

TOPIC: The Voter List

Abstract: -

The BID Regulations (England 2004) at Regulation 2 (1), obligate the local billing authority to prepare a document to be provided to a legitimate BID Proposer evidencing the name of each ratepayer, together with the address and rateable value of each property within the proposed BID area. It is evident that this list is to be derived from an extract of the ratings list.

However, the Regulations then go on to indicate that the final voter will be a named person (e.g. Regulation 8 (1)) and that this person may not, therefore, be a name included on the ratings list. In any case, it is important to note that, on many occasions, the person authorised to pay rates on a hereditament may not be the same person authorised to vote in a BID ballot and so the ratings information may be incorrect for this purpose.

Guidance: -

A practical approach is to use the ratings extract (as above) as merely a starting point when finalising a voter list in readiness for ballot.

Throughout BID development, particularly during research and consultation elements, ensure that the identity of the voter for each hereditament is sourced.

The information most likely required by the Ballot Holder for any BID ballot will be:

1. Name of the person (or persons – e.g. see Regulation 8 (3)) to whom the ballot paper should be addressed.
2. Full mailing address for the person(s) above.
3. Full address of the hereditament.
4. Rateable value of the hereditament.
5. Ratings identifier (UPRN, or similar).

Note: details for 2 and 3 may not be the same e.g. for retailers with head office voters and corporate policies.

The Ballot Holder will have the opportunity to verify the voter information through issuing the Notice of Ballot. In addition, it might elect to sample test (say random 10%) any voter list provided by a BID Proposer or, alternatively, hold a pre-Notice canvass.

TIPS

1. The ratings list is only a guide; it is not to be assumed as a list of voters.
2. Include the full voter list as part of a BID Proposal as evidence of who should be sent ballot papers.
3. Thorough research will identify the correct voter for each hereditament – but it takes a great deal of time and the task should not be underestimated.

Notes:

BID Regulations (Wales) the same as the English Regulations.

BID Regulations (Scotland) Regulation 2 (1) is the same. In Regulation 9 (1) and (2) – Entitled to vote, it indicates the final voter may be either the eligible ratepayer/s or eligible person/s and covers joint voting if more than one person is the eligible ratepayer/person.

BID Regulations (Northern Ireland) @ Regulation 17 – Information, states the district council and the Department of Finance and Personnel shall supply the ballot holder with any information they require for the purposes of carrying out their functions under the Regulations.