

## **Welsh Government position regarding the Rhyl BID**

Welsh Government has strongly prioritised the regeneration of our town centres, and the recent establishment of our Town Centre Position Statement sets out a range of actions for both the Government and its delivery partners. Town centre businesses of course have an integral role to play in the delivery of effective regeneration programmes, working with public sector partners to ensure higher footfall and occupancy levels, supporting sales growth, job creation and the vibrancy of our centres. The establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) brings together a town's business interests in a co-ordinated way, leveraging private sector funding in support of a cohesive programme of regeneration activity.

Rhyl has been a priority for Welsh Government regeneration programmes over many years, and the progress made by Denbighshire County Council in providing a catalyst for change in the town has been hugely impressive. Transforming Towns funding is currently supporting works to the value of nearly £25m within Rhyl town centre, improving and adapting underutilised commercial and residential property, and providing enhanced green spaces. A major project to support the redevelopment of the Queen's Buildings is nearing completion, whilst works focused on Rhyl's High Street, enabling the full redevelopment and renovation of outdated High Street properties to provide new small business spaces with housing units on the upper floors, are underway in supporting town centre vibrancy. We are currently working closely with the County Council on the development of a Placemaking Plan for Rhyl, as well as other Denbighshire towns.

Alongside these physical works, it's hugely encouraging to see how the Council has worked to bring town centre businesses together to ensure economic development. The Council, supported by Welsh Government, put a great deal of work into the establishment of the Rhyl Business Improvement District. The BID has generated significant levy spend over its first five years in support of events provision, focusses on creating a better trading environment, marketing and business support – vital elements in improving the town centre economy. We are aware of some of their key projects including Town Rangers, collaboration on a number of successful town centre events, a bespoke Business Support Programme and pioneering work on the Smart Towns agenda, incorporating the QR Boxx platform. The BID was also instrumental

during the pandemic in providing advice and reassurance to the business community in Rhyl. If the BID fails the next term ballot, then crucially important activities to raise Rhyl's profile, along with similar planned projects and business support, will not continue.

As elected representative bodies for our business communities in town & city centres, BIDs are an integral part of the Minister's Transforming Towns Regeneration agenda. A BID enables public sector partnerships to effectively engage with a town's business community, ensuring their input into positive, effective regeneration strategies. Whilst there is a levy payment associated with being a BID member, this provides ring-fenced funding to invest in a town centre that the Council and Welsh Government are coming together to support with regeneration capital investment.

It is clear that Denbighshire County Council has put in a great deal of work to date to support the establishment of an effective BID in Rhyl Town Centre, and the positive role that the BID could play in the town's regeneration strategy, supported by our strong partnership arrangements, is beyond doubt.