaigns to drive footfall to the city and welcomed our Ambassadors onto the streets.

All Year One achievements are laid out in this report as we look ahead to another year of success for Belfast City Centre.

The Belfast One area consists of a diverse range of businesses from professional services to retail and hospitality. Our Promote, Enhance and Support Working Groups are made up of representatives from all of these sectors, ensuring each and every business sees a return on their levy.

Year Two promises to be another exciting year as we launch new projects and initiatives to benefit your business and our City Centre. We will continue to collectively deliver our vision working with our key public and private sector partners to transform Belfast City Centre into a clean and safe bustling twenty-four hour culture full of

people loving it.

To hold the position of Chairman throughout the past year has been a great honour and one that I have enjoyed thoroughly. I would also like to thank the Belfast One team and the Board for their enthusiasm and dedication to improving our City Centre.

Chris Suitor,
Belfast One Chairman

BELFAST ONE BOARD

Chris Suitor	Suitor Menswear
Michelle Greeves	Victoria Square
John Lunn	Lunns Jewellers
Paul McMahon	CastleCourt
Bob McCoubrey	Mourne Seafood Bar
Wilson Walker	NITHCO
Liz Kerr	Boots
Colin McGreevy	Marks and Spencer
Stephen Mewha	House of Fraser
Lisa Toland	Belfast City Council
Nigel Skillen	Diamond & Skillen Accountants
Michael Stewart	Bar Czar Limited
Geraldine Duggan	Belfast City Centre Management
Andrew Irvine	East Belfast Mission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Belfast One officially opened for business in April 2016 and since then the team have had a productive year working on projects across our key areas of Promote, Enhance and Support and progressing on initiatives set out in our five year business plan.

We are passionate about our City Centre and want to create a high quality experience for every visitor, be the destination of choice in Northern Ireland and attract new investors and businesses. The University of Ulster development is now well under way and with other projects in planning we're seeing an exciting regeneration of Belfast.

Footfall into the City Centre has increased by 2.4% over the last 12 months and we're looking forward to seeing that rise in the coming year through our marketing campaigns which will drive people into Belfast through promotion of the great food, shopping and culture our City Centre has to offer.

To monitor results of our campaigns and projects we have invested in five footfall cameras in the city, along with conducting business and visitor market research surveys. The results of both are available to each levy paying business in the BID area on a monthly basis.

Our overall objective is to create a City Centre that is a clean, safe and attractive place for people to visit, work and live and that is easily accessible from anywhere in Northern Ireland.

As part of our Promote project this year we were a key partner in one of the biggest advertising campaigns Belfast has had to date, alongside Visit Belfast, Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce and Belfast City Council. We're delighted to report that there were over 403,000 visits to Belfast over the Christmas period.

Our Year One Support projects included launching

our cost saving initiatives for businesses with ISL Waste Management, CIRCA Energy and Bank of Ireland Merchant Services. These have proven to be a real success with participating businesses reporting significant savings. Three further cost saving initiatives are planned for Year Two.

Our flagship Enhance project in Year One was the introduction of our four Ambassadors in the Belfast One area, whose primary role is to greet tourists and share information on the highlights in our City. They also report on antisocial behaviour and environmental issues and engage with businesses.

Belfast One is run by businesses, for businesses, and we want to encourage all levy payers to get involved through our working groups and by giving us feedback.

We're very much looking forward to embarking on our second year and progressing with the delivery of our five year business plan. If you would like to discuss Belfast One further please do not hesitate to contact a member of the team.

Bronagh Lawlor,
Managing Director (interim)



YEAR ONE IN FIGURES

COST SAVING



3 initiatives launched

AMBASSADORS



16,060 visitor welcomes

1,226 business visits

SAFER CITY



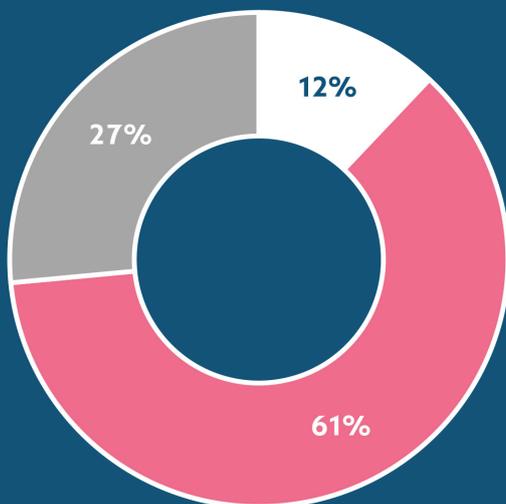
2 dedicated PSNI officers

1,289 business liaisons



338 retailers subscribed to Retail Crime Watch

BELFAST VISITOR REGIONS



■ Belfast Metropolitan Area ■ Rest of NI ■ Outside NI

DIGITAL MARKETING



13,500 website visits

31,000 page views



8,300 likes

2,470,000 reach

MARKET RESEARCH



1,100 consumer surveys

600 business surveys



5 footfall cameras installed

MARKETING CAMPAIGNS



530,000 trips generated

£42.8m spend generated

FOOTFALL

2.4% increase year-on-year



■ 2015-16 ■ 2016-17

PROMOTE

Promoting Belfast City Centre to increase footfall for business, retail and hospitality



WEBSITE

The new look website, BelfastOne.co.uk, officially launched in late September 2016. The website sections include: What's On, Blogs and Getting Here, as well as a members section that includes information about Belfast One, project updates and downloads.

The Shop, Do, Dine businesses directory will launch in Year Two and businesses have been invited to create their own business page on BelfastOne.co.uk and add their events and offers to the What's On section.

In the six months since its launch the website has had 13,500 visitors and 31,000 page views.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Belfast One Facebook page launched in August 2016 with a series of competitions with 6,500 entries. Likes have grown steadily over the

past six months and the page now has over 8,300 likes with posts reaching 2,471,455 people from August 2016 to March 2017.

To further promote Belfast we have produced three social media videos to showcase what the city has to offer and these videos have had just over 200,000 views to date.

Our Twitter account continues to have a business focus with over 800 followers and regular engagement across the Belfast business community.

BRANDING

In September 2016 Belfast One rebranded to better represent the city with the strapline 'Different Days' for our consumer marketing. This represents the diverse offer our City Centre has that can make every day you spend in it a different day, as well as how Belfast is a reenergised city.



PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Following the rebrand of Belfast One we ran various promotional campaigns, as well as collaborating with wider City Centre partners to maximise our budgets.

Autumn

In partnership with Visit Belfast the Find Your Belfast campaign was launched in September 2016 with a focus on retail and eating out. This addressed one of the key Promote goals to drive footfall into the Belfast One area. The campaign delivered fantastic results, generating 138,000 trips to Belfast and £10.2 million spend.

Christmas

We continued to work together with Visit Belfast on this year's Belfast Christmas marketing campaign. With additional investment from Belfast City Council and Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce the combined overall budget was £350,000, making it one of the

largest campaigns the city has seen to date.

The campaign went live in mid-November, targeting consumers in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland across TV, email marketing, social media, radio, outdoor advertising and PR to raise the profile of Belfast as the destination of choice in Northern Ireland at Christmas.

Results showed the campaign generated over 400,000 trips and £32.6 million spend in the city. In addition Belfast One ran smaller targeted campaigns including a Q Radio competition, a Christmas social media video, parking campaigns and distribution of Christmas shopper bags across the City Centre.

Alive After Five

Alive After Five launched in mid-March 2017 to encourage people who work in Belfast to stay in the City Centre after work to eat out, go late night shopping or listen to some live music before they go home. The campaign spanned across outdoor,

Five-year plan to see £5 million extra fun

THE company behind Belfast's Business Improvement District (BID) has unveiled a strategy it claims will deliver £5 million of additional funding to Belfast city centre over the next five years.

"Belfast One" has set out a mission to "Promote, enhance and support Northern Ireland's capital city".

The organisation, which has the support of the business community, will have a say in how the city is marketed, maintained and managed.

The group's managing director Clare Maguire said: "Our overarching goal is to make Belfast the very best it can possibly be, by promoting enhancing and supporting what is already in place, and what makes it such a great city to work, live and do business in."

"The next few months will see us begin to roll out our strategy which is unique to Belfast."

"We have funded a scheme of footfall ambassadors to visit businesses, O of Trade at City Centre



more focus on the city centre bus.

"We will support to them more waste and centre."

"It will be a better at priced ser power and we are consultants at the mo"

"By work fast City Chamber Visit Belamunities a will make business I

Belfast shops in £5m bid to attract even more spenders

BY RACHEL MARTIN

It such a great city to work, live and do business in."

"The next few months will see us begin to roll out a new marketing strategy which will showcase the city's unique offering and help us drive footfall."

The Belfast BID will install several footfall cameras to monitor the number of shoppers hitting Belfast's high street. The data will then be shown to members who can use the information to gauge how their sales have performed in relation to footfall.

Ms Maguire said: "Sometimes you will have large numbers of people in the city centre who aren't necessarily there to shop."

"They could be there for an event or a concert, or another reason, but it's a way for retailers to judge whether they have been able to capitalise on that and consider how they can in future."

"There are a number of different challenges for retailers in the

A £5m improvement scheme which includes cameras to monitor shopper numbers is aiming to boost trade in Belfast city centre.

Clare Maguire, the head of the body striving to improve Belfast's retail trade, said boosting footfall is the key to reviving the area.

Belfast One, the company behind Belfast's Business Improvement District (BID), was formed in April 2016.

In October, 84% of Belfast companies in the BIDs area voted 'yes' to the concept, which will cost city centre traders 1.5% of their business's rateable value.

The body aims to promote Northern Ireland's capital city.

Ms Maguire said the scheme would provide £5m to the city centre over the next five years. It's drawn from contributions made by traders who have joined the BID scheme.



Plans to install footfall cameras in Belfast city centre.

New Ambassadors welcome visitors to Belfast

A partnership between Belfast One – The Belfast City Centre Improvement District – and The Welcome People has unveiled four Belfast Ambassadors aiming to enhance and improve the visitor experience in the city centre.

In a few weeks, the team has given a warm welcome to 2,000 visitors, a figure set to rise over the festive period.

The Welcome People already operate in 21 other cities and towns across the UK, and the partnership with Belfast One is their first venture in Northern Ireland.

The team of four ambassadors provide a warm welcome to visitors, workers and residents in the city centre

and offer help and advice about Belfast and what's on offer, as well as a direct contact for local businesses. In the run up to Christmas they have also been spreading festive cheer across the city centre by handing out free Belfast One bags to shoppers.

Since taking to the streets in mid-November the ambassadors have already greeted thousands of visitors in the latest initiative from Belfast One aimed at enhancing everyone's experience of the city, as well as the amount of time they spend there.

Belfast One chose The Welcome People after a competitive tendering process, and are impressed with the

progress so far.

"We are delighted to have this partnership with the Welcome People," said Clare Maguire, Managing Director of Belfast One said.

"The ambassador initiative is the latest step in providing a superb experience for everyone coming to this great city."

"They are knowledgeable, fun and can guide people to the top spots for shopping, eating, socialising or just where to hang out to enjoy the city's legendary craic."

David Miller from The Welcome People said he was delighted to join forces with Belfast One to support continuing development of

Belfast One unveils new BID brand

Belfast One, the city's business improvement district (BID), has unveiled its new brand with the slogan 'Belfast One - Different'.

The new brand is part of the company's strategy to get Belfast City Centre to become a more vibrant and exciting place to visit.

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Clare Maguire, director of Belfast One, with other staff members.

Looking for a Small Business Current Account? Apply online at danskebank.co.uk/smallbusiness



The ambassador scheme is the latest strategic partnership from Belfast One.

online and social media advertising, with What's On guides, social media videos and more. Businesses were encouraged to get involved by displaying Alive After Five window stickers and submitting their offers to be promoted on the website and social media.

The campaign had over 6 million consumer impacts with 13,000 Alive After Five page views and Facebook reach of 531,000 with 18,000 engagements.

MARKET RESEARCH AND FOOTFALL

June 2016 saw the first Belfast One market research surveys take place in the City Centre.

The data gathered from this continuous market research provides valuable insights into the views of customers and businesses and has helped to shape our strategy to make Belfast the number one destination for the people of Northern Ireland.

Belfast One has also worked with Springboard to install five footfall cameras across the Belfast One area. This data provides insights into how the City Centre is performing, as well as the impact of marketing campaigns and events.

The results of this market research are now shared with all Belfast One levy payers on a quarterly basis and footfall reports are circulated once a month.

PRESS AND PR

In the past 12 months several key business and consumer stories have been picked up by local and regional online and printed media. Our PR campaigns have delivered 38 articles with a total advertising value equivalent of £24,421. Additionally, extensive PR coverage of the Find Your Belfast This Christmas campaign generated an advertising value equivalent of £99,000.

ENHANCE

Developing and delivering projects that enhance our City Centre for visitors, businesses and workers



AMBASSADORS

November saw our Belfast One Ambassadors officially hit the streets of the City Centre! The four ambassadors act as a direct contact for Belfast One businesses and provide a warm welcome to visitors. They have fast become the faces of Belfast City Centre.

Since November 2016 the ambassadors have welcomed 16,060 visitors and are fast becoming the face of Belfast City Centre.

The ambassadors also act as a point of contact for every levy payer and visit each business at least once a quarter, as well as delivering newsletters and informing businesses of upcoming Belfast One events and marketing campaigns.

They liaise with the PSNI City Centre Beat officers on issues such as anti social behaviour while also reporting litter, graffiti and general environmental issues to the relevant agency.

SAFER CITY

PSNI City Centre Beat

Belfast One has become the principle funder of the PSNI City Centre Beat Officers.

They provide a dedicated PSNI resource to police issues that directly affect businesses within the Belfast One area. This scheme has been run successfully by Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce since 2005.

Every Belfast One business has received an information leaflet and a business card for the officers so they can contact them directly.

In the past 12 months the City Centre Beat officers have carried out 1,289 business liaisons, demonstrating the huge benefit that they offer for Belfast One businesses.

Retail Crimewatch

Belfast One has expanded the Retail Crimewatch



scheme across the BID area by purchasing it for all retailers.

The scheme not only provides businesses with PSNI support but it also gives retailers the capability to tackle shoplifting themselves. It helps to empower retailers to prevent entry of known shop-lifters to their stores, share information about the most prolific shoplifters, and make a collective stance against those who want to steal from your business.

In Belfast, shoplifting has been steadily decreasing since 2010 with almost 2,500 incidents reported then, in comparison to 2,264 in 2015-2016 – representing a 9.5% reduction over the last five years. This figure is in contrast with the increase experienced in other towns and cities across Northern Ireland.

Several retailers involved in Retail Crimewatch have reported stock loss reductions of over 30%.

ACCESSIBLE CITY

The perceived lack of parking in Belfast City Centre was highlighted during the development phase of Belfast One and we have ran several campaigns to address this issue.

BelfastOne.co.uk hosts an interactive parking map that displays all the car parks within Belfast City Centre and how to get to them, as well as the ability to get directions to them via Google Maps. Over Christmas this map was promoted across social media as well as in the Belfast Telegraph's Christmas in Belfast Supplement with a readership of 155,000 people.

We also partnered with Translink at Christmas to run a campaign across 12 regional newspapers to inform the public about how easy it is to reach Belfast from their local town or city via public transport, as well as giving away free tickets.

SUPPORT

Drive down business costs and provide practical support to help for all levy payers



TRADE WASTE AND RECYCLING

The first of its kind in Northern Ireland, our trade waste and recycling initiative aims to improve the quality and cost of waste and recycling collections for our businesses. This type of initiative has been very successful in other BIDs across the UK, and we are confident we can replicate this in Belfast.

“McDONALD’S DONEGALL PLACE WILL SAVE OVER £5,000 A YEAR WITH ISL”

Stewart McFarland, McDonalds

Following an extensive tender process ISL Waste Management Ltd were appointed as the preferred waste provider in November 2016 for the Belfast One BID area. Belfast One was able to negotiate a price and standard of service, based on the buying power of some 750 businesses.

Following their appointment, Barry Donaghy,

Director of ISL said, “We place great importance on the quality of our service because we recognise the value customers place on reliability and the fact that we represent them in contributing to a clean and environmentally friendly streetscape.”

MERCHANT SERVICES

Belfast One has partnered with Bank of Ireland Payment Acceptance UK (BOIPA UK) to offer a fantastic deal that aims to reduce businesses’ merchant services costs.

BOIPA are providing Belfast One businesses with a wide range of competitive debit and credit card payment solutions. The focus of the offer is on price transparency, great value, and customer service.

“DEANES WILL SAVE OVER £9,000 A YEAR AFTER SWITCHING TO BOIPA UK”

Rachel Matthews, Deanes Restaurants



WORKING WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Consumer Council

As part of our cost saving initiatives we have worked with the Consumer Council to inform businesses on how they can save on their water bill costs.

We worked to promote how to get a free Water Bill Health Check and make business rate payers aware that they could be eligible for a domestic allowance of £522.54 per year on their water charges.

“AFTER A WATER BILL HEALTH CHECK WITH THE CONSUMER COUNCIL OUR WATER BILLS WERE REDUCED BY OVER £200 A YEAR”

Alessandro de Meo, Dina Dina

Healthy High Streets

Launched in 2014, Healthy High Streets provided support for high streets and businesses in local communities up until June 2017.

Over the past 12 months Belfast One has been a key member of the programme, working together with the programme’s partners, Boots, Marks and Spencer, Santander, Belfast City Centre Management and Belfast City Council.

Following the completion of the programme Belfast One aims to continue to address the issues raised as part of Healthy High Streets through our Working Groups, such as:

- Giving access to landlords who wish to address issues around vacant properties.
- Prioritising accessibility and safety.
- Helping to improve customer service for businesses.
- Providing expert help and resource to market and celebrate the high street.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT



Over the past 12 months the Belfast One team has worked to communicate with businesses via print, online, face-to-face events and through our ambassadors in order to inform them about our initiatives and give them the chance to get involved with Belfast One.

EVENTS

Across the year we have held a number of business engagement events, including:

Retail Crimewatch Launch – Friday 29 April 2016

This event in City Hall was an opportunity for businesses to hear about how Retail Crimewatch operates and get an update from the Belfast One team on the plans for Year One of the BID.

Brand Launch – Thursday 22 September 2016

Businesses were invited to The Treehouse at AM:PM to learn more about the new Belfast One brand and hear about our promotional plans for the rest of the year.

Business Cost Saving Workshop – Wednesday 12 October 2016

This event was an opportunity for businesses to hear from our cost saving partners about their initiatives. It also marked one year since Belfast One achieved a Yes vote and provided an update on the projects that had been put in place since.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTERS

To keep businesses up-to-date with our latest projects and campaigns we produce a quarterly newsletter that is hand delivered by our ambassadors to every business, as well as emailed to our business mailing list of 519 businesses.

We also send out regular email updates about upcoming marketing campaigns and events.

FIVE WAYS TO SAVE

We have compiled a five-step guide to show businesses how they can reduce their business costs through our various Support projects.

The ambassadors have delivered this to every business across the Belfast One area, it has been emailed to our mailing list and is available on our website at BelfastOne.co.uk/members-area.

WORKING GROUPS

Belfast One hold regular working group meetings across the Promote, Support and Enhance projects to give Belfast One levy payers the chance to get involved with the BID and influence the projects we are undertaking.

We have been actively recruiting new members to these groups and since January have doubled the participants in every group.

FINANCES

Income	£
BID Levy	1,063,314
Investment income	29
Total	£1,063,343

Expenditure	£
Staff costs	112,200
Administration and establishment costs	23,361
Legal and professional costs	28,665
Bad and doubtful debt provision	24,380
Project costs	380,027
Sundry expenses	370
Depreciation	1,996
Total	£570,999

Surplus (carried forward to future expense)	£492,344
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*A full financial statement is available upon request

YEAR TWO PRIORITIES

In Year Two we plan to build on the success we've had in our inaugural year across our Promote, Enhance and Support projects.

Promote

Our Year Two plans include delivering five large scale advertising and marketing campaigns including Alive After Five and Christmas. Additionally we will continue to grow our online engagement on social media and our website through seasonal online campaigns.

We will also be organising activities to attract families to the City Centre.

Enhance

Our signature ambassador and PSNI City Centre Beat projects will continue to run and we are also

developing new projects for Year Two

Following extensive consultation with Belfast One businesses we are planning an additional cleansing project. This cleansing team will be additional to baseline local authority cleansing services and also tackle individual cleansing issues for businesses within the Belfast One area.

Support

In addition to the cost saving projects that we already have in place with ISL Waste Management and BOIPA UK. Based on the feedback from businesses we are addressing pest control and will be aiming to appoint a preferred supplier with favourable rates for businesses and a more coordinated approach to address the issue.

MEET THE TEAM



Clare Maguire
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MEET THE AMBASSADORS



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