

IEP
Industrial
Estate
Partnership



1st June 2006
IEP BID Board
01204 336140
www.IEPBID.ORG.UK

Industrial Estate Partnership (IEP) Business Improvement District (BID),

Dear Business,

For members who don't know me I am Graham Harrowell, the elected Chairman of the IEPBID Board. The board has 11 other elected board members and we are responsible for the management of IEPBID Ltd and represent the interests of approximately 300 member businesses across the eight estates. I also run a successful company on the Europa Trading Estate.

The board are writing to all businesses in the BID area as a direct result of complaints received from member businesses who claim they feel intimidated and under pressure from a small protest group called BACIT.

I am aware of members that have received unsolicited calls from this group and that a recent circular has been sent out to asking members to vote again.

In view of these events, I along with my board would like to restate the facts about the scheme

- THE IEP is a business led initiative that has over the past 5 years successfully complained to Bolton Council about attracting more investment onto our estates and subsequently implemented an effective crime reduction package worth more than £1m of Bolton Council capital. Businesses working in isolation or receiving individual grants just did not work and the problems could only have been solved by coming together and speaking with one effective voice in partnership.
- This approach has cut the cost to businesses of crime across the 8 estates from £4 million to £750,000 over the last few years. This has greatly improved business confidence and made many businesses stay in the area and grow without the fear of criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

- The voluntary scheme had a majority in its own right of businesses across the 8 estates, making any claim that most businesses did not want it or knew little about it redundant. The members of the voluntary scheme felt that there was a need to prove a better “full” service as the crime levels/ costs were still too high rather than a “limited” service under the old voluntary scheme.
- The move to an inclusive scheme has been fully consulted by Bolton Council in partnership with the IEP and all of its members. Businesses were offered to have their say in a feed back form, again the majority were in favour. All businesses were invited to a full public meeting and were offered the chance to discuss the BID proposal on a 1 to 1 basis. Many of the people now behind BACIT were vocal and made their minority views known at that time. This was the right and proper time to have the debate about the BID not now after the events.
- The BID ballot was carried out exclusively by Bolton Councils Election Department based upon the rates listing of 1st August 2005, the turnout was 46%. This is higher than the recent local election ballots in the area and is around the national average for a BID ballot. A massive 72% of all businesses and 84% of the total rates vote was in favour of the BID. **This is now legally binding upon all businesses.**
- The BID now has 13 full time operational staff watching over our businesses. Contracts have been issued for 5 years for this service to the value of £1 million.
- **The BID in its the first 6 weeks since 1st April has dealt with 41 criminal incidents on the 8 estates. Many of these incidents have been detected by the Patrol or CCTV staff, arrests made and potential damage prevented. We have also passed 30 evidential images to the Police for potential prosecution. Without the BID these and probably more crimes would have been committed/ continued unchecked inflicting severe damage against our businesses and livelihoods.**

The fight to free our estates from criminal activity, anti social behaviour and fear is an ongoing one. There is a danger that we are starting to take for granted the benefits that the IEP gives us all, and we must therefore ensure we do not become complacent.

The BID does require businesses to pay into a ring fenced fund to provide the services. No business wants additional expenditure but the consequences & costs of not providing this service is for many far greater.

We now have an excellent IEP BID and security service that has become the envy of many areas that do not receive the same level of support from its Council or partners.

We are encouraging any business that is not sure about the quality of service or value for money being provided to contact Keith Neilson on 01204 336140 and ask for a tour of our newly built control room, we are sure that you will not be disappointed.

If you would prefer to contact me, you can do this via our web site- www.IEPBID.ORG.UK.

Yours sincerely

Graham Harrowell
On behalf of the THE IEP BID Board

Bolton's Industrial Estate Partnership, Creating the right conditions for investment, growth & competitiveness.