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Department for
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**One Public Estate (OPE) Phase 6 and Local Authority Land Release
Funding (LRF): Phase 6 Open Day
11 August 2017
Questions & Answers**

**There are a number of government reforms as detailed in the presentation.
How well engaged are OPE with network rail?**

- The OPE programme is engaged with Network Rail at both a national and regional level. We realise that closer working with Network Rail has huge potential and this is an area we are having some success. We have exciting regeneration projects in York, Plymouth and Swindon where councils are working in partnership with Network Rail and local rail companies and would be keen to expand the number of projects we have in this area. We will give priority to ambitious and deliverable proposals.
- We have in place regional teams of Government Property Unit (GPU) and Local Government Association (LGA) who are out in the field and can help you build closer working relationships where appropriate.

What is the difference in the timetable between new and existing partnerships?

- The timetable takes a two stage approach depending on whether the partnership is new to OPE or already an existing partnership.
- The first stage is for new partnerships to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) by Friday 18 August. We realise this is a quick turnaround and would encourage partnerships to submit a high level overview of what they are planning to deliver over 8 pages. The assessment of the application will look to see if partnerships will meet the pre-selection criteria and whether the projects have deliverability. Up to £50,000 will then be awarded for partnerships to work up a full Services and Assets Delivery Plan (SADP).
- In the second stage, partnerships (new and existing) will submit a full SADP [new] or an appendix to an existing SADP [existing] by the deadline Friday 3 November.

If applying for multiple sites will the application be made on behalf of the partnership? And if so, where will the money be allocated?

- The lead partnership should submit the application on behalf of the local authorities represented in the partnership. This will include all projects for OPE revenue funding and sites for release for LRF.
- The OPE revenue funding is issued to the lead authority of the partnership. And a funding letter will be issued to clarify the breakdown of funding award.
- We will clarify how LRF funding will be allocated ahead of funding being awarded.



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Wouldn't it be more effective to put in separate bids rather than in a partnership so the maximum amount of funding can be achieved?

- OPE has a raft of different partnerships on the programme for example Cornwall who are a single unitary and Greater Manchester who have 10 local authorities in the partnership. We encourage partners to work together as this will give the partnership a greater number of assets. We will provide challenge to the application if it's not part of a wider partnership.
- An application can be made for up to £500k but it will not necessarily receive the full amount requested. This will depend on the individual projects within the application. If there are a series of strong projects then the application will be more likely be successful for the full amount.
- Separately, well-established OPE partnerships, or those in the top 100 asset owning areas, will be able to apply for a pilot scheme offering up to an additional £500,000 repayable grant.

For OPE, can you bid for more that £500,000?

- No, a maximum of £500,000 per partnership is available. We encourage partnerships to put forward deliverable projects which we understand may require more than 500,000.
- Partnerships can apply for funding to kick start the project then come back at a later date for continued funding and support, therefore creating a wider opportunity across the programme to unlock projects and create resources.

Is development funding available for existing partnerships?

- No, we expect a partnership to be able to produce an extension bid using the funding and resources OPE has already provided.

What funding is used to access the pool of experts and what are their benefits?

- It is separate to the initial £50,000 which is intended to help build a partnerships SADP, but funding granted under OPE can be used to acquire an individual's services.
- The experts understand OPE and will provide a consistent approach. We will also offer partnerships a choice of consultants, allowing you to select the most appropriate person for you.

Is there a cap for LRF?

- No cap has been set for the total LRF that will be allocated to partnerships. It will depend on the size of the bid.



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- Please note that the maximum amount of funding that can be requested per unit is £15,000. Funding will be awarded on a competitive basis, with bids ranked according to how they demonstrate value for money, innovation, and whether they're in an area that supports government's strategic growth ambitions.

Does a local authority have to be part of an OPE partnership to bid for the Land Release Fund?

- No they don't, but you must follow the same application process for either or both OPE and LRF funding.

Can local authorities apply for both OPE and DCLG funding?

- Yes, partnerships can apply for either or both pots, dependent on the opportunities available in their area.
- Partnerships will need to meet the separate criteria for each funding pot, and evidence how they can deliver benefits in a short timeframe. They must also be willing to meet the pre-selection criteria in place which covers all funding elements.

Do you just have to apply for new projects or can a partnership apply for projects they are already part of their programme?

- If the partnership has long term projects they want further funding for, we will take this in to account. We will want to see evidence the project is on track and has a clear project plan for delivery. We recognise there are often setbacks but as long as the partnership can demonstrate strong governance and progress to date then an additional request of funding will be considered.
- To secure additional funding for an existing project, partnerships will have to demonstrate that extra funding will deliver increased benefits at an accelerated pace.
- It is recommended that a bid is formed of long and short term projects, for example a short term blue light co-location and long term housing development.

If the transfer of a site is imminent, can a partnership still apply for LRF?

- The partnership will need to demonstrate that the site will be in their possession by the time the funding will be issued. Any requests will be assessed on a site by site basis.



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Are you worried about who develops the land for housing? Would a Local Authority arm's length company be eligible?

- A Local Authority arm's length company would be eligible. I would also reiterate that 40% of the criteria is for innovative models of delivery. The prospectus covers the criteria for this.
- Note that as long as land is owned by the local authority prior to release then they can decide who the land is transferred to. At the point houses are being built, it no longer needs to be owned by the local authority.
- An example of a body not eligible for funding is a Registered Social Landlord.

Are there any examples or guidance of what is classed as small scale infrastructure?

- Demolishing a building
- Putting in an access road
- Improving road junctions
- Road widening

The prospectus states that LRF is for the release of land by 2020. What does it mean by 'release'?

- Released is defined as local authority land that has been sold to the open market, transferred to a development vehicle, or which has seen development starts.

Are there are restrictions on the type of housing that can built on a site?

- No. We understand that the partnerships will know what is best for their areas.

If a project includes housing that will be phased over a number of years (completing after 2020), does this still count for LRF?

- If the agreement is signed before 2020 then yes, this is fine.

Should I apply for Land Release Fund, HIF or Accelerated Construction funding?

- Your OPE Regional lead is best to advise on the best fund for your site's specific need. DCLG are also happy to look at any bids ahead of submission. There will be no double funding on any of the sites.
- Priorities of the respected funds are as follows:
 - **Land Release Fund**
 - £45million capital grant funding for land remediation and small-scale infrastructure to support the release of surplus local authority land for housing, by 2020.



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- **Housing Infrastructure Fund**
 - £2.3 billion of grant funding to be allocated to local authorities on a competitive basis in period from 2017/18 to 2020/21, to deliver up to 100,000 homes
 - To fund physical infrastructure e.g. roads, healthcare facilities, digital infrastructure, to unlock large sites for housing
 - Open for bids until 28th September 2017
- **Accelerated Construction**
 - Expected to be allocated to local authorities on a competitive basis.
 - Aim to deliver 15,000 home starts on central and local government surplus land by 2020.
 - Designed to support our market diversification objectives by supporting non-major builders and help tackle the construction skills gap, including through greater use of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC).

Can the Land Release Fund cover any revenue work necessary to work out what needs to be done to the site?

- The Land Release Fund is only for capital works.

Can the fund be used to bring forward a piece of land for commercial and residential use?

- Yes, however the value for money calculation only takes into account the number of additional housing units that will be unlocked by the funding.