

Question 1: Please select your preferred option	Question 2: Please provide your queries and comments regarding the operation of Hexham BID in relation to your preferred option. (blank space indicates no comment given)	Question 3: Please provide your suggestions for future activities to benefit Hexham: (blank space indicates no comment given)
Option 1a	The council doesn't have funds to help improve the town, and if they placed a levy on us to do so we wouldn't have any say in what the money is spent on, with the BID we as business owners can have a say and for most of us £200 a year isn't too much of problem.	Positive promotion of town and good news stories to be told, especially by the hexham courrant, who are full of doom and gloom and don't help the town be seen in good way.
Option 1a	It would be helpful to have list of contacts/directors if a new board is elected/formed.	The list outlined by previous BID was fine. A voice for local businesses with NCC is valuable, and an organisation which looks at the town as a whole and works to improve the appearance and attraction for customers, tourists etc is essential. BID should be coordinating action on the bus station development, vacant properties, possible conversion of some properties within the retail area to residential use if there is insufficient demand for retail properties. Reversing a decline in the town as a shopping centre but creating a better overall environment.
Option 1a	How can this be overturned if the Secretary of state said there was nothing to answer by the Bid board? There was great progress of the business plan even though those board members had to put up with hatred and bullying by half a dozen people.	Plain and simple get the parking right and the signage up dated, bring the signage into the electronic age. There needs to be a multi storey carpark and quick if you want Hexham's businesses to survive and thrive. This has been the message from the business community for over Ten years and trying half cocked measures will not cut the mustard. Getting the markets back into some kind of shape where more quality stall holders are begging to come to Hexham offering some barrows instead of all stalls might help, the bid was in the throes of doing this. Hexham's business community need a voice, many pro Bidders feel they will lose that voice if the Bid folds. Hexham needs to become parking friendly, this will show in footfall over the following years. Hexham visitors who come into town need something to make them stay all day, good independent shops, a good mix of multiple outlets, leisure facilities and summer shows or festivals. A huge marketing campaign on why to come to hexham to work shop and live here. The Bid is a fabulous opportunity for Hexham and it will be a travesty if it fails. It needs to said however that there must be measures put in place to protect the business people on the board from the vicious attacks from the Anti Bid brigade or directors will not come forward to continue this good work.

Option 1a	<p>I don't know what has led to the BID falling apart exactly, so I'm not sure whether option 1a or option 1b is best, as I don't know which option would best enable the BID to move forward. My main thoughts are that all the hard work that has been put into this so far should not be lost, and that the BID should continue in one form or another, in whatever way works best for the majority. I think changing it to just the town centre could result in the loss of lots of funding from the larger businesses (for instance Eggar!), and so that is why I have chosen Option 1a. I think the vast majority of businesses in Hexham DID support the BID, although I am aware that there is a strong-voiced minority who do not (and I don't know why this is - whether it is an objection to paying the money, or whether it is to do with what is actually proposed). I think there needs to be a bit more clarity about exactly what projects can be taken forward, which may allay fears from some businesses about how exactly the money will be spent.</p>	<p>More pedestrianisation, particularly of the market place. I know traders don't necessarily agree, but where this has been done in other market towns, I think non average the local economy has actually improved, as people stay longer if the environment is nicer. This in turn attracts more high quality retailers, which further improves footfall (Keswick is a good example). Obviously people have to park somewhere, and a suitable site should be found for a car park which is close to the town centre, but doesn't require people to drive through it to find it. (If you go to the market place, you see people driving round and round looking for car parking spaces, which further exacerbates the traffic impacts in the town). The old bunker site is an obvious potential location, as are other sites along Haugh Lane potentially, where people could easily walk into Hexham.</p> <p>I think more could be done to encourage tourism in Hexham - it has a lot to offer, but this isn't particularly well advertised. The Abbey, Moot Hall, Old Gaol are all worth visiting, but the lack of a good Tourist Information Centre doesn't help with this. More could be made of Hexham as a base for exploring Hadrian's Wall, North Pennines AONB, visiting Newcastle etc.</p> <p>The physical environment in Hexham could be improved (and I think this was part of the initial BID proposals). Apart from keeping it clean, litter free and graffiti free, there are measures that could be put in place to improve the physical fabric of the town centre as well. For example, there are lots of beautiful old shop frontages in Hexham, some of which have been trashed by plastic signs which do nothing to improve the 'feel' of the town. (E.g. 'Hexham Nails' at the bottom of Eastgate). The Council's enforcement team must get on top of these as in many instances these are listed buildings, and listed building consent is required for such alterations. I am aware that there is not much resource for enforcement, but I think this is crucial if we are to keep Hexham town centre looking as it should.</p> <p>Better signage between the shopping areas, and better pedestrian links between them. For instance, someone who wants to go to Next and M&S and Homebase, finds that they are all in different parts of the town. For those of us who are in a hurry/a little bit lazy, the temptation is obviously to drive between these 'centres'. I'm not sure there is an easy solution to this, but perhaps signs showing distance away in metres, and an easier route for accessing the different places, may make it easier for people to walk between the various shopping areas.</p>
Option 1a		positive promotion in press

Option 1a	<p>1a) Allows for necessary operational changes i.e. all levy payers must become voting members and be invited to AGM's. The current arrangement is undemocratic, it's a nonsense that we have 600 + levy payers but only 28 registered members, this clearly demonstrates the failure of the former board and its officer.</p> <p>Without doubt the current schedule of projects should be revisited and the opportunity taken to carry out projects on the periphery of the BID area so that industrial estates etc. clearly see benefits.</p>	<p>Most importantly I think we should replace the officer (if one could be found after such poor publicity). From my observations the BID has failed to work well with Hexham's other players and the business community in general.</p> <p>I fully support the established area covered by the BID given the significant funding it provides. A new board working with the entire levy paying community should be able to recover their support in the four years remaining before the next vote.</p> <p>Although keeping the streets clean and having attractive Xmas Lights are important, the movement of traffic and lack of parking are a blight on the town.</p> <p>I'd suggest that a significant sum be allocated as pump-priming (would need NCC Highways support) to create a mini roundabout at Hexham's Bridge End - the junction between Rotary Way and Ferry Road this would be an aid to the traffic servicing the towns major industrial areas and the business estates.</p> <p>It is essential that we regain the confidence of the service and manufacturing businesses and this would be a high profile aid to that end.</p> <p>Although Hexham's BID has failed in its current form this is partly due to the poisonous and bullying campaign waged against it by a small group of traders. I'm concerned that unless a shot is fired across their bows that this unacceptable behaviour will continue, it will certainly give other Northumberland towns pause for thought before launching a BID application.</p>
Option 1a		<p>The issues that were raised with the initiation of the BID still apply - improved parking, traffic flow would be a great help along with making the town centre more appealing. Pedestrianisation of the market place as well as restriction of traffic on or closure of Hallstile Bank would greatly enhance our area. Better promotion of Hexham as a tourist destination and also linking it more closely with Hadrian's Wall would also benefit the tourism related businesses in the town.</p>
Option 1a	<p>Leadership needs to be strong and robust. Supported throughout all parties in Government and Council.</p>	<p>Marketing, marketing, marketing.</p> <p>Retail is suffering nationwide however Hexham currently still has a strong retail presence which needs to be nurtured. Empty units need to be filled with a viable interesting and diverse selection to encourage both visitors and those who live in the area that its a great place to shop.</p> <p>Hexham needs to be seen as a destination for those looking to start and grow businesses.</p> <p>Re-invigorating our weekly market including as many local producers (not just food) as possible.</p> <p>Develop trade events (at least 2) to bring people into the town who would otherwise spend there money in Newcastle.</p> <p>Hexham has an embarrassment of riches in historical buildings and architecture...use it, stop its gradual decay.</p> <p>The town is divided, there has been no publicity of the benefits the BID could bring and importantly the money it could leverage. Local people giving there own time and energy for the good of the town and its people have been vilified and this cannot be allowed to continue. Debate and disagreement are vital and needed, however personal attacks and lies cannot and should not be tolerated in a healthy democratic process.</p>

Option 1a	<p>We think that the principal of the BID is sound, and, essential to improve Hexham as a whole. I feel that, unfortunately the way it was set up, has ruined it for everybody. I believe other towns keep industrial separate from town centre, and I feel that is something that should be explored in Hexham. Let monies from industrial busnisses on the fringes of town, have their money ploughed into improvements to their estates. The rest can be used to tidy up the town centre.</p> <p>I do think that also the Council MUST be made more accountable. The BID money should not be replacing things NCC should be delivering out of rates money.</p> <p>The town is filthy, no proper street cleaning gets done. We have asked on many occasions for repairs to pavings and potholes outside our office, and NCCC don;'t even reply, its disgraceful.</p> <p>Also, I think business landlords should be forced to get their own buildings (or their tenants) tidied up, and ensure pride is taken in the town. Iceland on Fore St is disgusting as they have no bird netting on their property and the pavement is always disgusting as a result.</p> <p>Likewise, there are cigarrate butts all over the floor, yet few bins for people to put them in.</p>	<p>Cleaning (deep cleaning of paths, drains) General improvement to appearance of the town – flowers, hanging baskets, signage, cleanliness etc Business events Lobby Council to take action to do the 'basics'. Enforcement action via Council on disrepair/breaches of Planning/Conservation Area consent</p>
Option 1b	<p>I strongly object to the way the Hexham Bid was run. Firstly although the Bid seemed to be of no advantage to the local industrial estates we were included and were subject to the levy. I believe the town needs to attract more people but I cannot see tourists coming here to visit the industrial estates! Businesses on the industrial estates would probably contribute to things like Christmas lights etc if asked and it is voluntary but to force us to contribute towards things we will not benefit from is asking for trouble. I did ask to become a member of the old BID by replying to an email from the committee following the link on the email to apply but I received no reply and was therefore not allowed to attend meetings for 'members'. I strongly suspect this was because I initially wrote to the Council about my inclusion in the levy although I was a fully paid up Levy business. If the Bid is retained in any form it will have to changes dramatically to get the backing of the majority of businesses subject to the levy and not be a 'Closed' committee as before. It will need to be open and fully inclusive with decisions not being made by the select few as before.</p>	<p>Future changes and improvements should be paid for by the levy payers with the added option of inviting local businesses (not included in the levy area) to contribute. We all want Hexham to thrive but to demand small struggling business who will not benefit to pay for changes will only antagonise people and may prove the final straw to make some of us close and that will definitely not help Hexham in the long run.</p>

Option 1b	<p>Most of Hexham's perceived problems focus on the town centre, rather than the industrial estates on the periphery. I voted yes in the ballot but have developed some sympathy for the protestors from those industrial estates who see little direct benefit to them. There will always be a hard core who fundamentally oppose all taxation, but it should be possible to convince most town centre traders that some concerted effort to improve and re -imagine the town centre would be worth paying for. My concern is that a smaller area will not produce enough revenue to make any significant changes.</p>	
Option 1b	<p>I believe the BID could benefit the town if ;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The catchment area is changed to remove industrial estates and outlying businesses who will not really benefit from the overall BID objectives. - The BID should be integrated in some way with the Hexham Community Partnership, Town council etc. That is not to say that the HCP should be 'in charge' as they may or may not have the correct leadership to perform such a role, but it is a farce to have both the HCP and the BID set up doing half of the same thing, not to mention the town council.... - The board/steering committee is made up of qualified people, and a broad spectrum of voices - youth should be a major focus, as it is the younger generation who need to be engaged with in terms of the future of Hexham. - The BID objectives should be very clear, and the areas of spend directed to obvious needs, not pie in the sky schemes or group buying schemes that line the pockets of BID suppliers. Areas should be visitor promotion/marketing, town appearance, assistance to local retailers, town events that bring in footfall etc. - I am not sure voluntary staff are the best way forward in any positions of power/authority, the previous BID board and chairperson were very obviously totally out of their depth and had little idea on how to run basic operations - i imagine this was a serious failing from the outset that cannot be repeated. If the correct skill set cannot be found then it shouldnt be a case of 'just ploughing ahead' regardless, it would be better to fold it than waste time and money knowing it is not going to work... the people are the key, not the money. 	<p>As the population moves away from retail as a form of activity, to online shopping, the only way town centres can survive into the future is to be experience led - Hexham needs to provide an experience for locals and visitors.</p> <p>The town needs to develop one or two experiential attractions to compliment the existing more historical sites, but these need to be aimed at the youth market, and not the tourist market, ie. something to keep locals engaged as well as visitors from the younger generation. An example would be some kind of science based centre, perhaps angled to an industry close to the area, ie. similar theme to the Discovery Museum in Newcastle, of course not on that scale(!). The town also needs much better sports/activity facilities, the Leisure centre does not cater for the diverse interests of the younger generation, and any outdoor pursuits cannot be serviced due to the weather, for example plug and play solutions could involve a large covered skate park, cycle tracks, multisport pitch etc.... teenagers gather around the parks and 'cause trouble' because there is nothing for them to do... this knocks onto to areas such as town appearance of course.</p> <p>The 'shop local' theme isnt going to work, there is nothing special about shopping local in Hexham! yes there are independent shops (as our shop at the Abbey is independent) but at the end of the day, 80% of people dont care, they will spend their money wisely, not emotionally.</p> <p>I could write an essay on what i think needs to be done, but this is perhaps not the best forum, NAME REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY i would be very happy to be engaged in any plans for the town and the BID - i along with others in similar roles i think just felt rather dis-engaged with the whole set up and the people running the BID. I would be very happy to help in anyway i can if asked.</p>
Option 1b	<p>Allow for businesses to opt out if they so wish. This may then incur further levy through rates. Improve the weighting of the levy on the larger national businesses as they put more stress on the towns infrastructure.</p>	<p>Improve parking arrangements, further work on public spaces</p>
Option 1b		
Option 1b	<p>Whilst option 1a allows the BID to amend governance and membership policy it makes no reference to changes in geography or levy rules which are in option 1 b. We have therefore opted for 1b, and would suggest that the minimum charge of £200 is abolished. It may be necessary to consider having a threshold value below which demands are not raised (eg £50 - rateable value of £5000 or less). It may be worth considering changing the geography of the BID if its focus is simply to be town centre retail/footfall, however we think it is worth there being a coherent voice to represent the business interests of Hexham in terms of the upcoming potential Neighbourhood Plan, or the potential relocation of school sites in Hexham, both of which could have a significant impact on the town.</p>	<p>We are generally in support of the BID Business Plan, particularly point 5 giving businesses stronger input into decisions and developments. We would like to see Hexham with a more positive attitude towards existing employment uses/sites, sustaining existing services, and future growth.</p>

Option 1b	<p>I am supportive of the BID in principle for retailers in the town, for tourist destinations and for businesses in the centre of town that would benefit from greater footfall or an improved visitor experience. The programme created by the BID and the information provided in its first Annual Report evidenced that this is what the BID is essentially about - improving visitor numbers and the visitor experience. This is a laudable aim for the town centre and one which I would support in principle.</p> <p>However, I have always felt that the BID area was drawn too large. By extending out into the industrial areas, it has included businesses like ours that do not have visitors at all. Our business trades to other businesses nationally, and more visitors to Hexham, or better signage for them to travel around the town, will not add any benefit to our business at all. This meant that the BID levy just seemed like an additional tax on our business. While the levy was not a significant amount, our business is struggling to make commercial ends meet in the current economic environment and the additional cost of the BID levy was most unwelcome. These are extremely tough times for businesses and every penny counts - tight control to ensure only essential expenditure is absolutely required for survival.</p> <p>I do realise that there were 'nods' to other programmes proposed by the BID - the Doing Business Better strand and the Business Led strand. The problem was that the former is already very accessible through other agencies such as ARCH, and the latter seemed to be a 'catch all' strand with no actual substantive proposals that would be of any benefit to our business.</p> <p>Finally, although I am unable to quote specific evidence, there did seem to be quite a lot of concerns raised about accountability, communication and vested interest by the BID. I do realise that the situation deteriorated and 'battle lines' were drawn with some businesses in the area, and this would have made it very difficult to ensure effective communication, but there did seem to be quite a lot of concerns raised that would need some clarity and reassurance before a further BID should go ahead.</p> <p>In conclusion then, I would support a BID that was restricted to the retail town centre area - and would happily pay a BID levy if I had a business that depended on visitor footfall and was located in that area - but am unable to support the bid in its current form. If the geographical area covered by the BID is not reduced to the retail area, then I would not support its continuation.</p>	<p>The work proposed by the BID has merit - cleaner streets, better signage, more effective town marketing, more and varied town centre events will all add to the vibrancy of the town and to an increase in visitor numbers. Having a focal point for pulling together businesses in support of this agenda would be valuable. It might be better if it were voluntary rather than compulsory however.</p> <p>In Corbridge, a voluntary traders association is having quite a lot of success in increasing footfall in the town. As I understand it, the membership fee for the Association is minimal and voluntary of course. They then tend to raise further funds for agreed projects as and when they are able. I don't know whether this model would work in a town the size of Hexham, but there does appear to be a willingness amongst a variety of businesses in the town -even those who oppose the BID - to work together to improve the area (Robson Print has created and distributes a Town Guide free of charge for instance).</p>
Option 1b		

Option 1b	<p>I have chosen Option 1B because I do feel that the original BID vote was flawed, and an Alteration Ballot would allow concerns to be addressed. Equally, however, I believe in the rule of law, and I feel that scrapping the BID would be a victory for civil disobedience over the rule of law</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Better use of the Market Place, to make it a thriving hub of the town, on a daily basis - without completely cutting off the vital Beaumont Street/Hallstile Bank/Market Street access route. 2. Bring parking back within local control. Restrict free parking for Wentworth so that those commuting out of Hexham cannot use Wentworth as a Station Car Park, leaving the free parking for those coming into Hexham to work, shop or indulge in recreational pursuits 3. Improve signage 4. Do whatever might be possible to sort out the mess that is the former Bus Station, or at least bring pressure to bear to sort it out.
Option 1b	<p>In my view the £200 minimum Levy is wrong in principle and needs to be revisited - that's a lot of Sandwiches to sell for an already under-pressure small business (before you make a penny). There is a strong case to re-define the geographical area. There needs to be more publicity about the positive things the BID can do (or is doing), even if by paid press advertising or direct mailshots, consultations or newsletters to Levy payers (it doesn't have to be expensive, email is fine). The BID haven't "got the message across" on positive issues strongly enough. Should a BID representative not have gone around all the levy payers individually to introduce themselves, leave a card, ask about any issues or ideas from an early time in the process? (I'm thinking of how the "Anti-BID" sector could have potentially been placated at an early stage). On costs, there appears to have been a lot of money spent on producing a 58 page colour bound document on scoping the new signage for Hexham centre - was that really necessary to be produced I wonder? There is a perceived (if not actual) crossover or "grey area" in the eyes of the beholder between the existing (& paid for!) activities & responsibilities of NCC (and to a lesser extent Hexham Town Council). One example - why aren't NCC, the Tourism people and looking at and improving the Town signage, it surely falls under their umbrella? A stated Business Plan aim is to "hold service providers to account". Why is no-one shouting from the rooftops (at NCC) about the condition of the pavements & kerbstones. I do my bit reporting individual issues (and to be fair NCC do respond very well) - but an ancient Market Town centre like Hexham deserves better and safer walking and aesthetic conditions. (And I am aware that a consultation is underway for an eventual proposed "makeover" - but that is not the immediate concern). Potholes on the towns main roads are another issue. Basic issues like this need to be addressed. One constantly being "patched up" (not properly repaired) pothole area is next to the Shell petrol station (Dale Garage) on Haugh Lane. (Update: only yesterday, 13th March 2018, this area has finally been re-surfaced!). It would be interesting to see how many reports of that pothole NCC received. The digital promotion (#LoveHexham etc) and website works well and needs to be continued / expanded.</p>	<p>Getting the Parking issue sorted out is urgent. I am fully aware that this is not an "easy fix" and it is currently being addressed by NCC / HTC, but it is urgent that a solution is found. Has a direct negative effect on Shopping, Visiting, Footfall, Tourism etc. As above, someone from NCC needs to survey the Marketplace / Fore Street / main pedestrian and Tourist area paving/kerbstones and effect proper repairs (not just temporarily filling holes with tar-mac) holes. Someone responsible for the Moot Hall needs to look at addressing the issue of weeds growing out of the building (and also the problem of pigeon "waste" accumulating on the pathways under the archway). Why are there not anti-pigeon measures in place? Why not put up some big "Visit Hexham for" signs several miles either side of the town in fields on the A69. Try to get the Hexham name into regional and mainstream Media more. What about looking at options for putting on a big Event on the Sele for example? (Pop concert? Sporting Event? Beer Festival?) Look at some of the things that Corbridge does so well. Inject some life into the Market? Towns like Keswick have a thriving Market - what's gone wrong in Hexham? Are costs putting off Stallholders? If there are empty shops, get the windows cleaned and put a brightly lit display there, whether it be promoting Visit Hexham or local businesses or perhaps worthy local causes?</p>

<p>Option 1b</p>	<p>I would have preferred to go with option 1a and keep the full pot of money for the town in order to implement the current projects and then start again with new impetus on new highly visible projects to win over possible floating voters and the general public at large. This whole process has left a sour taste - this could and should have been a wonderful scheme to improve an already wonderful town, where all businesses were actually granted a voice. Instead it was hijacked early on by dissenters who simply didnt want to pay a nominal fee for the greater good.</p> <p>This despite all of them having businesses within the town, many of them living in the town, or again having their own families live or work within the town.</p> <p>It is my belief that prosperity breeds prosperity and that there are two main points of view to be had on the bid - it's either a blinkered view that as you may not see a direct, or immediate benefit to your business it is of no use. Or there is the wider view that by making the town look nicer, cleaner, having more events to attract people, a better website to attract people - all of these would have wider impact and generally make the place a better place to live and work in this would in turn make the town a better proposition for new businesses, or existing clients etc</p> <p>As far as I am aware there has been no aggression or bullying on the part of the Pro Bid voters and indeed everyone that I have spoken with was willing to pay in order to improve the whole town for all who live and work here.</p> <p>The No campaign was set up as exactly that, with a Facebook page to match which only changed from No To Hexham Bid, to a Hexham Bid Discussion page when they realized that this affected their ability to become members of the BID, due to their being against the proposed objectives of the BID itself, leading ultimately to this consultation itself. The no campaign set themselves up to deliberately disrupt meetings etc and never seemes to want to listen to the potential positives - it was always simply "it wont help me therefore I don't want to pay".</p> <p>Furthermore, the No campaigners and this Facebook group in particular have actively sought to disparage other local businesses, have often used vulgar language and have generally been unpleasant toward Pro Bid supporters. This led to a lack of outward support for fear of reprisals or being on the receiving end of negative comments/actions from that camp (many BID supporters including ourselves have young families to consider in all of this).</p> <p>The press attention and coverage, along with the FB campaign led many to believe that this was the little guy being persecuted (a fair vote and consultation were in fact carried out and I have been informed that some companies who stated that they did not receive forms etc due to floods was in fact a fabrication) Indeed many pro bid businesses have actually suffered by association, as the BIDs hands were tied as to how they reacted to all of this. Always fair, open, never resorting to foul language etc, but among the general public mud seems to stick</p> <p>These protests in turn led to a lack of involvement from the wider business community, a smaller gene pool of ideas to choose from and unfortunately as good as some of the schemes that the BID chose to invest in are, they were not as visible as they needed to be to win over the dissenters/general public.</p> <p>Hopefully this can all be resolved if this current consultation goes with Option 1a or 1b. The town is suffering a little at the moment and needs investment which simply isnt going to be forthcoming from cash strapped councils or anywhere else for that matter. I would hate to see this great town lose out on £1.1 million of investment due to people who don't seem to give two hoots for the town or its inhabitants, but who will happily live and work here and take the good money of</p>	<p>This has shown that the town is quite disparate (we have had a business here for the last 7 years) and know this to be the case. We have tried to be involved in various Business Network, Loyalty Schemes etc and none of them have worked out. The level of money involved in this opportunity and the fact that all businesses had a say as to how to spend it made it the perfect opportunity to spring board Hexham from its already great standing point. What Hexham needs is local champions from each street/industrial area championning their own causes, but also coming together for the greater good and not in fighting like folk from times gone by. We also need to showcase the whole town with events at strategic points when there is something happening in the town. The majority of events are held in/around the Abbey or Park, which is all well and good, but there are hardly any other businesses in those areas. If something is on in the Park there should be performances or activities elsewhere so that visitors can see more of what the town has to offer. We need better markets, we need a USP (painted cobbles in Back Street,Public Artworks around the town that people have to walk around to see, in Boston there is poetry on the streets that only shows up in the rain, A proper ice rink next to the Abbey or in the park, but with stalls for local shopkeepers as a priority before out of town food purveyors etc are invited. A chewing gum cleaning machine. A shuttle bus to take people to the outlying areas as well as providing connection to a possible park and ride would also be a sterling idea and would also help to alleviate parking issues at the same time) The possibilities, with the BID funding, were and still are limitless as long as positivity and backing returns to the scheme.</p>
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Option 1b	The BID should involve only businesses within a clearly defined area of the town centre which are affected by the context and environment of Hexham itself. Businesses for whom the context of Hexham has no relevance to their line of business should not be included as BID levy payers.	Leave the tourist information centre and library in the Wentworth Car Park, which is the obvious place for it.
Option 1b		
Option 1b	The £200 minimum caused smaller businesses to be very upset and the including of industrial areas feels detached from the centre. The bid as it stands is not supporting industrial areas.	Access is a key area of concern linking the town is another concern people with limited mobility can not easily access the different parts of the town improving access would be helpful
Option 1b	<p>The existing BID has been badly managed.</p> <p>I fully support the aims and objectives, but it's clear that the existing board has not been providing value for money, or satisfying the expectations of levy payers.</p> <p>The BID objectives have not been clearly communicated to all the stakeholders, the decisions taken by the existing board have not been transparent, the membership rules were too exclusive, and the membership badly organised and implemented.</p> <p>We need a clean sweep of existing directors and re-definition of the scope and boundaries of the BID.</p>	<p>Completely new set of directors is needed.</p> <p>Re-define the BID boundaries to exclude industrial estates and out of town businesses. These businesses should have opportunities to make voluntary levy payments into the BID.</p> <p>ALL levy payers should be members.</p> <p>Total transparency and accountability of accounts to members.</p> <p>Directors should fully represent all sectors in the levy membership.</p> <p>All BID contracts where possible should be fulfilled by BID members or local businesses, so long as they provide value for money and at a market value.</p> <p>Key projects decisions to be made by members by democratic process, with complete clarity of associated costings of each project.</p> <p>Reassessment of flat rate levy for lower rateable value properties, to a percentage of rates payable, e.g. revise £200 flat rate levy to 1% of rateable value.</p>
Option 1b	I believe the aims & objectives of the BID will be of benefit of Hexham, but the existing management of the BID has been poor. The BID objectives have not been clearly communicated to all the stakeholders, the decisions taken by the existing board have not been transparent, the membership rules were too exclusive, and the membership badly organised and implemented.	<p>A clean sweep and a fresh set of directors.</p> <p>Re-define the BID levy boundaries, excluding industrial estates and out of town businesses.</p> <p>Businesses outside the new boundaries should have opportunities to voluntarily payment into the BID</p> <p>ALL levy payers should be BID members.</p> <p>Total transparency and accountability is required for any new board.</p> <p>Directors should be drawn from all different sectors & retail sectors to give a better representation of the BID membership.</p> <p>All BID contracts where possible to be fulfilled by members or local businesses, so long as they provide market value and value for money.</p> <p>Key project decisions to be made by membership by a democratic process.</p> <p>Reassessment of flat rate levy for lower rateable value properties, to a percentage of rates payable, e.g. revise £200 flat rate levy to 1% of rateable value.</p>
Option 2	severe lack of understanding of hexham and lack of communication with the majority of people. very selective in who they actually spoke to.never got back on issues raised or interested in face to face meetings.	cancel the bid.if it were to stay it needs a much better run team and organisation instead of beligerance to townspeople.
Option 2	I find the whole operation of the BID to be very unfair and will have no befit to my company.	End the BID and let businesses get on and try to make a living All businesses should be responsible for there own property which if kept clean and tidy will make to town more attractive.

Option 2	<p>Of the money already spent, what has it been spent on?</p> <p>As for the general operation of the bid, the communication was very poor. If we tried to make an enquiry about anything to do with the bid we were met with deafening silence. If we did receive a reply we were accused of being aggressive simply for having a differing point of view to the people working for the bid.</p> <p>I attended a meeting with Helen Grayson on Anick road last year, a representative from Ncc was also there. We discussed street lighting etc. At the end of the meeting we asked Ms Grayson what the bid would do for our businesses as every thing we had discussed would be paid for out of our business rates. The answer we received was that it was not an appropriate question.</p> <p>I do not have any issue with the bid concept for shops and other businesses in the centre of the town. However, when it comes to companies such as our own operating on industrial estates I really think that we have nothing to gain from being a part of the bid. We already pay over £XXXXXX pa business rates and to be asked to pay another £XXXX (we have X different bills) is unacceptable (INFORMATION ANONYMISED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY).</p>	
Option 2	Hexham BID is of no benefit to my business	
Option 2	Whatever the outcome I think it only fair that ALL businesses (including those who objected the BID) pay any due/overdue levies.	Flood defences for Tyne Mills and Bridge End etc
Option 2	Have not seen any improvement in town since it started	Improve parking
Option 2		
Option 2	<p>I think there is too much negative feeling about the current BID, so it is never going to be accepted in its current form, and there will always be people raising issues and charging conspiracy theories and corruption. I think it's better to make a fresh start, perhaps the legal structure of the BID is not the way forward as certain individuals are always going to put themselves forward for authority positions in it, and there will always be background people moaning about it.</p>	<p>Still need a collection of businesses working together, still need to put money towards improvements. Perhaps those who contribute can put in lists of possible activities, at open public meetings present their case, and then carry out a private vote for or against, with a proportionate amount of money distributed towards these projects. The key point is open public meetings, without particular directors, there could be a rotating chair from a list of volunteers.</p> <p>A map of Hexham which actually includes all businesses. There is no signage advertising our restaurant from Fore Street or Beaumont Street, yet numerous, apparently illegal A-boards litter the streets for other businesses, a practice we haven't joined as it's a hazard for pushchairs and visually impaired etc...</p> <p>Councils to be responsible for things like keeping the street clean etc, or encourage groups like the Scouts to help with projects with donations to their funds.</p> <p>New Year's Eve? Nothing happens in Hexham, a big missed opportunity.</p> <p>Carnival/parades, better market,</p> <p>Parking is the hugest issue: Business owners (those who had to pay BID levies?) should be provided with a business parking disc (for extra cost if necessary) which enables them to park longer, not for every employee but maybe 2 per business particularly for small businesses who don't have their own spaces. Multi-storey car park in the centre (old bus station?).</p>
Option 2		Better support for startups
Option 2		
Option 2		

Option 2	Lost all confidence in the bid as it was not transparent & ordinary business owners were berated if they disagreed!	<p>Attract more shops by reducing rates or providing incentives. Stop allowing take away food establishments & charity shops from taking over our town.</p> <p>Provide extensive street cleaning along with lovely flowers, I've lost count on how many weeks I've walked past a smashed up tv on my way to wentworth car park! There used to be a street sweeper on a morning in Hexham & that has been shelved due to austerity!! The council cannot move this responsibility onto the business owner, as its what all residents pay for in their council tax bills!</p> <p>Any other organised local events or seasonal activity such as the 'spook night' existed long before the bid so we know as traders that these events can successfully flourish & continue with the existence of the hexham partnership, round table & sponsorship from the large businesses in Hexham such as Eggar & the likes of national stores such as Marks and Spencer's.</p>
Option 2	Complete Waste Of Money	
Option 2		
Option 2	Unless parking and access to the shops/businesses within the town centre for residents who don't live within the town and travel by car they will generally use the large supermarkets i.e Tesco, Waitrose, M&S and Aldi which all have there own large car parks. I brought this fact up with the last BID coordinators who said parking to them was not a priority, when I asked what they were spending the money on they told me, flowers, signs and tidying up town centre. To me that is a waste of money as the majority of people know where the shops etc are but they can't park to use them.	Improve parking and access to shops/businesses within the town centre
Option 2	There is too much bad feeling in the town to ever have a successful BID. The whole project has been run badly from the start and to get support now, I suspect, would be impossible. I believe the best option is to put the whole matter to bed.	Start listening to the traders, instead of going ahead with projects that will have a detrimental affect on trade. Such as the bus station, parking and now the closure of Hallstyle Bank. We air our views on how these notions will affect business but no one listens and invariably we are right.
Option 2	so many bad mistakes made by the council who instigated this shambles its hard to remember them all but the BID was thrust upon an uninformed business community without adequate consultation and few even understood the voting process which was at best flawed and at worst corrupt. The ballot as it turned out was a foregone conclusion even before it was taken and that was just the beginning. The BID company was as it turned out a closed shop that seemed unaccountable to anyone. The woman at the helm had scant regard for the concerns of local business owners and lied to all about the activities of business people who did not share her views.	Put the bus station back where it was! Provide more car parking for town centre! The council seems to run the town like a cash cow for itself. The assets have been stripped and the town has nothing to show for millions of pounds leached from it. The town was quite prosperous once but it has been stripped by a council with only self-interest at its core. Only huge investment will restore what has been taken away already. The town is on its knees thanks to successive bad decisions made by NCC.
Option 2	Lost confidence in the BID and don't anticipate it on improving	Clean the streets and maintenance to be carried out - especially Fore Street More Long Stay car parking nearer town centre More affordable units for Rents/Rates to enable more Independent shops

Option 2	We find it deeply insulting that an organisation such as the Northumberland County Council having only an equal input into a company which was legitimately set up and created as a "Limited by guarantee company", you as one business of many, in over 600 in Hexham. The very suggestion that you have the power and the only professional skill available and use that in an abusive way upon the BID, this legal separate entity which is very able to design and create its own future. In an extensive way your interference, illegal interference, has caused this demise, collapse and will continue to do so if you continue to feel that you are the one and only arbiter of its future. The Board of the BID, the legitimate Board, due to the NCC incompetent and illegal interference has in fact underlined the NCC's inability to know what business in Hexham needs and underlines your disregard for the law and as a result we would refuse to take further part in any recombinant formula you would ever suggest.	A major practical thing would be actually to have signposts, not finger posts, providing up to date technologically advanced sign boards in the town centre, for the town centre, delineating the town centre as a small section, "The Old Town" as opposed the New Town sector of Hexham which could be easily be signposted in its vicinity, instead of 150 signs dating back 50 years telling everybody where somewhere is other than Hexham! We would love so many other things to be done but this we have been asking for for 20 years.
Option 2	Business rates are already very high and as a high street business we will be lucky to survive another 5 years. Whilst originally supportive of the BID process it did not appear innovative enough to make any difference.	Parking Parking Parking! The council really needs to sort parking out with several council owned properties, ie the old swimming pool, a multi-storey car park (chargeable) should and indeed could have been built to solve the lack of long stay parking bays.
Option 2	The BID scheme is not related to my business and would in no way provide improvement. I found myself paying a substantial amount of money for something which I didn't believe in. The BID Team were delivering a service which should be provided by Northumberland CC or Hexham Town Council, captured by the rates and council tax, for the benefit of the town. Business should not be made to pay for this especially where it is not directly related to their trade. People who live in Hexham likewise benefit from improvements and therefore an increase in rates and council tax should fund any future proposals.	
Option 2		too little too late
Option 2	Unfortunately, despite potential promise and benefit to the community, the BID, in it's current form was marred by voting inconsistencies and suspicions. The fact that the BID members have refused to account for actions, plans or spending and declined any dialogue with any fee-paying member, unless they are comfortable that the dialogue will be favourable to them has alienated a major element of the business community. The damage to the concept of the BID has - as a result - been so dramatic that any replacement would be destined to failure.	Closer relationship between business/community leaders and the Council. Transparency as to proposed budget and spending forecast with accountability as to targeted results.
Option 2		geography area too large to be of benefit
Option 2	previous organisation had no communication with us	no benefit to us as a business
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2		Reduced legislation on Advertising Signage for businesses off main road on an industrial estate
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2		

Option 2	We never received voting papers from the outset, and have not been kept informed of what was being proposed.	Hexham was a thriving market town. Since the Bid it seems to be that a number of businesses have closed down, resulting in lots of tired and empty shop units. All businesses need to work together for the good of town. The Town Council needs to listen not only to businesses but also the general public.
Option 2	What was the justification in including industrial estates in the BID Proposal? Why was the original vote allowed to stand after so many businesses were excluded by virtue of not receiving a voting pack?	An audit of rates/rents to encourage more businesses to locate in the town centre, which would in turn attract more visitors. Reintroduce Tynedale District council as NCC is too focused elsewhere to provide adequate services for Hexham.
Option 2	<p>We bought the xxx (REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY) premises and refurbished the shop. 2 months later the shop tenant (REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY) retired, unexpectedly. The shop has remained vacant since, with little prospect of a new tenant.</p> <p>I am not a business, but the BID rules required me to pay the levy. All your documentation refers to businesses, there is no value to me for the BID personally and I would like a refund regardless of whether it continues.</p> <p>At a higher level, Hexham is declining as a shopping / regional centre, due to societal changes such as more cars giving greater mobility, less public transport, out of town shopping centres, internet shopping, closing down Tynedale Council buildings etc. This is probably irreversible, regardless of what the BID does, for example new signage is largely irrelevant. Issues that could be better controlled such as Poor Parking system, lack of development of Old Bus station site, refusing planning permission for edge of town shops (Tesco, Marks and Spencers etc), all divert people away from the centre, as a result town centre shops remain empty for long periods or become charity shops. Again probably irreversible.</p> <p>The BID itself is a layer of bureaucracy, that is unlikely to add value, perhaps conducting feasibility studies. It is clear that the BID has been very divisive and badly managed. Has it actually produced anything tangible in the year or so it has existed? If not, then it has no purpose.</p>	<p>Provide adequate and simplified parking.</p> <p>Compulsary purchase old bunker site (by railway bridge), for parking.</p> <p>Reduce overzealous traffic warden activity. I was fined for parking outside my Hencotes house.</p> <p>Parking in Hexham is a deterrent to visitors from surrounding areas.</p> <p>Enforce redevelopment of old bus station site, it is an eyesore.</p> <p>Ensure buildings opposite hospital are brought back into use / redeveloped.</p> <p>No payments at waste disposal site for DIY waste (not builders), to deter fly tipping.</p> <p>Pot holes in road, drainage ditches, leaves on paths, all need to return to previous levels of maintenance in and around Hexham, as they impact attractiveness.</p> <p>Public toilets need to be open. They are in out of town shopping centres you are trying to compete with.</p>
Option 2	Of the 280+ bids in the UK Hexham is almost the only one to include industrial estates, which cannot benefit in any way. If you add up the combined moneys that have been collected from Hexham businesses it runs into hundreds of thousands. This is money sucked out of the local economy so any improvements in money brought into the town would have to make this up before anyone was any further forward. Also the consultation process and vote was so badly done the whole thing wasn't democratic. The majority of towns, when revoting after five years have not said yes, showing a lack of enthusiasm for it to continue.	music festivals on Tyne green, Hexham regatta on the river, sporting events sponsored by local businesses so we can choose where to put our money.
Option 2	What has bid done. Nothing for my Business	The town is fine as it is
Option 2		Cleaning, support for local businesses - things the original board planned before being bullied out of their roles

Option 2		Parking first and foremost. Quality shops. Lower rents. Sunday local craft market
Option 2		
Option 2		Additional Parking. Replacement of some of the elder / ineffective Council Members with those who have strong and current commercial skills and ability. Focus Marketing on a broader audience rather than sticking to Heritage....a lot of Sport and Leisure is undertaken in and around Hexham this activity is largely ignored by the multiple Councils, and Community Partnership. A broader approach is required as to where and how advertising should take place...Hexham Courant is NOT going to attract people from anywhere other than Hexham. To improve footfall and the economy a campaign to attract visitors needs to be undertaken within from initially a 3 hours drive radius. Similarly, the local retail community...needs to step up and make its customers aware they are here. Various initiatives can be pulled together quite quickly but these need the buy in from Business Owners. These activities would be best placed NOT in Beaumont Street or Sele Park. There is an over kill on siting events in these areas which often turns off businesses.
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2		Go back to charging for parking and stop the all day parking being used by people working in Newcastle, this is detrimental to those working and shopping in Hexham. The council to work towards bringing in a national brand name retailer to attract people into the town as current shops do not bring people in, Beales is a poor cousin of Robbs, M & S is too small and has little choice so people shop in Newcastle. Stop this idea that we need more small shop units, we dont we need a large attractive store on the old bus station site which might reverse the crazy decision to take buses out of town. Tidy the town up and one of the biggest offenders is the council with building in a dire state on market street. Reduce the business rates, we as a small business are fortunate to have help with this but others face huge bills and this is not helping attract small business. Limit the number of charity shops, too many spoil the town.
Option 2		The current BID had less than 25% support of the total number of businesses in Hexham. Many businesses now paying through their rates did not get a ballot paper. The BID is a money making venture for the consultants operating it and has done little or nothing to improve the town. The Council should take the lead in improving the centre of Hexham for retail and Parking. There is no need for a BID.
Option 2	People need to see the BID delivering results and "fair" system for charging levy.	Improved car parking provision and a simpler system, improved signage for town centre, promotion of Hexham further afield, street cleaning on a regular basis. No pedestrianisation of the market place.
Option 2		
Option 2		increased housing development

Option 2	it was a waste of time and money and got in through the back door	
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2	The BID should never have been forced upon businesses who did not wish to be part of this, also taking us to court and fined for no reason other than being honest business people who bring custom to the area, I believe all the business who were taken to court, fined, and bailiffs at their property to be re-embersed in full. The BID divided Hexham, in the 22 years as a business owner never have I witnessed or played part in such a despicable act. All the people who were part of the BID have done nothing but reap their own reward from the funds taken from business under false promises. I am personally so angry.	Why has Hexham been left in a deplorable state by the local Council, since Tynedale Council Merged with other councils, Hexham has been left to go to ruin, no cleaning or up keep of Hexham at all. Yet Morpeth Anwick Carlisle etc are looking good - thanks to all OUR coffers. YOU should answer the question not hard working business owners struggling with todays economy.
Option 2		Improve parking
Option 2	Hexham BID should never have been put in place it was a huge mistake from the beginning, with a catalogue of failings to all who where made to contribute under duress. It should be dissolved with immediate effect.	The NCC should be answerable to the dilapidated state the once beautiful town Hexham used to be, not business owners, as we put our own money into our buildings and the outer appearance. MY question is where are all our business rates contributions being used in the Hexham area, as there is little evidence of this.
Option 2	no benefit for our company	
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2	Despite democratic ballot this BID was forced on us as an organisation. We did not wish to contribute towards it. The turnout was only 36% which suggests that it was geared towards businesses that would vote positively towards it, There was also an appeal against it. The planning and subsequent BID proposals are relatively meaningless in attracting any new business to Hexham or indeed improving that situation for our business. The BID did not even send a representative to the consultations held with Northumbrian water regarding flood defence measures which were probably the most important event affecting businesses in Hexham in recent times. Not wanted/Ineffective/a waste of our money.	Encourage rate free and discounted zones to enable new business start up or assist existing business. Develop and enhance tourism marketing to encourage more visitors, provide more free parking areas. Assist in better flood defences.
Option 2		The town needs a better basic street cleaning program fore street in particular is often litter strewn for a number of days before a council sweep . The town needs more long term car parking outside of wentworth car park
Option 2	I think in general the industrial estates of Hexham have been used as a cash cow to bank roll the BID , in essence there is very little they can gain from it where the retail business could maybe benefit form town center improvements. in addition in our instance our solar array that is rated seperately to the site is given an addition bid bill !!! what possible advantage can that be ? mobile phone aerials and cash point where allowed exceptions but there must be other business that have been given additional cost like our has where there can be no viable benefit	More long and short term car parking out side of Wentworth car park would be of benefit along with more basic street cleaning doing the basics better

Option 2	I think in general the industrial estates of Hexham have been used as a cash cow to bank roll the BID , in essence there is very little they can gain from it where the retail business could maybe benefit form town center improvements. in addition in our instance our solar array that is rated seperately to the site is given an addition bid bill !!! what possible advantage can that be ? mobile phone aerials and cash point where allowed exceptions but there must be other business that have been given additional cost like our has where there can be no viable benefit	more long term car parking outside of Wentworth car park and more street cleaning and or litter picking . fore street and Priestpople in the town are often strewn with litter for days before the council sweep it
Option 2		
Option 2	I am unaware of any benefits the town has received as a result of the BID, and certainly have not noticed any as a contributor to the scheme	I think Hexham has a huge amount going for it already - the one thing which really annoys me is the amount of dog mess on the paths. Burn Lane seems particularly bad but there was even some on Priestpople (outside Lloyds Bank) last week. I would love to see the guilty owners dealt with.
Option 2		Retail units in the town centre would benefit from extra advertising to increase footfall But commercial units on industrial estates can not and would not benefit.
Option 2		Dont Know
Option 2		Address the inequalities in the business rates. It is ridiculous that some businesses pay no rates while others are paying massive amounts. Surely if everyone payed something then more money could be made available to improve hexham.
Option 2	my business has no requirement whatsoever from anything a BID company has to offer other than revealing how low your fellow man can go in the pursuit of other peoples money	knock the back half of hexham abbey down and build a multi story car park
Option 2	As a retailer i have seen no benefit from this scheme and the way it has been implemented means we can have no say in where our money has been spent.	Parking for customers would be a great help.
Option 2	Total waste of my money as it will not benefit my business what so ever	more decent retailers to bring custom to Hexham and parking
Option 2		
Option 2	My business in on the industrial estate as a workshop facility only, I do not trade from there and I do not live anywhere near Hexham. I get no benefit from the bid and I paid, reluctantly, only to avoid court proceedings. I did not receive ballot papers and knew nothing about the bid until I got my first invoice. I live in Rothbury so did not see any of the press for or against as I receive a different local newspaper. I would like a refund from currently held funds please. Local shop keepers on the high street might prefer to have a bid process in place but they should be the ones to pay for that as they would be the ones to benefit, not the industrial estates. I have no objection to them promoting Hexham and trying to increase visitors and hence improve their trade and wish them luck but I have been forced to pay for something I did not want, was not asked if I wanted it and did not get any benefit. From what I hear, the committee generated plans that provided themselves or family members/friends with business opportunities and tenders were not offered to the local businesses. I only hear gossip and the rants of those opposed to the bid but from my perspective, I do not gain anything so do not want the bid to continue. High Street business may well see opportunity for improvement but let them pay for themselves please. And I hope they are successful.	Business owners need to promote their products to get people onto the high street and into their own premises. Improved car parking/rail links? Offer products that make Hexham unique to draw people in. New street signs are seen when visitors arrive, that does not make people want to visit the town. Individuals could be encouraged to improve their own shop frontage and provide their own hanging baskets - generate a Hexham in Bloom competition to make the town look nice and draw businesses in to a community spirit that seems to have been lost over the bid. Better quality shops and business' that make people want to travel to is the way to improve Hexham. Nail bars and charity shops and standard produce shops only serve local people, they do not draw in tourists.

Option 2		encourage new business to come into Hexham but not national chains there is a bad mix of business in Hexham we need more specialist business
Option 2		Start with the car parking . People don't understand it . Being so close to Wentworth car park I have people asking all the time what to do and how long they can stay .
Option 2		
Option 2	There is no way of re-organising the BID company, which has thus far proved divisive, and was not working to achieve the requirements of the businesses as a whole.	Perhaps looking to raise a voluntary group from across the business community, to look at ways to improve the profile of the town and community.
Option 2		
Option 2	The concept of BIDs is flawed. There needs to be revision of the scheme at government level to ensure BIDS are run on an inclusive manner and are fully accountable for their actions.	
Option 2	I CHOSE OPTION 2 AS IT IS IN MY OPINION THE ONLY OPTION. THIS BID HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR A DIVIDE BETWEEN HEXHAM BUSINESS OWNERS WHO WOULD NORMALLY GO ABOUT EVERY DAY LIVES IN HARMONY . SPEAKING FROM OUR EXPERIENCE, THE CONSULTATION PERIOD WAS NOT CONDUCTED CORRECTLY, THE VOTING PROCESS WAS NOT CONDUCTED CORRECTLY, WE AS MANY OTHER BUSINESSES IN HEXHAM WERE COMPLETELY IN THE DARK UNTIL A BILL LANDED. NO EXPLANATION HAS EVER BEEN GIVEN AS TO WHY WE RECIEVED NO CORRESPONDENCE PRIOR TO A BILL BEING ISSUED!! BUSINESSES IN HEXHAM FORCED TO PAY HOWEVER NOT ABLE TO TAKE PART IN THE VOTE AS NO BALLOT PAPERS OR ANY INFORMATION WAS SENT. THE LACK OF TRANSPARENCY FROM THE PEOPLE RUNNING THIS BID HAS BEEN RIDICULOUS THE ACCOUNTS SERIOUSLY NEEDS TO BE INVESTIGATED AND I BELIEVE ANY MONIES NOT SPENT SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE LEVY PAYERS!	BUSSINES RATES COULD BE REDUCED TO GIVE STRUGGLING BUSINESSES A CHANCE TO SURVIVE AS THEY ARE CLOSING WEEKLY!!
Option 2		
Option 2		Get the parking problems in the Wentworth Car park sorted out and stop workers parking there all day for nothing. Charge visitors a small nominal amount per hour. Get the empty premises leased and opened again, the town is an eyesore. Get the litter off the streets and get the Council to clean the streets properly . Get rid of BID and please can I have my money back as the whole situation has been divisive and downright dishonest. How can you call an AGM and not invite anyone- absolutely disgraceful. I never got a ballot paper originally and all I got was demands for £102 the first time and £204 the second time. I paid reluctantly as I can't afford a judgement against me or my business.
Option 2	The BID would appear to have done nothing except take levies from local businesses and pay its own Officers. We see no advantage in having a BID in Hexham. The Council is well qualified to look after the Town.	No comment
Option 2	It has been only a burden on hard pressed businesses with nothing to show for the money.	This is the responsibility of Northumberland County Council and our elected councillors

Option 2	I'm absolutely categorically AGAINST this TAX or LEVY whatever you want to call it , its been flawed from the start in my opinion a very sly and slimy way of a voting process when hardly any businesses knew about it and never voted infact the vast majority never voted so what does that say. My business will never benefit from it at all , there's been no transparency and the money collected so far hasn't done anything and will not in my opinion in the future either, too much consultation and nothing gained (jobs for the boys in my opinion) IT WILL NOT DO OR ACHIEVE ANYTHING WITHIN HEXHAM BUT JUST MAKE A DIVIDE IN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY , so do the decent thing and abolish it Regards Jonny Franklin	I DO NOT WANT THE BID TO CONTINUE
Option 2	Having read through numerous BID documents it seemed the only real benefit most outer Industrial estate businesses would gain was to have new updated signage installed at the estate entrances, our opinion is that these should be supplied by the council anyway and funded through existing tax.	
Option 2	Unfortunately Hexham BID in its current form has is been damaged beyond repair due to the lack of transparency of the operating company, the restrictions and authoritarian approach to membership and the exclusion of levy payers from the workings, decision making processes and financial affairs of the operating company. I very much doubt the existing company or arrangements can be salvaged or that there is a desire to do this from a majority of businesses with the BID area. The BID or a similar organisation may better serve Hexham as town centre focused organisation based on a voluntary subscription funding.	Due to the diverse requirements of large variety of businesses in Hexham I would suggest Northumberland County Council or Hexham Town Council identify a person or office to which queries, suggestions and complaints can be directed towards.
Option 2		
Option 2	The Hexham bid has caused enormous upset and ill feeling amongst the businesses in the town . It's just another unnecessary overhead which has been forced upon us and could well be the final straw in some cases. Causing buisness closures and loss of jobs. We don't need anything to make it more difficult and expensive to be in buisness. We need things to make it easier and less expensive.	
Option 2		More transparency at all levels in good time to allow action.<>
Option 2	In principle this was a good idea but it failed to get the Hexham businesses on side from the start. Bringing in an outside agency who had no interest in the town, its businesses or its people, to initiate the BID process was a mistake. From there the BID went from bad to worse with poor communication, a lack of inclusion, autonomous decision making alienating business owners and the appointment of a manager who simply failed to undertake the job requirements. The BID project has failed and there is no point flogging a dead horse.	There is a need to make improvements in Hexham and there could be support for a town centre based forum to raise funds and to take action. The town centre is unattractive to visitors, it is dirty, the shopping choices are poor, the parking is a mess and there is not enough variety of activities to attract residents or visitors in to the town for long. A more co-ordinated approach is required.
Option 2	No obvious way that the BID would benefit an ex-forces charity as the great majority of members are local	
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2	We believe that money from cooperative business who initially were compelled to pay into the BID be fully refunded.	Parking is disastrous. Cleanliness is also an issue.

Option 2		Business community programmes. Community office space. Business networking. Website development. Improved tourist information facilities. Access and parking.
Option 2	A self elected board is not democratic to all businesses. Total disregard toward the majority of small businesses. This is not an opt in club were talking about here, this is nothing more than a local level stealth tax to assist a chosen few businesses, not the local community and not the majority of small businesses..... simply not enough money in the pot to be fair to every business equally.	Hand back the power to the people of Tynedale area and reinstate the local district council, afterall when NCC incorporated Tynedale district council it also stripped the monies that had been earmarked for direct action resources/works for the area, this district council would be made up of businesses and private individuals who actually care about the town and bring back the beginnings of a community spirit which itself appears to have left at the same time the money was taken. Reduce the amount of national businesses locating in the town, there in no unique selling point to Hexham anymore as it is mainly now a services town and not for retail shopping, leisure & tourism which builds communities and invites people from outside the area to come and shop/ visit. The only national company I would invite would be the larger chain hotels, this makes a statement to the area that there is something actually worth bothering to come and see.....indirectly of course.
Option 2	The BID was launched with confusion and little information on what it meant for the business owners. In my case I did not receive a ballot pack and was denied the right to vote and I understand that I was not alone. Since the BID was formed there has been no transparency regarding the work they have done, where the money has been spent or detailed future plans that would benefit the businesses of Hexham. The BID has managed to cause resentment and division within the business community rather than bringing businesses together. The total opposite of what it purpose is for! Hexham has major problems as a commercial center but this can not be solved by new signs and flower baskets. The credibility of the BID is so badly damaged that there can be no other alternative than to scrap the idea and work on bringing Hexham back together again and formulating a way forward that will benefit Hexham and a town.	Consultation with businesses on a wider scale. Open meetings!! Planning for the city center by the community not the individuals who have commercial interest in development of certain parts of the town. Redevelopment of the city center to cater for a modern day town. Hexham has too many small empty shops! I understand this is a radical point of view but Hexham will soon cease to function as a retail center if work to improve it is not done. Services are to be improved and have permanent homes rather than being moved around the town IE the Library and Tourist information. Development on a planned mandate rather than the current piecemeal adhoc basis
Option 2		
Option 2		

Option 2

1. The whole consultation was deeply flawed from the start. A letter direct to all business owners at the start of the process - like the one sent regarding this process, - would have signalled that the premises were proposed to be included in the Bid area. Those businesses like mine, (in a rural micro business setting not even within the 30 mph limit of the town and over a mile and a half from the nearest retail premises in the town in the middle of farmland accessed by small country roads), would have realised that we needed to object to the boundary when changes were still possible.

2. The inclusion of the XXX (REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY) businesses made no geographical sense in relation to the stated aims of the BID company (a requirement pointed out in the Government's own guidelines on setting up Bids) which are all town centre focussed and promoted as such. They are all totally irrelevant to my business.

My premises is a workshop, not a retail outlet, and as such is not open to casual callers.

3. The £200 minimum levy represents well over 8% of my rateable value and is unfair. I have so far paid £300 to this company and have received nothing in return, not even inclusion on the much vaunted relaunch of the Visit Hexham website which is anyway a very poor 'gateway' and also unnecessary as I have my own website focussed on my own business.

4. Having gone through the initial objection procedure to the Secretary of State to no avail, the Ochrelands businesses tried to engage with the BID board to put forward our very reasonable request for exemption given our unique location well away from the town, - firstly in informal talks with the BID manager, then through the 3 stages of a formal complaint.

The BID Board were unable to engage with our particular situation and resorted to stock responses which took no cognizance of our unique situation. We did not get a fair hearing.

5. We pursued our complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman, but because of the obscure nature of the relationship of the BID company with the Northumberland CC, he decided that, although he was sympathetic to our case, he could not proceed past the second stage unless the nature of the relationship with NCC was clarified. Despite the fact that subsequently the NCC has appeared to be very involved in the affairs of the BID company, we were unable to progress our complaint further

6. Finally we submitted a very detailed explanation of our case to the NCC as invited by Geoff Paul in July 2017. Again an inadequate response quoting all the standard stock replies and not engaging with our unique circumstances.

7. According to the Business Plan, all levy payers were entitled to become members of the company. The Bid company then restricted membership so severely, refusing it to any levy payers with concerns or criticisms about the operation of the BID, that the BID board became separate from and totally unaccountable to the vast majority of levy paying businesses who they were supposed to be representing.

8. This BID company was not transparent in its operations and fostered mistrust and divisions in the business community. It is not fit for purpose and should be terminated.

Option 2	<p>There has been no thought gone into this. At least 18 months before the Bid vote, those who were on the Bid board should have been out & about talking with business in Hexham and all the industrial estate to find out their feelings and what they thought of the Bid along with ideas to improve Hexham. No homework (as I call it) had been done, no data base of all business in Hexham. They have only dived in with both feet and saying this is the best thing to have happened in Hexham. At no point did anyone from the Bid board get in contact with my business or let alone be told of any meetings prior the vote. If this had been thought about then yes maybe business would feel different about this Hexham Bid. They have taken my business money and then be told once you have applied to become a member you are turned down or need even be told if you have been accepted!! If you pay the Levy (which our business has x 2) then you are a MEMBER!! It is a very sad state to see our wonderful town of Hexham been so divide by this and so many business upset by this whole Bid. Closed doors and if your face don't fit then (sorry) you don't get in!!</p>	N/A
Option 2	<p>There has been no thought gone into this. At least 18 months before the Bid vote, those who were on the Bid board should have been out & about talking with business in Hexham and all the industrial estate to find out their feelings and what they thought of the Bid along with ideas to improve Hexham. No homework (as I call it) had been done, no data base of all business in Hexham. They have only dived in with both feet and saying this is the best thing to have happened in Hexham. At no point did anyone from the Bid board get in contact with my business or let alone be told of any meetings prior the vote. If this had been thought about then yes maybe business would feel different about this Hexham Bid. They have taken my business money and then be told once you have applied to become a member you are turned down or need even be told if you have been accepted!! If you pay the Levy (which our business has x 2) then you are a MEMBER!! It is a very sad state to see our wonderful town of Hexham been so divide by this and so many business upset by this whole Bid. Closed doors and if your face don't fit then (sorry) you don't get in!!</p>	N/A
Option 2	<p>Extra costs for my small business make it more of a struggle to keep it going.</p>	
Option 2	<p>The structure and functioning of the current BID is in chaos. It should be completely disbanded.</p> <p>If a BID is to be implemented again, then the Hexham "area" should be changed and the BID applicable only to the Town Centre premises, not those in the Industrial Areas, nor in the outlying areas.</p>	<p>The main streets of Hexham are an eyesore of empty premises. Until the haemorrhage of businesses from the town centre can be halted things will only deteriorate and no amount of new signage, websites, leaflets can help.</p>
Option 2	<p>My catering unit is outside hexham town center on a country road with 5 other units.in our lease we are unable to have passing trade.So I don't see how theBID is going to help us ie signage litter picking lights etc</p>	

Option 2	This BID is the biggest split we have ever seen in the Hexham business community. It has been a joke from the very start with a chosen few running the show behind a mask of secrecy.	The NCC could always listen to the Hexham people. The bus station move being a prime example of how not to do things.
Option 2	If you feel the need to take businesses to a Court and prosecute them into payment is this not evidence of a poorly set up and a poorly managed scheme. I for one have yet to be contacted on a one on one regarding the BID and have been ignored and brushed away when asking questions.	How about having ONE point of contact that will listen to the business people of Hexham, not the hand picked want to be's but the real hard working people.
Option 2		MORE CAR PARKING SPACES
Option 2		MORE CAR PARKING SPACES
Option 2		MORE CAR PARKING SPACES
Option 2	The Hexham bid is of no benefit to my business	It cannot be improved and should be terminated
Option 2		
Option 2	Has been totally useless and has caused upset in the local business community	Leave it to the individual business, to improve things as they know best
Option 2	Hexham bid was not explained to us in depth, and they did not tackle anything worthwhile in our area despite promises, there was little to no worthwhile communication	Local business can target their own customers, using their money to far better effect, than Bid managed, the main concern for Hexham is the terrible parking situation that has been created, it just does not work and needs a massive overhaul to improve.
Option 2		
Option 2	What is the relationship between Hexham BID and Hexham Community Partnership? I note that the Visit Hexham website (implied in the consultation document to have been launched and operated by Hexham BID) is in fact operated by the Community Partnership.	Sweep the streets. Replace or remove vandalised benches from the Sele. Put a road level NO ENTRY sign at the west end of the Market Place (entrance to car parking area). Simplify planning procedure to convert unused shops which are part of a residential property to be converted into additional living space, thus, at a single stroke, increasing housing stock at no cost to the council, and reducing the number of "to let" and "for sale" signs that seem to proliferate here.
Option 2		Let the Town Council do their job we do not need another level of totally undemocratic bureaucracy
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2	I am no longer trading from these premises, and I did not see any benefit when I was trading. It is of no benefit to me for the BID to continue, and I do not believe it is of any benefit to any other businesses either.	Improve the attraction of the town to visitors by preventing any further ugly and thoughtless developments. Help renovate the existing beautiful buildings in the town. Set affordable rates for central Hexham properties so that small businesses can afford to operate in the town.
Option 2	As I felt the BID was extremely poor value. Their projects were things I felt should be the responsibility of the Council	
Option 2	As a trade business we did not feel the Bid was of any benefit	Sort out the eye sore of the old bus station site
Option 2		

Option 2	Unprofessional handling of all communications, use of money for operations, uncontactable with queries and/or unco-operative, no improvements for businesses achieved with the provided money/payments. Highly dissatisfied.	<p>lower rents and rates to re attract small independent businesses in Hexham to create an unique shopping experience to improve the tourism and further inflow of footfall and diverse customer base, incentives for businesses,</p> <p>turn around of the deterioration and the closure of many businesses, (including bookshops, bakery, butchers, antique shops) since the arrival of Tesco and the increase of Charity shops it has become almost impossible to run a viable business in Hexham.</p> <p>Other towns and Cities such as Morpeth, Harrogate, Edinburgh and York seem have been able to balance High Street chains with a healthy mixture of independent traders.</p> <p>My desire for the Hexham town council and also the County Council is to be more strongly considering the needs of businesses and their residents and actively looking for new solutions to create a thriving town centre ONCE AGAIN!</p>
Option 2	Incompetant and a waste of money	
Option 2	The town centre is too small for a BID operation. It should never have included the trading estates.	More facilities for independent, characterful traders, such as a covered market
Option 2		get rid of the mayor and all his hangers on
Option 2		get rid of mayor & all his cronies
Option 2	<p>The BID provides no value at all for tenants of the units at Ochrelands and should the BID be retained the boundary should be redrawn to exclude them.</p> <p>The boundary in its current form takes an extraordinary path specifically to include these small units occupied by artists whose business profits are marginal marginal. The lease held by most of the tenants forbids the use of the units for passing trade which further devalues anything the BID may offer in terms of attracting retail customers to the town. In any case the units are not within realistic walking distance of the town centre to allow visitors irrespective of lease conditions.</p>	
Option 2	Charges unfair and too high. I'm paying for an empty room that I can't use for any other purpose.	Car parking in centre of town where the bus station was - people don't like to walk. Appreciate the town needs help but need to look for ways to help traders and those who do deliveries. We do need to bring people into the town. Shuttle bus to take shoppers around the town.
Option 2	The only beneficiaries of the BID are retail outlets and therefore office units should be exempt.	Reduction in rates to encourage new businesses into Hexham.
Option 2	Industrial units would not benefit from the BID and should therefore be exempt.	Better parking. Easier access for elderly people. Encourage new businesses by reducing rates and rentals. Any vacant shops should be utilised somehow and not left empty to improve the look of the town.
Option 2	This unit is purely a storage facility and cannot benefit from the BID. It should therefore be exempt.	Reduce rates in Hexham for retail units in an attempt to rejuvenate the middle of town and encourage new businesses. Utilise the empty units to minimise the visual effect of empty shops. Provide better parking.
Option 2	The bid holds no benefits to my business	Hold more events in hexham and more free parking!

Option 2	The BID is another stealth tax to further impede business' that are already struggling in this current climate. The fundamental problems in Hexham cannot be solved by way of a BID.	Hexham has a major problem with; continuous road works, parking and clensing, all issues that affect business', tourists and residents and need to be addressed by the LA.
Option 2	The bid was an excellent opportunity to help Hexham. However with inept directors and manger it has failed catastrophically, which is exceptionally sad. If all actions had been transparent and boundaries had been kept to the town centre this could have succeeded.	There needs to be a solution to the parking situation. Parking in the town centre needs to be increased. We need a person to champion the town to generate interest in retail units.
Option 2		
Option 2		
Option 2	Waste of money	pedestrianise the market place
Option 2		Use the £300k to employ a full time Road sweeper / litter collector
Option 2	Why does one business like xxx (REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY) have to pay 3 times because it has 3 sites? we are one business?	Employ a road sweeper to address the growing litter problems
Option 2	why does xxx (REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY) (one business) have to pay 3 times? why did we have to pay when we were never invited to the process locally? the invite wand invoice was sent to our central office.	Address the litter issues in the town - use the money to employ a road sweeper for 10 years.
Option 2	Never was a tenable idea, was based on a "one size fits all" scenario.	The parking is ridiculous, not enough long stay parking places, which in turn puts pressure on short term spaces, deterring visitors. Having to move a car every two to three hours adds to congestion and pollution.
Option 2		have Hexham local authorities support local business in all areas of thee town. All businesses should be accountable for their own success or failures.
Option 2		Remove all the A boards scattered all over the town and in particular in the Market Place
Option 2	<p>The BID provides no value at all for tenants of the units at xxx (REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY) and should the BID be retained the boundary should be redrawn to exclude them.</p> <p>The boundary in its current form takes an extraordinary path specifically to include these small units occupied by artists whose business profits are marginal. The lease held by most of the tenants forbids the use of the units for passing trade which further devalues anything the BID may offer in terms of attracting retail customers to the town. In any case the units are not within realistic walking distance of the town centre to allow visitors irrespective of lease conditions.</p>	<p>We believe that Hexham sorely needs regeneration and its decline as a market town is a massive concern. Unfortunately we believe the BID model is tainted and not trusted so a new initiative or organisation is required. The new organisation must avoid the mistakes of the BID. Firstly, we think that participation must be limited to those businesses who really want to be involved and who see involvement as clearly beneficial. This could be achieved by involvement being voluntary or by the new initiative being focussed on the town centre or both. Secondly, we think the new organisation or initiative should build on an existing successful Hexham organisation. In particular we think serious consideration should be given to building on the success and of the Hexham Community Partnership. Thirdly, the new organisation needs strong, inclusive and open leadership. Inviting a leading and well known member of the Hexham business community (e.g. Conrad Dickinson or Tamsin Beevor) to lead the organisation rather than employing an unknown manager as happened with the BID would, we think, help ensure success.</p>
Option 2	We were very pro bid & wanted it to work for the good of the town, however now feel that sadly it cannot be rectified due to many factors. In our opinion the bid was poorly managed & many mistakes were made & by not addressing concerns & engaging with levy paying businesses this led to a very anti bid feeling.	We are very passionate about Hexham & want it to be a thriving town for locals & visitors. The car parking situation needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency to allow visitors & locals to be able to park easily & be able to choose their length stay. We need a positive approach highlighting the attractions of Hexham & our independent retailers offering a unique shopping experience.

Option 2	<p>The initial implementation of the Bid was a farce. We were not provided with all of the information required to make an educated decision at the early stages of it. We also don't feel that the yearly fee we were required to pay was justified for the location of our business. We saw no benefit whatsoever and as a premises that is exempt from business rates it was an unjustified expense for nothing in return.</p>	<p>A big issue with most of our businesses clients is the lack of parking. The limitations of long term parking puts people off coming into Hexham. I honestly believe that improved parking facilities would encourage more people to come to the town and provide more business.</p>
Option 2	<p>Hexham BID did not work for Hexham due to the way it was brought into Hexham. It has wasted alot of money paying wages salaries and advisories. The actually voting of this to be brought into place was very unfair as not everyone knew about it and therefore I vote for it to go.</p>	<p>Hexham needs to wake up to the 21st century. The councillors need to wake up and listen to the people of Hexham and move with the times. Parking is a huge issue and also to encourage new and up to date shops into Hexham that will keep families in Hexham to shop instead of going to metro centre or Newcastle.</p>
Option 2	<p>I feel that over the past year and a half the BID has not done anything to help support local independent businesses in Hexham.</p> <p>I have spoken to various business owners from around Hexham and the majority of them agreed with the following suggestion:</p> <p>If the money collected by the BID was held in a bank account, this annual amount could then be spent to improve Hexham. The money currently goes to pay various employees on the BID team. However, if the BID team were all volunteers who did not receive a wage then all the money collected could be spent wisely and invested back into the local businesses. A monthly meeting could be held by the voluntary chairperson and the voluntary committee as well as any businesses that paid into the BID fund. Not all would agree on some decisions but the majority of the vote on each topic could then go ahead.</p> <p>This then allows everyone in Hexham to see where the money is being spent. As I'm sure that all we want is Hexham returning to its former self. A vibrant and popular country village that tourists loved to visit.</p>	<p>I believe parking is a huge issue that needs to be addressed in Hexham. Footfall in Hexham has fallen dramatically over the past few years and after speaking to a number of my customers, it appears that being unable to find a parking space is the number one reason why visitors are no longer coming to Hexham.</p>
Option 2	<p>The BID is another stealth tax to further impede business' that are already struggling in this current climate. The fundamental problems in Hexham cannot be solved by way of a BID.</p>	<p>Hexham has a major problem with; continuous road works, parking and clensing, all issues at affect business', tourists and residents and need to be addressed by the LA.</p>