



Heart of London voting procedures

1. The renewal ballot

The Business Improvement District (BID) levy can only continue if a formal renewal ballot is successful.

The law requires that the renewal ballot is administered by the “Ballot Holder” who is the City of Westminster’s Returning Officer for all elections (Peter Rogers, Chief Executive of Westminster City Council) and his Electoral Services staff. It will be arranged in line with the rules set out in the BID Regulations (2004) as approved by Parliament.

All defined ratepayers, as set out in the database of Heart of London Business Alliance levy payers which can be found on our website www.heartoflondon.co.uk, will be entitled to one vote per hereditament (rateable business unit) occupied. Some businesses may occupy more than one hereditament in the same building and therefore have more than one vote, and this can be identified from the database.

To be successful the renewal ballot will need to carry:

- A majority in number of those voting
- A majority in proportion of rateable value of those voting

2. The renewal ballot procedure

The Ballot Holder/ is obliged to follow a strict procedure in relation to the administration of the renewal ballot.

The proposed dates are as follows:

- Notice of the renewal ballot: **5 January 2007**
- Issue of ballot papers: **26 January 2007**
- Close of ballot : **26 February 2007**
- Count and announcement of the result: **27 February 2007**

i. Notice of the renewal ballot

The eligible voter will receive notice of the renewal ballot by post from the City of Westminster Ballot Holder, which is due to be sent out on **5 January 2007**.

The notice will give details of the renewal ballot arrangements and dates. This will include details of how to obtain a copy of the Heart of London Business Alliance renewal proposals and information on applying for a proxy vote (for those who need to nominate someone else to vote for them – for example if the voter is going to be away abroad on business during the renewal ballot or if the voter is based outside England in which case the voter must nominate someone else to vote on their behalf from an address in England).

ii. Issue of ballot papers

The eligible voter will receive a renewal ballot paper from the City of Westminster Ballot Holder by post - this is due to be sent out on **26 January 2007**.

The renewal ballot envelope will be addressed to the name of the eligible voter, and will be sent to the address of the ratepayer for the business within the Heart of London area or to an alternative name/office address if one has been notified by the ratepayer for that business to the Ballot Holder. The envelope will be clearly marked with details of the renewal ballot and logo of the Heart of London Business Alliance for easy identification.

The envelope will contain:

- A ballot paper
- An explanation of the renewal BID arrangements
- An explanation of the ballot
- A return envelope

iii. Close of the ballot

The ballot period must run for a minimum of 28 days. The notice of the renewal ballot and renewal ballot paper will clearly state the deadline for return of papers, which is anticipated to be **26 February 2007**.

iv. Announcement of the renewal ballot

The count of the ballot papers is secret. Once this count is complete the Ballot Holder will announce the ballot result, which will include:

- The total number of valid votes cast in the renewal ballot
- The total aggregate rateable value of valid votes cast
- The total number of valid votes cast in favour of the BID
- The total aggregate rateable value of valid votes in favour of the BID

The result is due to be declared on **27 February 2007**.

3. The eligible voter

The Ballot Holder is provided with the NNDR (ratepayer) information by the Council's rating department.

A letter was sent to all the designated ratepayers on this list in November to request nomination of a named voter – this may be the name that was nominated

as the voter in the first Heart of London BID ballot; the name that already features on the rating list; or may be an alternative named representative of the company.

All businesses are encouraged to notify the Ballot Holder (electoralservices@westminster.gov.uk) of the name of the individual who will vote in the ballot to ensure that the ballot paper is sent to the correct person. In the absence of any named individual, the ballot paper will simply be addressed to "The Ratepayer" and so may not so easily reach the correct person in the business.