

HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report To: Cabinet
12 March 2019

Subject: FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND

All Wards
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Finance: Councillor P R Wilkinson

1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 To seek agreement to put forward an Expression of Interest to the Future High Streets Fund.
- 1.2 The Future High Streets Fund is part of the Government's 'Our Plan for the High Street', and will provide co-funding towards capital projects that bring transformative change. The fund is to help the implementation of bold new visions to transform town centres and make them fit for the future. A total of £675m is available nationally.
- 1.3 Future High Streets Fund projects must fall into under the following themes :
 - Investment in physical infrastructure
 - Acquisition and assembly of land including making improvements to the public realm
 - Improvements to transport access, traffic flow and circulation in the area
 - Supporting change of use including (where appropriate) housing delivery and densification
 - Supporting adaptation of the high street in response to changing technology
- 1.4 Projects need to be co-funded by public and/or private sector. The Fund will contribute up to a maximum of £25 million to each successful place. However, it is expected that many will be in the region of £5-10. Bids covering town centre areas that are not facing significant challenges will not be accepted nor will bids covering multiple town centres.
- 1.5 The fund will not support surface level projects that only make a difference to the appearance rather than use of the area or those that only have a short term impact. On examination of evidence it is considered that Northallerton is the most likely town centre in the district to be able to demonstrate challenges sufficient to have a chance of a successful bid.
- 1.6 The Fund is accessed by a two-stage application process:
 - Phase 1 - Expressions of Interest are to be submitted by 22 March 2019 setting out challenges and strategic approach to regenerating town centres.
 - Phase 2 - Shortlisted places will be announced summer 2019 - revenue funding will be provided to support the development of their high street strategies, project plans and business cases setting out how they shall regenerate these places for submission in late 2019 through to spring 2020. There is no guarantee of success for those moving to Phase 2.
- 1.7 In two tier government areas bids are to be led by District Councils however there is a need to demonstrate support from a range of stakeholders and link to emerging Local Industrial Strategy, wider strategic plans and alignment with other funding streams.

1.8 The Business and Economy team is starting to consider a range of proposals which build on current Vibrant Market Town ambitions and some more aspirational projects tackling a range of issues in the town. These include:

- Change of use of empty spaces above shops on the High Street, some of which have been empty for many years, to form affordable residential units, improving upper floors and their appearance, bringing more people into the town centre and providing starter accommodation for young people.
- Exploring the potential for land assembly for office and/or residential around the Friarage Street/East Road gateway to town replacing the current not fit for purpose office stock with a vibrant attractive offer to stimulate new business in the town centre well connected to transport networks.
- Zetland Street Shop Front Improvement Scheme to complement the planned Connections project
- Enhanced cultural offer to further develop the night time economy exploring the potential for improvements to The Forum
- Parking improvements through the implementation of intelligent parking. This would provide spaces with sensors that link to an app allowing navigation to available spaces, allowing flexible charging by the minute. Potential to extend the app functionality to link in businesses offers and appointments which could be booked via the app.
- Developing an Augmented Reality History Trail linking in key aspects of the town's history, including the prison but also utilising Ginnels and other elements of historic fabric providing an opportunity to enhance the public realm.
- Highway and footway improvements to Friarage Street which would seek to alleviate congestion and air quality issues in Friarage Street and the three roundabouts.
- Green Links and Infrastructure - connecting large residential areas of town to the town centre via pedestrian and cycle links with high quality natural environment encouraging more people to access the town centre on foot.

We will be engaging with a range of stakeholder to identify strategic funding opportunities and secure support for these proposals including Northallerton Town Council, Northallerton Business Improvement District (BID), North Yorkshire County Council and the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (YNYER LEP).

2.0 LINK TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

2.1 The development of an Expression of Interest will support the Council's priority of driving economic vitality more specifically it will support businesses to grow, help maximise private sector investment and strengthen the economic prosperity of our market town.

3.0 RISK ASSESSMENT:

3.1 There are no significant risks associated with approving the recommendations.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 The costs associated with developing the Expression of Interest will be met through the existing budget in the Economic Development Fund and the staff resource of the Business and Economy team.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with the recommendation.

6.0 EQUALITY/DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 Equality and Diversity Issues have been considered however there are no issues associated with this report.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION:

7.1 That Cabinet approves the submission of an Expression of Interest for Northallerton to the first round of the Future High Streets Fund on 22 March 2019.

MICK JEWITT
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Background papers: Future High Streets Fund

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Future High Streets Fund

Call for Expressions of Interest

Application Form



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Applicant Information

Bidding authority:

Area within authority covered by bid:

Bid Manager Name and position:

Contact telephone number:

Email address:

Postal address:

Additional evidence, such as letters of support, maps or plans should be included in an annex.

Applications to the Fund will be assessed against the criteria set out below. Further information on the scoring criteria and their weighting will be published by the department before the end of January 2019.

Submission of proposals:

Proposals must be received no later than 2359 on **Friday 22 March 2019**.

An electronic copy only of the bid including any supporting material should be submitted to highstreetsfund@communities.gov.uk.

Enquiries about the Fund may be directed to highstreetsfund@communities.gov.uk.

SECTION 1: Defining the place

This section will seek a definition of the high street or town centre to be covered within the bidding authority. Places should:

- Explain the high street/town centre geography
- Indicate the population of those living and travelling to this centre, how this links to the wider economic area and its role in the lives of those within the catchment area

1.1 Geographical area:

Include information setting out the extent of the high street/town centre area covered in the proposal and a description of this centre.

Please include maps and supporting evidence as annex documents if required.

Please limit your response to 500 words.

1.2 Population and links to wider economic area:

Information on the population living and working in the town centre area, how the area acts as a centre of social and economic activity and its links to the wider economic catchment area.

With supporting evidence to include:

Resident and workplace population, travel to work catchment area, town centre footfall, commercial space, retail activity, cultural activities, diversity of uses and social/ historical importance of the centre

Please limit your response to 750 words.

SECTION 2: Setting out the challenges

Clear description of the issues and challenges facing this area.

This section will seek a description of the issues and structural challenges facing the high street or town centre area to be covered within the bidding. Places should:

- Describe the key challenges facing the area
- Provide evidence to support this argument (additional sources can be included in annexes). Set out why this place would benefit more from moving forward to co-development than other places within the area

We will not accept bids covering town centre areas that are not facing significant challenges.

2.1: Challenges

We recognise that each place will see different challenges. Supporting evidence on the challenges facing areas could cover the following:

- *Proportion and/or number of vacant properties*
- *Openings/closures of commercial units*
- *Diversity of uses in the town centre area*
- *Resident/customer surveys*
- *Pedestrian flows and footfall trends*
- *Evidence of congestion and air quality*
- *Perception of safety and occurrence of crime*
- *State of town centre environmental quality including provision of green spaces*
- *Accessibility*
- *Housing demands*

2.2: Rationale for selecting town centre area

Set out your rationale for choosing this town centre area as opposed to other centres within your local authority, and why this area is most in need.

Please limit your response to 500 words.

SECTION 3: Strategic ambition

This section will seek evidence of the level of ambition from the local authority, support from stakeholders and evidence that the local authority is well-placed to use the Future High Street Fund to tackle these challenges in a way that will fit with wider existing plans. Local authorities should:

- Set out a high-level vision for improving their area and how this links with need expressed in Section 2
- Demonstrate how this ambition will align with other funding streams (public or private)
- Cover how investment from government will support the area and help overcome these challenges
- Demonstrate engagement with and support from local stakeholders including other tiers of local government, if applicable (supporting evidence of this support such as letters should be attached as an annex)
- Show how this will link to wider strategic plans, including the Local Plan and Local Industrial Strategies e.g. around housing and local growth
- Provide an estimate of how much revenue funding they would need to support the development of their strategic vision and business case for a specific proposal

This phase relates to defining places and challenges and we therefore are not asking for specific project proposals at this stage.

However, if a local authority has been working on a specific project that they feel is deliverable in the short term if they were to receive capital funding at an early stage, we invite them to make that clear here. While the details of the project will not be considered in our decision-making at this stage, we may consider fast-tracking these projects during co-development.

We will not accept bids that do not provide sufficient evidence of support from local stakeholders.

3.1 Town centre vision and ambition for change

Set out your vision for regenerating your high street and how this links with the challenges outlined in section 2.

Please limit your response to 750 words.

3.2 Engagement and alignment of vision

Set out how your town centre vision aligns with other funding streams, both public and private, including details of partnership working with the private sector in this area. Show how your vision fits with wider strategic plans such as housing, transport and Local Industrial Strategies.

Please limit your response to 750 words.

3.3 Support for town centre vision

Provide details, including letters of support, for your vision from (where applicable):

- *Other tiers of local government including Mayoral and non-Mayoral Combined Authorities and county councils where applicable*

Other local stakeholders including:

- *Local Enterprise Partnerships*
- *Business Improvement Districts*
- *Private sector*
- *Community groups*

Please limit your response to 500 words and include evidence of this support as an annex where appropriate.

3.4 Estimate of revenue funding needed

Provide details of how much revenue funding you need to develop project plans for capital funding (including detailed business cases).

Include estimated breakdowns of how you would spend this revenue funding

Please limit your response to 500 words.