



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

## Pre-Tender Market Engagement

### High Street Accelerator Pilot Programme Evaluation CPD4126186

**Authority:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)  
("the Authority").

**Date Response required:** Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 12pm.

## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This Pre-Tender Market Engagement (PTME) seeks information in preparation for the potential procurement of a Supplier (from herein referred to as a "**Potential Supplier**") to conduct a research study to evaluate the High Street Accelerator Pilot Programme. The purpose of this PTME is to:
  - help define the requirement
  - help provide a better understanding of the feasibility of the requirement
  - understand the best approach
  - understand the capacity of the market to deliver and possible risks involved
  - provide the market with an opportunity to ask questions, raise queries and any issues to be addressed at an early stage.
- 1.2. The Authority shall maintain commercial confidentiality of information received during the PTME.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. In March 2023, the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan announced that up to 10 high streets in England will test a new High Street Accelerator model via the High Street Accelerator Pilot Programme.
- 2.2. At its core, a High Street Accelerator is a partnership. It brings together residents, local businesses, community organisations and other local people to work with their local authority to develop and deliver a long-term vision to regenerate a high street in the area.
- 2.3. The pilot launched in 10 high streets across England in December 2023 and will run until 31 March 2025. The high streets were selected based on an analysis of commercial vacancy rates and other socio-economic factors, namely educational attainment, health, income, and Gross Value Added. Five of the 10 high streets are in the North West, 3 in Yorkshire and the Humber, 1 in the West Midlands and 1 in the East of England.
- 2.4. The Government is supporting each Accelerator area with £237k seed funding across Financial Years 2023-24 and 2024-25. This funding is being used by Accelerators to set up a partnership, develop a vision for their high street, and deliver projects in line with

their visions. Each Accelerator is also receiving an additional £500k green spaces funding to deliver projects that improve green spaces and parklets connected to their chosen high street.

2.5. Accelerators are also receiving additional support consisting of:

- **High Street Task Force (HSTF) support.** The Government's HSTF programme is a separate programme that provides support to local leaders on high street regeneration, including giving expert advice in areas such as placemaking, planning and design. In addition to its core programme of work (which runs from July 2019 to September 2024), the HSTF is providing support to each Accelerator throughout the pilot, helping them to establish their partnership and develop their vision.
- **High Street Connect service.** The Government is providing direct support to Accelerators through this service, including guidance and signposting on a range of high street issues and a peer-to-peer learning function, where Government will set up networking and lessons learnt opportunities for Accelerator partnerships.

2.6. The Authority is monitoring Accelerators in line with three Key Performance Indicators detailed below:

- KPI 1: Accelerator partnerships provide evidence that a high street partnership (containing at least the four mandatory partners and a non-local authority chair) is established and maintained throughout the pilot.
- KPI 2: Accelerator partnerships provide evidence that a long-term vision has been developed and put in place.
- KPI 3: Accelerator partnerships provide evidence that projects to revive and regenerate the high street are being delivered.

2.7. The Authority is exploring the idea of conducting research to assess how well the High Street Accelerator model works to revitalise declining high streets. A maximum budget of £130k has been allocated for this research project, with the findings helping to inform a decision about the future of the policy.

### 3. HIGH LEVEL OUTLINE PROJECT OUTCOMES REQUIRED

3.1. The primary outcome is for the Authority to understand how successful the Accelerator model is in helping to revive declining high streets. This includes achieving a better understanding of how the funding design; partnership composition; and other support contributed (or did not contribute) to high street renewal.

3.2. The Authority intends to use the evaluation findings to inform a decision about the future of the policy, and the design of other similar partnership-based models.

3.3. The following outcomes for the evaluation project are being considered. At the end of the project, the Authority would like to have:

- A good understanding of how an Accelerator works, with this theory recorded in an accessible format, such as a theory of change diagram.
- An understanding of which specific aspects of the Accelerator model work well or less well.
- An understanding of what outcomes Accelerators have achieved and how they have contributed to high street revival.

- An understanding of the benefits and risks of rolling out the Accelerator model more widely, and if any aspects of the model should be changed to increase benefits or reduce risks for a wider roll out.
- An understanding of how different partners experienced the programme, and the extent to which the residents and the community helped shape the vision and projects.
- An understanding of how the local communities viewed the pilot, and the impact on the high street.
- An understanding of the differing approaches Accelerators took to the pilot through case studies.

## 4. OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

4.1. The following outputs are being considered for the project once a supplier is appointed:

- Deliverable 1: Theory of change model: As part of the initial policy development of the High Street Accelerator Pilot Programme, the Authority developed a theory of change model to explore evaluation of the policy. This theory of change model can be found in **Annex A**. This initial model would be reviewed by the potential supplier and then used as the basis for the potential supplier to develop a new and better model. The newly developed theory of change model will form the basis of the evaluation and should expand on the short-term outcomes and long-term impacts that the Authority expects to see from the Accelerator Pilot Programme. It should look to demonstrate the areas with stronger evidence for the theory of change and the areas where there is evidence gaps/weaker evidence.
- Deliverable 2: Design and conduct a research study (qualitative methods): This research study should aim to use the theory of change model as a guide for evaluating the progress made towards the short-term outcomes and long-term impacts of the programme. Due to confounding variables, (e.g., several government funding programmes being delivered in the same location) we expect the supplier will need to use qualitative rather than quantitative research methods. This study could look to focus on the evidence gaps and weaker evidence in the theory of change model to add value. The study should also aim to evaluate the processes of the Accelerator model in developing and aiding the revival of the high streets.

The suppliers would ideally evaluate all aspects of the Accelerator model including:

- funding amount and flexibility
- partnership composition
- HSTF and High Street Connect support
- The level of progression high streets have made towards any desired impacts/outcomes for Accelerators (e.g., more people spending time on the high street and for longer; fewer empty properties on the high street; and the Accelerator partnership being sustained and the high street vision continues to be delivered).

- c) Deliverable 3: Evaluation report: To develop a report that sets out the findings of the research study. The report format is yet to be decided (e.g., Word document, slides) and we welcome your thoughts on this in the PTME response. The report should aim to give the Authority a better understanding of how the Accelerator model can revive the high street. The report will use evidence gathered in the research study, and the Authority's KPI monitoring data to evaluate the Accelerator Pilot Programme with exploration into some of the following questions/areas:
- What outcomes has each Accelerator delivered, and how have these contributed to high street revival?
  - How useful are the different types of funding? E.g. seed funding, green spaces funding, RDEL/CDEL?
  - How can the policy work if rolled out nationwide?
  - Can the programme help us understand whether partnership models might work on all high streets, not just those that are declining?
  - Can we learn any best practice relating to high street revival from the programme?
  - How effective were each of the three monitored Accelerator KPIs, mentioned in paragraph 2.4, in progressing Accelerators towards the desired outcomes and impacts of the programme?
  - Whether funding from other programmes played a role in outcomes of the Accelerator areas?
  - Sustainability of Accelerator partnerships either financially or otherwise.
  - Effectiveness of both expert and MHCLG support provided throughout the programme.
  - Satisfaction of participants/local community.
- d) Deliverable 4: Case studies of Accelerator areas: To develop case studies of each Accelerator area that will explore each Accelerator area's journey through the programme. Ideally the case studies will collate information from existing reports and data either collected by MHCLG or HSTF, along with further research conducted by the supplier with Accelerator areas. This will give MHCLG further understanding of the differing approaches taken by each Accelerator area and how these may have impacted the pilot programme.

4.2. The following KPIs are being considered:

- a) The final report provides robust evidence-based analysis which underpins any recommendations along with suggested next steps.
- b) Correspondence from the Department to supplier is answered within [one] working day.
- c) Monthly update meetings between the supplier and the Authority.
- d) As part of the evaluation process, MHCLG may consider the Social Value Theme of "Wellbeing", specifically the policy outcome to "Improve community integration". A specific evaluation question will be included to that effect in the Tender Specification if MHCLG includes this in its evaluation criteria. More information can be found here [Social Value Model UK](#)

## 5. KEY DATES & TENDERING PROCESS

- 5.1. If it is decided this service is required, it is anticipated that a procurement may start in September 2024, with the contract to commence shortly before the pilot concludes in March 2025. We expect the supplier to report their research findings by September 2025. These indicative dates are for information purposes only. MHCLG reserve the right to amend these dates at any time, and Potential Suppliers rely on them entirely at their own risk.
- 5.2. The contract is expected to be for a period of six months, between March 2025 and September 2025.
- 5.3. MHCLG are considering the use of the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Research and Insights Dynamic Purchasing System to undertake this procurement.

## 6. RESPONSE

- 6.1. **Please respond by email to [commercialtenders@communities.gov.uk](mailto:commercialtenders@communities.gov.uk) with the following by 12pm GMT on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September (the “Response Deadline”). Please use the reference CPD4126186 - High Street Accelerator in the subject line of your email.**

- Q1 Would you be interested in bidding for this project? Is there any further information that would be helpful?
- Q2 Is this project deliverable in the timeframe proposed?
- Q3 Is this project deliverable within a maximum budget of £130,000?
- Q4 Is what the Authority asking for clear?
- Q5 Do you have any comments on the Project Outcomes and Outputs/Deliverables proposed for this project?
- Q6 Do you have any comments on the format the evaluation report should take?
- Q7 Do you have any comments or suggestions on the KPI's being proposed for this project?
- Q8 Are the proposed Social Value Themes, Policy Outcomes and Criteria appropriate for this requirement? Please elaborate on your reasons why and/or suggest alternatives that could be applied and why these alternatives would be more relevant?
- Q9 What, if anything, has the Authority missed or overlooked in setting out their requirement?
- Q10 Is there anything here which is irrelevant, outdated or unnecessary?
- Q11 What potential risks may there be to the successful delivery of the contract and what mitigating action can be taken by the Authority and/or the supplier?

## 7. QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- 7.1. Potential Suppliers may raise questions or seek clarification regarding any aspect of this PTME document at any time prior to the Response Deadline. Questions must be submitted by email to [commercialtenders@communities.gov.uk](mailto:commercialtenders@communities.gov.uk) only. Please use the reference CPD4126186 - High Street Accelerator in the subject line of your email.
- 7.2. To ensure that all Potential Suppliers have equal access to information regarding this PTME exercise, responses to questions raised by Potential Suppliers will be published in a "Questions and Answers" document, which will also be circulated by email, with updates appearing at regular intervals (approximately two to three working days).
- 7.3. Responses to questions will not identify the originator of the question.
- 7.4. If a Potential Supplier wishes to ask a question or seek clarification without the question and answer being revealed, then the Potential Supplier must state this in their email and provide its justification for withholding the question and any response. If the Authority does not consider that there is sufficient justification for withholding the question and the corresponding response, the Potential Supplier will be invited to decide whether:
  - 7.4.1. the question/clarification and the response should in fact be published; or
  - 7.4.2. it wishes to withdraw the question/clarification.

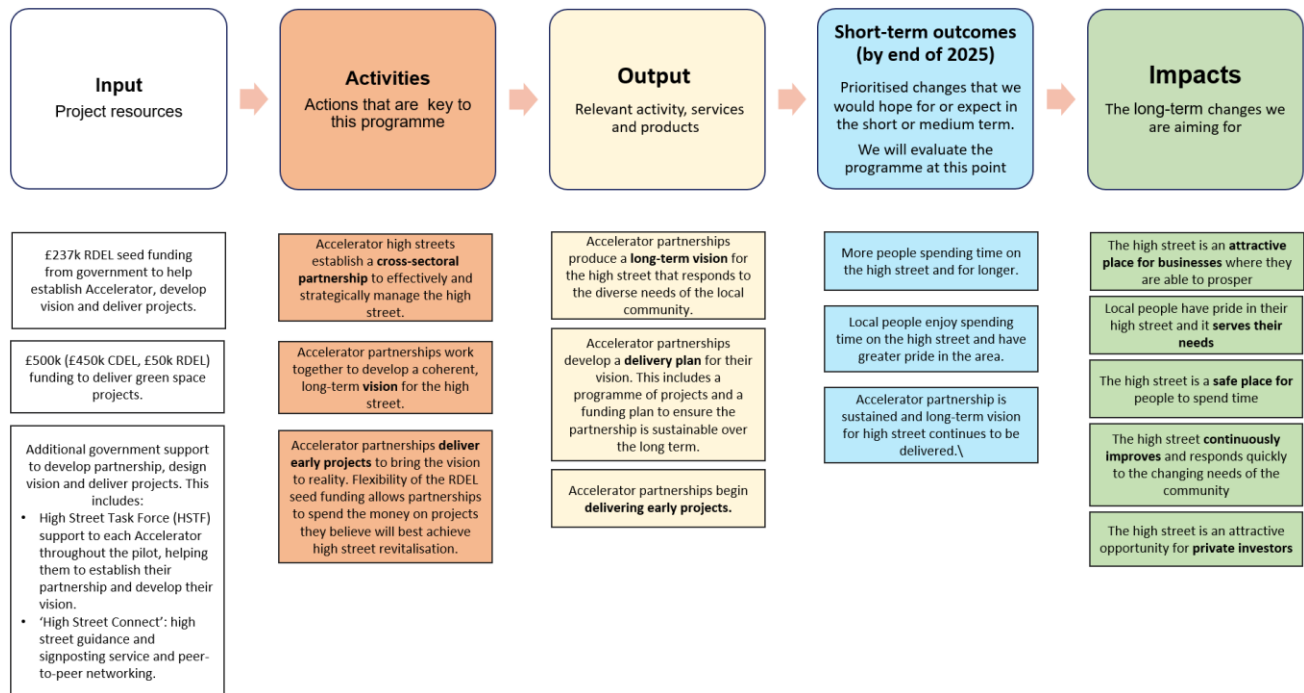
## 8. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- 8.1. This PTME will help the Authority to refine the requirements and to understand the potential level of interest in the delivering requirements. It will also aid Potential Suppliers' understanding of the requirements in advance of any formal competitive tender exercise.
- 8.2. The Authority reserves the right to change any information contained within this PTME at any time, and Potential Suppliers rely upon it entirely at their own risk.
- 8.3. The Authority reserves the right not to proceed with a competitive tender exercise after this PTME or to award any contract.
- 8.4. Any and all costs associated with the production of such a response to this PTME must be borne by the Potential Supplier.
- 8.5. No down-selection of Potential Suppliers will take place as a consequence of any responses or interactions relating to this PTME.
- 8.6. The Authority expects that all responses to this PTME will be provided by Potential Suppliers in good faith to the best of their ability in the light of information available at the time of their response.
- 8.7. No information provided by a Potential Supplier in response to this PTME will be carried forward, used or acknowledged in any way for the purpose of evaluating the Potential Supplier, in any subsequent formal procurement process.

## Annex A : Initial Theory of Change Model developed by the Authority:

As part of the initial policy development of the High Street Accelerator Pilot Programme, the Authority developed a draft theory of change and identified some short-term outcomes and long-term impacts of the pilot programme detailed below.

### Draft theory of change



Due to the presence of confounding factors (e.g., multiple funding streams being present in some Accelerator areas), we expect that measuring these impacts quantitatively would be challenging. We would therefore expect the potential supplier to use qualitative methods for the research, and to evaluate the accelerator process as a whole.