

**HEREFORD STRONGER TOWNS BOARD**  
**Notes and Action Points**  
**Friday 04 September 2020 at 08.30**  
**Zoom Video Conference**

<b>Chair:</b>	Mark Stevenson	MS	Co-Founder, Work Here Ltd
<b>Note Taker:</b>	Melissa Walker	MW	Growth Programme Support Officer, Herefordshire Council
<b>Board Present:</b>	Ellie Chowns	ECH	Cabinet Member Environment, Economy & Skills, H.Council
	Ian Christie	IC	Big Business Representative / MD, Welsh Water
	Elise Cummings	ECU	Younger Person Representative
	Kath Hey	KH	Councillor, Herefordshire Council
	David Langley	DL	Chief of External Engagement, NMITE
	Will Lindesay	WL	Chief Executive, HVOSS
	Frank Myers	FM	Herefordshire Business Board / Marches LEP
	Jesse Norman	JN	MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire
	Ruth Parry	RP	Director of Operations & Marketing, Simple Design Works Ltd
	Lauren Rogers	LR	Project Manager, Rural Media
	Paul Stevens	PA	Hereford Business Improvement District (HBID)
	Will Vaughan	WV	Hereford Pedicabs and Pedicargo
	Nick Webster	NW	Economic Development Manager, Herefordshire Council
<b>Board Apologies:</b>	Laura Hughes	JH	Director, Signs And Labels
	Julian Vaughan	JV	Managing Director, Green Dragon
<b>Other Attendees:</b>	Rebecca Collings	RC	Consultant, The Nichols Group
	David Hitchener	DH	Leader of the Council, Herefordshire Council
<b>Other Apologies:</b>	Clare Hannah	CH	MHCLG representative

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1.	<b>WELCOME - Chair</b> MS welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	<b>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING - Chair</b> There were some issues in obtaining the recording of the last meeting which led to a delay in them being typed up. Once they have been reviewed by the chair they will be issued.	
3.	<b>COMMS UPDATE – Lauren Rogers</b> BBC Hereford & Worcester ran a story about the Towns Fund, and are keen to follow up on progress. It has also been promoted in various newsletters. Once the Consultant is appointed comms will be joint with them.  Members of the public have added comments to the Towns portal, LR will regularly circulate an update on this. It was queried if we are able to moderate the comments made as a lot of them are not relevant; the portal is run by central government so it is outside of our control.  It was queried what other towns are using that we may need to consider; RC will check for any other good process being used elsewhere.	<b>RC</b>
4.	<b>CONSULTANTS APPOINTMENT UPDATE - Chair</b> Three bids were received for the Consultant tender, a robust scoring process was followed to review the bids over the weekend and the group then met on Wednesday to agree who the contract should be awarded to. The process was overseen by the HC Procurement team. It is felt the successful candidate is the most appropriate and was the strongest of the three.  The contract has been awarded to Rose Regeneration; they are based in Lincolnshire and have considerable in the field of undertaking economic development surveys. They will work with local contractors, including Christian Dangerfield, Rural Media and Minx Media, to engage locally.  An initial meeting is being arrange for early next week to go through expectations and areas of their tender that need to be strengthened. They will be asked to produce an implementation plan that sets out timelines for engagement, how they will handle public consultation, etc. Once in place it will be shared with the Board.  It is important that all sectors of the community are involved. We need to think about how to support the consultants to ensure all sectors are covered and ensure we feed into the consultants to support them. If have anyone has an awareness of any groups please forward	

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	<p>information.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Board Members to provide NW with contact details for sectors to be fed into the consultants, by Wednesday 09 September</b></p> <p>KH queried if there has been any communication with Hereford City Council Officers yet, it is important that there is ongoing liaison and collaboration with the city council.</p> <p><b>ACTION: NW &amp; KH to follow up on communication with Hereford City Council</b></p> <p>JN advised that he has had a conversation with Peter Knott, Arts Council Director for the Midlands, who was very encouraging about the bid and our decision to go in the third round. He has advised that the more we can do across the sports piece to tie in all of the community sports activity into the picture the more it will strengthen the bid. NW confirmed he has also had conversations with the Arts Council. Their engagement is really important early on. We need to think outside of the box of what we already have, football, rugby, skate park, etc. getting all of that focused to the consultants is key</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p> <p><b>NW, KH</b></p>
5.	<p><b>CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY – Nick Webster</b></p> <p>The guidance states that a Conflicts Of Interest Policy must be in place. Board Members need to declare any interests at beginning of a meeting to enable transparency and provide confidence that what we're doing is fair and transparent.</p> <p><b>ACTION: NW to circulate Conflicts Of Interest forms for completion</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: Board Members to complete the Conflicts Of Interest form and return to NW by 11 September</b></p>	<p><b>NW</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p>
6.	<p><b>FACTS, FIGURES AND VISION – Nick Webster</b></p> <p>NW has gone through the data and pulled out some of the key information, which he delivered via the attached presentation.</p> <p>When the consultants are on board they will look at providing an evidence base. This gives a wider picture of the town. Some people will be connected, others will have no experience or information in relation to this. Our bid needs to be all encompassing and look at how to pull in those from the deprived areas to participate.</p> <p>JN felt it was interesting to have the numbers that confirm things we've thought for years. We really must take a one city view of the whole thing, the worry is that we're not going to play up the opportunities involved with the entire city. When we think of a positive picture we need to think of the entire city. It was agreed that we need to ensure equality of opportunity for those in south of the city.</p> <p>FM requested clarity on the figures, are they city figures, county figures, or a mixture of both; NW advised that the average wage is a county figure, all others are city figures.</p> <p>Concern was expressed about how we prioritise as we won't be able to address all of the issues with the money available. The government want an economic emphasis, and the jobs figure highlights one major issue, but there are other issues, and we need to include the views of the population. It was discussed at the last meeting that we need to ensure we not being constrained by the £25m, we need to think about what is required and then whittle them down into deliverables. Those in the deprived areas feel that the decisions are out of their hands, we need to build confidence in these areas that things will progress.</p> <p>ECH felt that the figures were missing the gender dimension, there is a big difference between males and females with jobs and access to services, etc. also ethnicity. One of the quickest ways to increase wages is to increase the number of civil servant jobs in the area.</p> <p>ECH felt it was useful look at the functions that the city plays, not just employment stats, as people use the city for purposes other than employment, we need to think about the functions it plays for the wider community.</p> <p>ECH reminded everyone that there is a cross part agreement that we will aim to become a zero carbon county, this needs to be an important part of our framing.</p> <p>WL highlighted that the vision and success is not just about the city, whatever we do offers the opportunity to be an enabler for the rest of the county. If at the end we have a coherent plan, and clarity of functions, this will be a massive success.</p> <p>PS felt important points were; how do we retain the younger generation in the county, what would make them want to remain here, e.g. leisure activities, sporting clubs, etc.; the history</p>	

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	<p>of the city, i.e. river, cathedral, city walls, Mappa Mundi, etc.</p> <p>KH noted that some of the facts are very sobering, particularly re qualifications. Skills and training for young people is crucial. We need to have the city as a centre of skills. The other main thing is accessibility in the city, i.e. RNCB, etc. needs to be considered if we want to cover the full demographic of the city. Diversity and all populations need to be included in the process.</p> <p>LR agreed that they were sobering facts and figures, and it's helpful to keep them in mind. She felt that a lot of people living and working in the city that won't be aware of these facts.</p> <p>RP felt we need to consider the role of the city for the wider county, both in terms of work and leisure, i.e. why would they keep coming to Hereford. How can we encourage more collaborations, community groups, etc. Re skills and training, it is not unusual for people to have several different careers, we need to prepare people to think of careers / job opportunities that will come in the future, and attract talent from outside of the county.</p> <p>FM noted that a lot of the community groups / facilities struggle, i.e. skate park, boxing club, etc. we need to understand why and how to ensure that they don't in the future. They need to be supported to grow.</p> <p>DL agreed with the previous comments and advised that he was taken with comment about looking for a golden thread. He feels that skills and training are key, as is the lack of skilled and good salary jobs. If we are going to attract and retain the younger population they need well paid jobs, etc. to encourage them to stay. Creativity, resilience, character, etc. are all things employers are looking for in addition to skills. A high percentage are non-skilled jobs, digitisation is likely to replace many of these roles so we need to have vision about where future jobs will be.</p> <p>ECU felt that she was able to offer an outsider perspective; she had never heard of Hereford before coming to study with NMITE, when she googled Hereford she got a picture of a green field with a cow in it!</p> <p>The best engineering education is in England and Germany, with many of the education providers attracting students by getting businesses to sponsor students by covering their fees for X number of years. This provides good links with businesses. ECU suggested creating a scheme with local businesses where rewards have to be spent locally.</p> <p>ECU felt that Herefordshire has a head start in the area of being green and sustainable. The students feel safe here and that Hereford is a safe town. It is cleaner than other cities, and has a unique feel, with lots of independent individual food places, and accessibility to the countryside. She felt that there was an issue with public transport, many of the students would like to explore the local area but they are fearful of getting stranded, i.e. one student took a bus to Hay-on-Wye but was unable to get a return journey and ended up having to hitch a lift back to Hereford. We need to ensure that future students are able to access safe reliable transport links.</p> <p>ECU noted that Japan relies on immigration to fix their ageing population, we need to look at blending incomers with the existing residents. She advised that when she began her course in Hereford the induction week was joint between NMITE, HCA and the RNC, the students all did fresher's together so it was not clear where each of them was from.</p> <p>WV wondered how many other boards are saying the same as us, what is our vision? We need stakeholders to help with this. There are some interesting suggestions being submitted to the website, we have to find a method to quickly get a route to what we want to deliver. We need to listen to the stakeholders and let them help us inform what is going to happen. It was agreed this needs to put into action and ensure it's delivered.</p>	
7.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Chair</b></p> <p>None raised.</p>	