

**TOWNS FUND BOARD
Notes and Action Points
Friday 05 March 2021 at 08.30
Zoom Video Conference**

Chair:	Lauren Rogers	LR	Project Manager, Rural Media
Minute Taker:	Melissa Walker	MW	Growth Programme Support Officer, Herefordshire Council
Board Present:	Alan Anderson	AA	British Land – Old Market
	Ellie Chowns	ECH	Cabinet Member Environment, Economy & Skills, H.Council
	Judith Faux	JF	Trustee, HVOSS
	Kath Hey	KH	Mayor of Hereford City Council
	David Langley	DL	Chief of External Engagement, NMITE
	Frank Myers	FM	Herefordshire Business Board / Marches LEP
	Ruth Parry	RP	Director of Operations & Marketing, Simple Design Works Ltd
	Paul Stevens	PA	Hereford Business Improvement District (HBID)
	Julian Vaughan	JV	Managing Director, Green Dragon
	Will Vaughan	WV	Hereford Pedicabs and Pedicargo
Board Apologies:	Ian Christie	IC	Big Business Representative / MD, Welsh Water
	Laura Hughes	JH	Director, Signs And Labels
	Will Lindesay	WL	Chief Executive, HVOSS
	Jesse Norman	JN	MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire
Other Attendees:	Rebecca Collings	RC	Consultant, The Nichols Group
	Clare Hannah	CH	MHCLG representative
	Joni Hughes	JH	Senior Project Manager – Capital, Herefordshire Council
	Nick Webster	NW	Economic Development Manager, Herefordshire Council
Other Apologies:	David Hitchiner	DH	Leader of the Council, Herefordshire Council

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1.	WELCOME / ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES / DECLARATIONS AND REGISTER OF INTEREST LR welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance and apologies are recorded above. No declaration of interests were raised.	
2.	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING The minutes from the meeting held on 25 January were agreed as a true record. Actions were discussed and updated. Thanks were expressed to FM for his liaison with LEP to get a letter of support, to LR for Arts Council support and to the HVOSS board for their endorsement of the TIP submission. The individual proposed to be the Youth Representation has advised they do not have capacity to take on the role; to be discussed later in the meeting. The investment plan has been published, members were asked to please share where appropriate.	ALL
3.	UPDATE FROM MHCLG The first 45 successful towns from cohort 1 & 2 were announced in the budget. The team are continuing to assess the remaining submissions. They had hoped to issue the HoT prior to the local elections but this is not looking possible due to the number to assess, it is now likely to be just after local elections. When we receive the HoT we will have to decide what we want to do with the money we are offered, we may not be able to spend on certain projects that MHCLG don't feel appropriate, but other than that it is up to us to make the decision. We need to start thinking about how to prioritise projects, they will be RAG rated which will help to guide the conversations and decisions. RC advised that other towns have had their funding allocation reduced to reflect the red projects, but the allocation does not cover the full requirement to deliver the remaining projects, i.e. £22m of projects but only receive £20m. It may be necessary to change the scope of projects or look for match funding to make up the gap, etc. It was felt that it will be difficult to prioritise projects until we receive the HoT; CH was asked to	

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	<p>feedback to Govt that it is an unhelpful process, the criteria is not yet properly published, Central Govt review and say what should go ahead but leave it to the town to decide what should be progressed. CH will feedback.</p> <p>JF queried what would be the rationale for the further funding cut following the rag rating; CH advised that it is essentially based on the quality of TIP and the individual projects, and will be a proportionate amount rather than full amount. RC commented that some towns have got closer than others based on merits of the detail within the TIP.</p> <p>LR noted that we need to do everything we can to prep for it, and we will have to handle the difficult conversation when we get the HoT.</p>	
4.	<p>STAGE 2 PREPARATION</p> <p>LR stressed that it is crucial we get this right, we need to ensure we are poised and ready for receipt of the HoT. The Govt guidance outlines responsibilities going forward, it is important we reach agreement about how to progress stage 2.</p> <p>LR noted that we have been invited to apply for additional Capacity Funding.</p> <p><u>4a. Recommendations re support</u></p> <p>JV outlined the content within the report about the implementation of Stage 2 produced by him, DL & FM; the report contains the following recommendations;</p> <p><i>The Board is asked to resolve:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>To agree the Board has responsibility to deploy TIP capacity funding, both £60K 'in hand' and, if successful, additional £120K.</i> 2. <i>Subject to board approval, to repurpose the existing 'Technical Sub Group' (TSG) into a new 'Programme Delivery Group' (PDG), maintain chair and increase membership to support the group.</i> 3. <i>Subject to board Approval, to immediately commission project management expertise for forthcoming Heads of Terms phase, under the oversight of the new Programme Delivery Group, and develop a framework plan for what will be needed at the TIP and individual project level, both for this period and beyond; to develop financial models for this.</i> 4. <i>To include administrative support for the Board as part of programme management functions.</i> 5. <i>To provide appropriate resources to support the Communications Sub-Group in gathering and disseminating data throughout the project.</i> <p>Discussions took place about the content of the report and its recommendations.</p> <p>It was felt that we need a budget agreed by the board that sets out the costs required for each element of work, i.e. comms, admin support, HC Accountable Body costs, etc. The funding that doesn't support the council can be deployed by the Board, it is critical to agree this at the outset. HC to set out accountable body costs and share with Technical Sub Group.</p> <p>RC advised that other towns are wrangling with how to progress this going forward, she felt our approach to build things up prior to receiving the offer sounds sensible, she will ask town coordinators if they have good examples that can be shared and will share with LR & NW.</p> <p><u>4b. Business Case Responsibilities</u></p> <p>NW advised that Govt issued guidance for stage two business case development in December, from this he had pulled together a table that sets out the broad requirements, when they need to be completed, and the roles and responsibilities of each party, i.e. Board, Accountable Body, and Project Applicants. He noted that a lot of the things in the 4a paper dovetail with these requirements, 4b sets out the Govt requirements. NW outlined the process required once HoT are received.</p> <p>Discussions took place about the content of the papers; it was felt that consideration needs to be given to the individual governance processes of the organisations that will be progressing the projects. We need to ensure that the projects are well supported as some of them will not have resources or skillsets to complete the requirements of the green book application.</p> <p>Further discussions took place about the recommendations in report 4a. There was a general consensus to commission, if possible, Rose Regeneration to undertake the initial work required to confirm projects to government. HC were asked to review procurement options for this initial work. Generally it was felt that the wider business case development work should be subject to an open process, to which Rose, and others, would be invited to bid into. No objections were raised against the recommendations. Thanks were expressed to all for their input.</p>	RC

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6.	<p>BOARD MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>LR advised that stage 2 brings further complexities and stressed the need for a Board that retains a good understanding of the pledge made to support the pipeline of projects and a good understanding of green book requirement. LR proposed that a review of the membership is started and asked for volunteers to begin process next week. KH, FM & PS offered to support the process.</p> <p>LR felt it was the right time to start looking for a new Chair of the Board, and that we need someone with experience of the Green Book process. Once the new members are in place a vote can be taken on this.</p>	
7.	<p>COMMS UPDATE</p> <p>RP provided an update on the recent comms work; Facebook and Twitter have been used for social media, and the website has been updated to reflect current position. Various media sources have run stories in relation to the submission of the TIP, and there has been a steady stream of media enquiries.</p> <p>LR stressed that additional comms support is essential going forward, she suggested a Comms Sub Group would be useful going forward to make it more sustainable and appropriate. This was supported.</p>	
8.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p><u>Orphans Press</u></p> <p>NW advised that a request has been received from Orphans Press for additional funding for work undertaken as they undertook more work than anticipated. It is for an additional £3k on top of the £12k already spent; NW is happy to work up the details and put it into a paper if the board require this; LR requested the paper is drafted and discussed at sub group next week on budget.</p>	NW