



## Press Release

March 5 2012

### Business vote 'YES' for Waterfront BID

Waterfront businesses have voted a clear 'YES' in a ballot to decide on setting up a Waterfront Business Improvement District (BID), with a 59 per cent turnout - significantly higher than the national average 41 per cent turnout for BIDs .

Results announced today showed 70 per cent of voters backed the BID to drive investment in the Waterfront and give local businesses a greater say in the way the Waterfront is marketed and managed.

The vote gives the go-ahead for Plymouth Waterfront Partnership (PWP) to set up the BID and to work with Plymouth City Council and other partners in taking forward the Waterfront Business Plan, which will deliver £6.2 million of investment in the Waterfront BID area over the next five years. The BID will come into operation in April this year.

David Wheeler, Chairman of Plymouth Waterfront Partnership, said: "This is a strong vote of confidence in Plymouth's Waterfront from the businesses who trade here and who clearly see the potential for a more successful and profitable future going forward under a Business Improvement District.

"The high turnout gives strong legitimacy to the vote. It gives businesses, through the PWP, a strong mandate to drive improvements for the Waterfront, to lobby on behalf of the area and to help shape the future of the Waterfront over the long term in partnership with Plymouth City Council.

"On behalf of the PWP Board I would like to thank businesses for their support throughout this process and the Council for backing the business community and the BID by agreeing to ring-fence services and provide significant match funding in what is a difficult economic climate.

"Our focus now is very clearly on putting all the arrangements in place for the start of the BID and on delivering the Waterfront Business Plan, which businesses have helped design."

Cllr Ted Fry, Plymouth City Council Cabinet Member for Planning, Strategic Housing and Economic Development, said: "Businesses have taken a very

positive decision in voting for a Waterfront BID. We welcome their commitment to vote yes for the BID and to take a greater role in investing in and managing the future of the Waterfront, which is such an important asset for the City.

“The City Council is committed to developing the Waterfront and the visitor economy and through the BID process we have the opportunity to empower businesses. It is part of the Council’s wider strategy to support growth in the city economy and create jobs and wealth.”

The confidential, postal BID Ballot was run throughout February by the independent Electoral Reform Services, with BID Ballot papers sent out to 659 voters in the Waterfront BID area.

Detailed figures for the vote were as follows:

Votes cast: 389 (59 per cent turnout)  
Yes: 273 (70 per cent)

The Yes vote represented 79 per cent majority of the total rateable value of businesses which voted in the ballot compared to the national average of 70 per cent. (A majority in terms of votes cast and rateable value is required to meet the ‘dual-lock’ mechanism for a BID to be legally voted through.)

Following the positive BID Ballot result, the PWP Board will now work with local businesses and stakeholders to agree the details and membership of the PWP Advisory Board which will be fully representative of all stakeholders in the Business Improvement District and which will advise the PWP’s Board on future strategy and the implementation of the BID Business Plan.

The governance arrangements will be discussed at a public meeting to form the PWP Advisory Board on April 4. This will include discussion of how Plymouth City Council will organise its executive functions to support the delivery the BID Business Plan.

## **Ends**

### **Notes to Editors**

The Waterfront Business Improvement District (BID) puts local businesses in the driving seat in helping transform the way the Waterfront is marketed and managed.

The first ever Plymouth Waterfront Business Plan, which local business voted on in the BID Ballot, sets out a five-year, £6.2 million programme and details 42 projects to be delivered including:

- Regional, national and international destination marketing campaigns aimed at creating £63 million new annual visitor spend
- High quality waterside events programme
- Better signage, gateway improvements and water transport links
- Environmental improvements and a vision for investment and regeneration

- Proposals to make the Waterfront cleaner and safer, including better cleansing standards and a night time economy manager

The BID also gives Waterfront businesses a powerful lobbying voice through the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership and a greater say in all aspects of the future development, regeneration and management of the Waterfront.

Under the BID, all businesses will have to pay to help fund delivery of improvement projects - with a third of businesses contributing less than £100 a year and half between £100 and £500.

For every £1 contributed by Waterfront businesses a further £2 (£2.4 million in total) will be targeted in match-funding by PWP. On top of this Plymouth City Council has confirmed it will support the initiative by ring-fencing £2.7 million of funding for services on the Waterfront for the full five years of a BID and also contributing £673,000 in match funding to the BID.

**Further information is available via:**

**The BID website:** [www.waterfrontbid.co.uk](http://www.waterfrontbid.co.uk)  
**Email:** [waterfrontmanager@waterfrontbid.co.uk](mailto:waterfrontmanager@waterfrontbid.co.uk)  
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