

## PRESS RELEASE



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### **RUGBY FIRST RECEIVES OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FROM TOWN CENTRE BUSINESSES**

Results from the recent survey of Business Improvement District (BID) levy payers, have confirmed that an overwhelming majority of businesses are very satisfied with the services the BID provides, wish to maintain these service levels and would be willing to continue to pay the levy at the current level.

The independent telephone survey, commissioned by Rugby First and conducted by IRN Research, was carried out in January 2013. Interviews were undertaken with business owners and managers and the survey sample included a mix of levy payers including retailers, companies in the private services sector, public service organisations, catering companies, and other businesses and organisations.

The overwhelming majority of those consulted (around 90%) agree that 3 core services – Rugby Rangers, CCTV, and street cleaning – are valued highly by the business community.

Over 90% (91%) are very happy with the overall range of services offered and three-quarters (75%) of those interviewed would continue to pay the levy at its current rate for all the services currently available.

A significant majority - 75% - would be willing to continue to pay the levy at its current level to maintain the present level of services. 7% are happy to continue to pay the levy but would like to see the payment reduced and some services dropped. A small minority - 9% - would prefer to stop paying the levy altogether and drop all the services. The 9% who are "don't knows" are primarily those working in businesses where their head office makes the decision.

The survey results were further reinforced last Tuesday evening when over fifty town centre businesses attended a BID Open Forum meeting organised by Rugby First. All BID levy payers were invited to join the meeting, which included a presentation about the BID and its services and a question and answer session, involving Rugby First Directors.

The majority of businesses, who attended, were extremely supportive of the existing BID, current service level provision, the levy rate and want it to continue to deliver the existing BID mandate.

Kayleigh Lubsey, from Topshop said: "Rugby First's CCTV, working in combination with Rangers and Police, provides a fantastic service, ensuring the town centre is safe and welcoming and providing me with an excellent platform on which to do business."

Joanna Stewart, from the British Heart Foundation, said: "The Rangers and cleaning team do an excellent job in keeping the town centre looking clean, tidy and free from graffiti, as well as providing a friendly welcome to shoppers."

Aftab Gaffar, Rugby First Managing Director said: “It is clear Rugby First, in partnership with the business community, Rugby Borough Council and the police are delivering on its mandate. We have the cleanest and safest streets in Warwickshire through our CCTV, cleaning teams and the friendly faced Rangers that have become part of the community welcoming customers. Nationally, Rugby First has an excellent reputation and is recognised as one of the leading lights in town centre management. Rugby First will continue to listen and respond to feedback from businesses and customers and would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued support and commitment in what is a difficult time nationally for all town centres.”

-ENDS-

### **Notes to editors**

### **Press and media enquiries**

Contact Chris Stanley, Unlimited Communications, on 07817 312718 or [chris@ucltd.co.uk](mailto:chris@ucltd.co.uk)

### **Rugby First**

The most recognisable and friendly face of Rugby First is the Town Rangers in their red uniform, but we are also the driving force behind the St. Georges Day celebrations, the Rugby Festival of Culture and the Smile loyalty card as well as operating the town’s CCTV.

Working closely with Rugby Town Centre businesses, we keep them informed and updated, fight business crime, and ensure the town centre is clean, safe, friendly and welcoming for all. More information can be found on our website [www.rugbyfirst.org](http://www.rugbyfirst.org)