

Reply to:  
65B Main Street  
Bangor, BT20 5AF

**Dr Kevin Pelan**  
Clerk, Committee for Social Development  
Room 412, Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw,  
Stormont,  
Belfast, BT4 3XX

19<sup>th</sup> September 2012

Dear Dr Pelan,

**Business Improvement Districts Bill**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislative framework for the BID scheme in Northern Ireland. As Regional Chairman of the Association of Town Centre Management I am very aware that officials from DSD have consulted closely with senior officers of the ATCM in the construction of the draft legislation. This will inject considerable expertise and experience of managing the BIDs process, into the NI structure. You will be aware that BIDs have been active in England, Wales and Scotland for some years so a significant body of working knowledge has been developed and this has now helped guide the NI process.

On this basis the ATCM would have no further comment other than to confirm its support from regional practitioners in its current form and to assure the Committee that once passed as legislation it will be a welcome addition to the regeneration policy infrastructure.

Although it doesn't impact upon the legislation the ATCM in NI would call upon the Department to:

1. Fund the early start-up costs of BIDs partnerships &
2. Invest in a BIDs Academy for all potential participants to learn from past experience and to reduce wasted time and energy on inappropriate proposals.

I am pleased to be able to respond to your correspondence in such a manner and would thank the Department for the early consultation to enable the draft legislation to proceed smoothly.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Dunlop MRICS  
Regional Chairman  
Association of Town Centre Management – Northern Ireland