



## Pre-Tender Market Engagement

### Delivery of Interim Neighbourhood Planning Support Programme CPD4124222

**Authority:** Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (“the Authority”).

**Date Response required:** 5.00 pm (BST) 8 September 2023

## 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 deliver the Interim Neighbourhood Planning Support Programme. The purpose of this PTME is to:
  - 1.1.1 help define the requirement;
  - 1.1.2 help provide a better understanding of the feasibility of the requirement;
  - 1.1.3 understand the best approach;
  - 1.1.4 understand the capacity of the market to deliver and possible risks involved; and
  - 1.1.5 provide the market with an opportunity to ask questions, raise queries and any issues to be addressed at an early stage.
  - 1.1.6 provide further information on the Authority’s support service requirements in relation to the delivery of the Interim Neighbourhood Planning Support Programme;
  - 1.1.7 update the market on the intended procurement approach
- 1.2 The Authority shall maintain commercial confidentiality of information received during the PTME.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced in the Localism Act 2011. It is an important and powerful tool that gives communities statutory powers to shape how their communities develop.
- 2.2 Government has provided funding and support to groups through three successive Neighbourhood Planning Support Programmes.
- 2.3 Neighbourhood planning will remain a key part of any reformed planning system. The Government is proposing to bring forward a few changes over the next few years through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and changes to planning guidance.
- 2.4 Government is reviewing what future level and type of support is appropriate and how any support should be delivered going forward. We are proposing to develop a NP Support Roadmap which will set out our approach to support over both the short and longer term.
- 2.5 One possible option of how we might deliver support to over the short – longer term is summarised in the diagram below:

**NP Support Programme Roadmap**

2023-24 and beyond

|                              | 23/24 | 24/25      | 25/26      | 26/27 | 27/28 | 28/29 | 29/30 |
|------------------------------|-------|------------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Current NP Support Programme |       | Transition |            |       |       |       |       |
| Interim NP Support Programme |       |            | Transition |       |       |       |       |
| New NP Support Programme     |       |            |            |       |       |       |       |

- 2.6 In this option we would stop providing grant and technical support through the Current NP Support Programme on the 31 March 2024.
- 2.7 In line with the One DLUHC Plan we would procure an Interim NP Support Programme to cover the financial year 2024-25, 2025-26 in terms of front-facing services (including the issue of new grant and technical support), and a transition period/ close-down in 2026-27. Funding will be subject to the Government's business planning and Spending Review process.
- 2.8 We would in parallel commence the design of a New NP Support Programme which will take account of the changes to the planning system emerging through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, the consultations on related regulations and will align to emerging policy through the National Planning Policy Framework. This option anticipates that the New NP Support Programme will be operational from 1 April 2026.
- 2.9 The primary purpose of this PTME is to help shape our procurement approach to the Interim NP Support Programme.**
- 2.10 However, we are also using this PTME as an opportunity to i.) seek your views on the staged NP Support Programme Roadmap above and ii.) any early views on how we could or should approach the design and/or delivery of a New NP Support Programme.
- 2.11 The Authority anticipates that at least two separate competitions will be used to procure the support services necessary to deliver the Interim NP Support Programme.

2.12 The anticipated scope of these two competitions is as follows:

- **Neighbourhood Planning Support Services Contract** - procured via an open competition in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations (2015);
- **Neighbourhood Planning Grant Administration Services Contract** – procured via a call-off competition under Lot 1: Fund Administration & Disbursement Services DPS (FAADS) through RM6322 (a dynamic purchasing system (DPS)) to buy services for grant administration.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING SUPPORT SERVICES CONTRACT

- 2.13 Under the possible option described above the Authority would award a contract for an initial term of 3 years. This would cover the provision of new grant and technical support for 2 years in 2024-25 and 2025-26 followed by a further period of up to 12 months run-off – during which we will commission no new support. By the end of 2026-27 we will have completely transitioned to new support arrangements.
- 2.14 We would in addition include an option to extend for one further year. This option would allow for the provision of new grant and technical support for a further year (2026-27) with the further period of up to 12 months to close the contract down (no new work to begin) and defer transition to new support arrangements until 2027-28.
- 2.15 The close-down period will include completion of technical support packages begun during the 2-year period (or 3-year period if the option is exercised) and transition to new arrangements.
- 2.16 **Demand** - the Authority projects that around 1,000 but up to 1,500 grant applications could be made over a 2-year programme delivery period (2024-25 and 2025-26) and that there will be a demand for around 600 - 650 technical support packages to be delivered. We project pro-rata levels of annual demand in 2026-27 if the option to extend is exercised.
- 2.17 We would note that due to the demand-led nature of the programme, there is a high level of volatility in these forecasts. However, DLUHC is aware there is a robust pipeline of existing and emerging groups that are likely to wish to access the Interim Support Programme.
- 2.18 **Budget** – DLUHC is currently considering the level of funding to allocate to the Interim Support Programme as part of a wider business planning and Spending Review process. We anticipate that at the point of issuing the ITT we will have firmed up the budget range of new grant and technical support in 2024-25 and 2025-26 (with an estimate of the likely range for 2026-27 if the option to extend were exercised). For the purposes of this PTME we have provided indicative budget ranges of the value for the programme.
- 2.19 Under the initial 3-year term of the contract (2 years of new support and 1 year run off) our indicative budget range (subject to the Government's budget setting process) is: between a total of £8m - £16m of grant and technical support delivery directly to communities in 2024-25 and 2025-26; between £750k – £1.25m (inc. VAT) for fixed costs – that being the implementation, on-going management costs for all services, and closing the programme, and covering all costs over 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27.

- 2.20 If the option to extend for 1 further year is exercised, we anticipate the delivery of further grant and technical support of between £4m - £8m of in 2026-27 and a further £250k - £500k (inc. VAT) of fixed costs to cover up to 2027-28.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES CONTRACT

- 2.21 The term of this contract will be aligned to the Support Service contract as set out directly above. This will include an option to extend. The volumes for grants issued and administered are as set out above.
- 2.22 However, for the Grant Administration Services contract, the close-down period will include the collection of unspent grant and collation of all end-of-grant reports from grants delivered during the 2 year (or 3-year period if the option is extended) prior to a transition to a new contractor.
- 2.23 The Authority anticipates that the value of Grant Administration fees due over the contract period will be subject to the number of grant applications received and approved, but we anticipate the contract value to be in region of £180,000 - £235,000 (assuming an initial term of 2 years with a six month close-down) or between £270,000 - £315,000 (if the option to extend the term from 2 years to 3 years is exercised with a six month close-down).

## 3 HIGH LEVEL OUTLINE PROJECT OUTCOMES REQUIRED

- 3.1 The aim of the **Interim NP Support Programme** is to:

- continue to provide support to ambitious NP Groups,
- make any necessary and pragmatic changes to delivery of and/or changes to the current support offer (support mix),
- lay the foundations for more fundamental changes to NP Support that will be ushered in through the proposed and/or likely changes to the planning system resulting from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and revised National Planning Policy Framework,

- 3.2 By 31 March 2026, through the Interim Support Programme, the Authority is considering delivering the following priorities:

- more neighbourhood plans in force (over 2,950 groups have started the process so far, with over 1,500 successful referendums as at end March 2023)
- more neighbourhood plans that allocate sites for housing
- a greater take-up and/or awareness of neighbourhood planning design policies and design codes at the neighbourhood planning scale
- improving awareness and understanding of neighbourhood planning reforms
- helping groups review and update their existing neighbourhood plans

- 3.3 By 31 March 2026 to have delivered through the Interim Support Programme, the following:

- A comprehensive programme of grant and technical support (around 1,000 but up to 1,500 grant applications, and around 600 - 650 technical support packages across the 2- year delivery period)

- Engaging with 600 new neighbourhood planning groups (across a 2-year delivery period)
- Website and advice services
- A series of pilot programmes (the purpose will be to respond to Ministerial priorities and/or policy changes but we provisionally estimate 2-4 pilots may be required)
- Development of a number of toolkits.

## 4 OUTPUTS / DELIVERABLES

### NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING INTERIM SUPPORT SERVICES CONTRACT

4.1 In broad terms we are proposing to deliver a support mix in line with the current support programme offer.

4.2 We intend to deliver the following support mix:

4.1.1 **Basic support:** Available to all neighbourhood planning groups and will require the successful supplier to:

- Provide expert advice on neighbourhood planning, including technical enquiries and providing advice on procuring and commissioning technical planning services;
- Produce and share high quality neighbourhood planning case studies that reflect and highlight tangible outcomes;
- Review and refresh existing neighbourhood planning toolkits and develop new ones where appropriate;
- Administer the Neighbourhood Planning Champions Network, recruit and retain Champions;
- Respond to factual neighbourhood planning-related correspondence forwarded on from the Authority.

4.1.2 **Grants:** Available to eligible neighbourhood planning groups, and will require the successful supplier to:

- Devise a robust process for assessing grant applications and ensure applicants meet eligibility requirements;
- Design and provide grant application forms and guidance for publication on the relevant website;
- Complete grant application assessments and provide all necessary details to the 3rd party Grant Administrator;
- For the first three months only, be able to receive and process grant applications which have been submitted via the incumbent provider's website. The incumbent provider shall periodically transfer relevant application information to the successful supplier, who shall be responsible for processing these applications so that the first approved payments can be issued from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. An outline of the anticipated mobilisation and transition milestones for the programme are included at Annex A.
- Eligibility criteria will be in line with existing grant eligibility criteria:

#### Existing grant eligibility criteria

For basic grant of up to £10,000, groups must be both:

- Writing a neighbourhood development plan or neighbourhood development order
- Based in England

For additional grant of up to £8,000, groups must be at least one of the following:

- Allocating sites for housing
- Including design codes in their plan
- A designated business neighbourhood plan
- A cluster of three or more parishes writing a single plan
- A Neighbourhood Area with a population of over 25,000
- A designated neighbourhood forum
- A group based in an area which has a high level of deprivation (where 30% or more of the neighbourhood area or population is in the 20% most deprived areas in England according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation).

**4.1.3 Technical support:** Available to eligible neighbourhood planning groups, and will require the successful supplier to:

- Devise a robust application process to ensure that support packages are awarded according to need and Authority priorities;
- Deliver technical support packages of varying complexity and within defined timescales, such packages to include as a minimum:
  - Strategic Environmental Assessments
  - Environmental Impact Assessments
  - Habitats Regulation Assessments
  - Design, including Design Codes
  - Masterplanning
  - Site Options and Assessment
  - Housing Needs Assessments
  - Evidence Base and Policy Development
  - Setting up a Neighbourhood Planning Group in an Unparished Area
  - Plan health check, prior to examination
  - Facilitation Days
  - Site Viability
  - Bespoke facilitation packages to support new / piloted grants specific (such as Neighbourhood Development Order Facilitation, High Street and Social Infrastructure Facilitation))
- Eligibility criteria will be in line with existing Technical Support eligibility criteria:

#### **Existing Technical Support eligibility criteria**

To access Technical Support groups must be at least one of the following:

- Allocating sites for housing
- Including design codes in their plan
- Planning to use a neighbourhood development order
- An undesignated Forum needing help to get designated

- A designated neighbourhood forum
- A group based in an area which has a high level of deprivation (where 30% or more of the neighbourhood area or population is in the 20% most deprived areas in England according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation)

4.3 The expectation is that technical support outputs (except for forum set-up, facilitation and examination-related packages) will be suitable for incorporation directly into neighbourhood plans as policies or as content directly related to plan policies.

4.4 The successful supplier will also need to ensure that relevant information is gathered on each neighbourhood planning group applying for grant or technical support and uploaded onto an appropriate management information system. Information will need to be captured in a suitably accessible, transferrable and transparent manner, which can be easily mapped at neighbourhood level. It must be capable of satisfying all Authority management information requirements, including those linked to contractual KPIs / SLAs and any potential payment by results requirements.

### **Website and Advice Services**

4.5 The Authority also requires the provision of a new website (or amendment of existing website) and advice service to under-pin and support delivery of the programme specific requirements described above. This will need to complement the Authority's evolving online neighbourhood planning content published on GOV.UK, thereby ensuring a seamless and consistent service for customers whilst avoiding unnecessary duplication. The current website provided by the existing contractor is at <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/>

4.6 It is envisaged that the new (or amended) website and advice line service will include:

- provision of basic information for those wanting to find information about neighbourhood planning, what support is available, for whom, and how to apply;
- publication of relevant case studies and toolkits;
- provision of advice via the most cost-effective channels, e.g. live chat and / or online forums, and triage / referral to expert advisers and other sources of information where appropriate;
- support of the 'Champions Network' through promotion, recruitment and referral of Champions;
- promotion of neighbourhood planning events organised by Champions or by the successful supplier.

### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES**

4.7 This contract will require the provision of the following key services:

- Administer and monitor grants for the Neighbourhood Planning programme, as directed by the Neighbourhood Planning Support Services supplier. For the avoidance of doubt it shall be out of scope for the Grant Administrator to manage the grant application process or evaluate grants.
- Conduct financial due diligence checks on applicants and provide assurance that grant applicants are financially robust and have effective governance and management arrangements in place.

- Issue and manage grant funding agreements, monitoring templates and requests for supporting information to applicants as necessary.
- Make, and where needed receive, grant payments to applicants through a BACS mechanism.
- Ensure all applicants spend grant money appropriately in accordance with the terms of the grant offer and, as a minimum, that applicants complete and submit an end of grant report, and where required a staged payment report and/or a Statement of Grant Usage.
- Identify and recover any grant underspend on an annual basis.
- Record, monitor and report details on all applicants, financial transactions, grant spending and communication between the Grant Administrator, Neighbourhood Planning Support Services supplier and grant applicants.
- Maintain close working with the Neighbourhood Planning Support Services supplier to ensure a seamless process for applicants, and to ensure that a robust, accessible and transparent audit trail is maintained.

## 5 KEY DATES & TENDERING PROCESS – INTERIM SUPPORT PROGRAMME

- 5.1 For the avoidance of doubt the key dates and tendering process set out below relate solely to the Interim Support Programme.
- 5.2 If it is decided this service is required, it is anticipated that a procurement may start in September 2023 with the Neighbourhood Planning Support Programme and Grant Administration Services contracts to commence in Jan 2024. These indicative dates are for information purposes only. DLUHC reserve the right to amend these dates at any time, and Potential Suppliers rely on them entirely at their own risk.
- 5.3 The Authority anticipates a phased mobilisation and transition approach following award of contracts, and that there will be limited overlaps with the existing support service arrangements. Indicative dates for the procurement processes, anticipated mobilisation and transition milestones for the programme are in the table below and as per the diagram in Annex A.

| PROCUREMENT STAGE                                  | INDICATIVE TIMESCALE      |                               |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                                    | Support Services Contract | Grant Administration Contract |
| Invitation to Tender (ITT) issued                  | Sept 2023                 | Sept 2023                     |
| Deadline for receipt of tender proposals           | Mid Oct 2023              | Mid Oct 2023                  |
| Contract award / mobilisation commencement         | Late Dec – Early Jan 2024 | Late Dec – Early Jan 2024     |
| Grant application and assessment services commence | 1st Feb 2024              |                               |
| Website and advice services commence               | Mid Mar 2024              | N/A                           |
| Grant payment services commence                    | 1 <sup>st</sup> Apr 2024  |                               |



|                                                                |                          |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|
| Technical Support application and assessment services commence | 1 <sup>st</sup> Apr 2024 | N/A |
| Technical Support delivery commences                           | 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024 | N/A |

5.4 The procurement process for the Neighbourhood Planning Grant Administration Services Contract (procured via a call-off competition from a Framework) will be conducted via the Authority's e-tendering portal <https://dclg.bravosolution.co.uk/web/login.html> and Potential Suppliers are encouraged to register on the portal as soon as possible in readiness for launch of the procurement. The open competition Neighbourhood Planning Support Services Contract will be conducted via the Authorities e-tendering portal <https://mhclg.force.com/s/Welcome>.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING SUPPORT CONTRACT

### a) Potential Suppliers

5.5 The Authority anticipates that the successful supplier of these services will:

- be able to mobilise at pace;
- be prepared to work effectively and pro-actively with the Authority, the Neighbourhood Planning Grant Administrator and the incumbent provider where necessary to ensure smooth transition to the new programme and to maintain co-ordinated delivery of the end-to-end services;
- have the knowledge, skills and capacity to advise neighbourhood planning groups on how to deliver their vision and development ambitions for their areas;
- be able to devise and deliver grant and technical support packages for neighbourhood development plans and orders;
- have access to specialists with a thorough understanding of the planning system and development process, who can advise on technical matters such as Strategic Environmental Assessment and design matters including Design Codes;
- be able to deliver support effectively to non-specialist community groups;
- target funding to deliver the Authority's priorities for housing and design;
- be able to provide a secure and robust IT and financial management system that can seamlessly interface with other relevant data systems, including the Neighbourhood Planning Support Grant Administration supplier where necessary;
- provide appropriate reporting as requested by DLUHC, including support uptake data which can be geographically mapped
- be able to provide succinct and reliable management information, which supports a pro-active approach to performance management and financial forecasting;
- be able to design and create an online presence which effectively promotes the service, supports the end-to-end processes and is simple and easy to navigate;
- demonstrate appropriate internal governance and risk management arrangements, including business continuity planning;
- have the levels of financial resilience required to maintain delivery of a highly volatile, demand led service, and be capable of demonstrating this to the Authority's satisfaction on a regular basis;
- have a wide geographical reach across England.

5.6 The Authority also envisages that the successful supplier will be able to satisfy a range of standard minimum, mandatory criteria such as technical and professional ability, economic and financial standing etc.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

### b) Potential Suppliers

5.7 The Authority anticipates that the successful supplier of these services will:

- be able to mobilise at pace;
- be prepared to work effectively and pro-actively with the Authority, the successful Neighbourhood Planning Support Services supplier and the incumbent provider(s) where necessary to ensure smooth transition to the new programme and to maintain co-ordinated delivery of the end-to-end services;
- have sufficient resource to respond to the flexible nature of the grant programme and the uncertainty over the volume of grants to be administered;
- be able to complete due diligence and financial checks on grant applicants;
- be capable of paying, monitoring and reporting on grant funds in a timely and accurate manner;
- demonstrate appropriate internal governance and risk management arrangements, including business continuity planning;
- be able to provide a secure and robust IT system and financial management system that can seamlessly interface with other relevant data systems, including the Neighbourhood Planning Support Services supplier, where necessary.

## 6 RESPONSE

6.1 Please respond by email to [commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk) with specific reference to CPD4124222 – Neighbourhood Planning Interim Support Programme within the Subject Line with the following by 5.00pm , 8 September 2023 (the “Response Deadline”).

| Overall Approach to Future Neighbourhood Planning Support |                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Q1                                                        | Do you agree with the overall staged approach to the procurement set out in the NP Support Programme Roadmap?                                                                                                           |
| Q2                                                        | Do you have any general comments on the overall structure or content of the current neighbourhood planning support offer to communities?<br><br>Are there any pragmatic improvements that we could make?                |
| Q3                                                        | Do you have any general comments on the overall structure or content of the proposed Interim NP Support Programme support offer to communities?                                                                         |
| Q4                                                        | Do you have any general comments on the overall structure or content of the proposed New NP Support Programme support?<br>We would welcome your early thoughts of the shape of any future support offer to communities. |
| Q5                                                        | Is there an alternative approach you would suggest to the proposed Interim NP Support Programme?                                                                                                                        |

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                     | Our view is that the procurement of an interim support programme balances our aims of continuing support to ambitious groups over the next 2 -3 years while designing and laying the foundations of a new support programme in the medium-longer term. We wish to test this thinking with you. |
| <b>NP Interim Support Programme</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| General improvements                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Q6                                  | What do you consider to be the most efficient (value for money) and effective way of supporting communities over the next 2-3 years?                                                                                                                                                           |
| Q7                                  | What improvements do you think should be /could be introduced in the Interim NP Support Programme?                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Budget                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Q8                                  | Our anticipated total budget range is set out above.<br>We anticipate direct financial support to be 50% grant and 50% technical support.<br><br>Do you think this budget envelope and split is appropriate to deliver our aims?                                                               |
| Eligibility                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Q9                                  | Are the existing Programme's eligibility criteria appropriate?<br><br>If these need to change, what should they change to?                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Technical Support                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Q10                                 | Do you think that the technical support packages available to groups producing plans have been effective?<br><br>Do you consider our provision of technical support as the best way of helping groups?<br><br>Do you think the mix of packages to be provided is sufficient?                   |
| Q11                                 | Is there an alternative way that technical support could be delivered? Such as through a framework? Or via direct grant support?                                                                                                                                                               |
| Grant Support                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Q12                                 | Do you think that the current approach to grant provision has been effective?<br><br>Do you consider that this is the best way of helping and supporting groups?<br><br>What changes should we make?                                                                                           |
| Q13                                 | Do you think the current combined grant and technical support offer (the support mix) should be changed? If yes, how?                                                                                                                                                                          |
| How to provide support for design   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Q14                                             | <p>As a consequence of an increase in demand and a limited available funding envelope we are keen to seek views on how we could adjust and/or limit our support for design codes.</p> <p>For example, we could continue with the other elements of technical support but ‘take out’ the design code technical support we currently offer, instead providing direct grant support to NP groups wishing to develop design codes.</p> <p>Is this a better approach? And if so, why?</p> <p>Have you any alternatives as to how we might manage spend on this element of support?</p> |
| Q15                                             | <p>Is there any other more effective or efficient way to offer support for the development of design codes than through technical support or direct grant?</p> <p>How would you anticipate drawing on other available design-related support (e.g. Office for Place) to maintain the best possible design outcomes?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Gaps and Other support</b>                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Q16                                             | <p>What other support should we offer?</p> <p>What, if anything, have we missed or overlooked in setting out the requirement?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Q17                                             | <p>Could we target support more effectively?</p> <p>Could we better target urban and under-represented areas?</p> <p>If so, how?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Q18                                             | <p>How can we best identify and address uneven take-up of neighbourhood planning across the country?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Q19                                             | <p>What tools and templates, or other forms of advice that are not already in place do you think would assist neighbourhood planners and why?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Interim Support Programme Practicalities</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Q20                                             | <p>Is your organisation considering submitting a tender or participating in a collaborative response for this project?</p> <p>If not, is there any reason why?</p> <p>Could the Department take any steps to encourage greater participation?</p> <p>Could the Department take any steps to encourage collaboration?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Q21                                             | <p>Do you think that you can deliver our core activities?</p> <p>We have anticipated that a new supplier would be able to fully mobilise in 3 months (between Jan – Mar 2024) and complete transition from the current supplier in 3 months (Apr – Jun 2024). Is this a reasonable approach?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Q22                                             | <p>Is there any further information we could provide to you?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Social Value</b>                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Q23                                             | <p>We will use the Social Value Model to take account of the additional social benefits that can be achieved in the delivery of these contracts. Please refer to the Social Value Model</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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|  | <p>Quick Reference Table at<br/> <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/940828/Social-Value-Model-Quick-Reference-Table-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/940828/Social-Value-Model-Quick-Reference-Table-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf</a></p> <p>We propose to base our evaluation on:<br/> Theme: Tackling economic inequality<br/> Outcome: Increase supply chain resilience and capacity<br/> Criteria: MAC 3.1: Create a diverse supply chain to deliver the contract including new businesses and entrepreneurs, start-ups, SMEs, VCSEs and mutuals.</p> <p>Is this the most appropriate and achievable approach? If not, please provide reasons.<br/> Are there better alternatives?</p> <p>What specific sub-criteria should we consider when evaluating response ITTs?</p> |
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## 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@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk) only, with the reference "CPD4124222 – Neighbourhood Planning Interim Support Programme"
- 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:
  - the question/clarification and the response should in fact be published; or
  - 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 Supplier's 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

