

HEREFORD STRONGER TOWNS BOARD
Notes and Action Points
Friday 16 October 2020 at 08.30
Zoom Video Call

Chair:	Lauren Rogers	LR	Project Manager, Rural Media
Minute Taker:	Melissa Walker	MW	Growth Programme Support Officer, Herefordshire Council
Board Present:	Ellie Chowns	ECH	Cabinet Member Environment, Economy & Skills, H.Council
	Ian Christie	IC	Big Business Representative / MD, Welsh Water
	Elise Cummings	ECU	Younger Persons Representative
	Kath Hey	KH	Councillor, Herefordshire Council
	David Langley	DL	Chief of External Engagement, NMITE
	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
	Julian Vaughan	JV	Managing Director, Green Dragon
	Will Vaughan	WV	Hereford Pedicabs and Pedicargo
Board Apologies:	Laura Hughes	JH	Director, Signs And Labels
	Will Lindesay	WL	Chief Executive, HVOSS
	Paul Stevens	PA	Hereford Business Improvement District (HBID)
Other Attendees:	Ivan Annibal	IA	Rose Regeneration
	Justine Burnett	JB	Senior Project Manager – Capital, Herefordshire Council
	Rebecca Collings	RC	Consultant, The Nichols Group
	Christian Dangerfield	CD	Rose Regeneration
	Clare Hannah	CH	MHCLG representative
	David Hitchener	DH	Leader of the Council, Herefordshire Council
	Jessica Sellick	JS	Rose Regeneration
	Nick Webster	NW	Economic Development Manager, Herefordshire Council
Other Apologies:	<i>None</i>		

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1.	<p>ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES / DECLARATIONS & REGISTER OF INTEREST</p> <p>Attendance and apologies are recorded above.</p> <p>LR made a declaration that whilst Rural Media are working with Rose Regeneration she is not involved with any of the work being undertaken.</p>	
2.	<p>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p><u>Actions from last meeting:</u></p> <p>P1, Item 3: Board Membership and Chair Update Action: NW to invite British Land to join the Board Update: NW has invited British Land to join the Board but received no response yet, NW to chase.</p> <p>Update regarding the appointment of the Vice Chair to be circulated.</p> <p>P2, Item 5: Project Ideas Kick Off Session Action: LR to send out email to establish areas of expertise and who will sit on each of the sub-groups Update: to be covered in this meeting</p> <p>P2, Item 6: Conflicts of Interest Action: NW to circulate Conflicts Of Interest forms for completion Update: NW will circulate asap</p> <p>ACTION: Board Members to complete the Conflicts Of Interest form and return to NW</p>	<p>NW</p> <p>LR</p> <p>NW</p> <p>ALL</p>
3.	<p>IDEAS WORKSHOP NOTES AND CONFIRMATION OF VISION</p> <p>An ideas workshop session was held on 08 October, which discussed a vision statement for use on the website, on social media, etc. The first draft put forward was;</p> <p><i>“Hereford is recognised globally as a great place to live, to work, to study, to invest and to visit; a place which has realised its full potential as a beacon of learning, culture, creativity, sustainable inclusive growth and community cohesion and which has fully embraced the opportunities and addressed the challenges of a smart, happy and ambitious 21st century.”</i></p>	

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	<p>It was felt that this was a bit wordy with too much detail, so the following vision statement was suggested;</p> <p><i>“Hereford aspires to be the greenest & fairest city in the country, with fantastic quality of life for people of all ages. Deeply rooted in our rural heritage, we're blossoming into a richly creative & highly-skilled place to live, work, study and visit.”</i></p> <p>There is a need to provide some clarity about key words within the vision so that there is agreement on definitions and interpretation, i.e. greenest / fairest / creative / highly skilled, etc. It was suggested that it is acknowledged on the website that, for example, fairest may mean equal wages, inclusive, access, etc. It was felt that digital needs to be included within the statement.</p> <p>Comments were invited from Board members;</p> <p>KH stated that she liked the basic revised version, however, she felt that it needed to be tweaked with ‘fairest’ replaced with something linked to connectivity. Whilst she liked the phrase rural heritage this is based in the city so perhaps replace with ‘historic heritage’. She suggested that the word ‘integrated’ should be included as we want to integrate all areas of the city, i.e. South Wye.</p> <p>FM felt it was important that the vision reflects what is in the prospectus. We need to define objectives rather than aspirations.</p> <p>DL also disliked the word ‘fairest’ and felt there are better ways of expressing this. He felt that connectivity needs to be included, as does ambition, we need to have ambitions to grow and bring communities forward.</p> <p>JN liked the language used in the statement and the energy it demonstrates. He felt it needs to clearly relate to Hereford to mark its individuality and make it perfectly clear that this couldn’t be anywhere else in the country, i.e. its heritage, cathedral, etc.</p> <p>JV liked the language used re deeply rooted and blossoming, he felt that smart / digital need to be included.</p> <p>ECH advised that ‘fairest’ is supposed to represent a levelling up, she noted that it is hard to communicate something on Hereford in 50 words that is unique and couldn’t refer to anywhere else. Our aim is to be really good, but we don’t aspire to be better than everyone else.</p> <p>ECU agreed with everything said and felt that integrated and ambitious were good suggestions. She suggested using ‘sustainable’ rather than ‘greener’, whilst we want to grow we don’t want to destroy what’s already here. Connectivity is also important.</p> <p>WL queried if there is space underneath the statement to provide more specific detail, i.e. use ‘Hereford – a thriving city in the countryside’ as the statement and capture more detail below. RC advised that other towns have used a series of more detailed objectives that sit below the vision. IA confirmed that having a short pithy vision with a series of sum ups has worked really well elsewhere. We need a golden thread / weave, with three of four themes around which we assemble the projects. This provides structure on which to build the bid. He advised that the Govt commitment to ‘Levelling Up’ has been a popular part of the development of visions in plans elsewhere.</p> <p>LR advised that volunteers are required to work on progressing this.</p>	
4.	<p>PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND PROJECT PRIORITISATION PROCESS</p> <p><u>Project Development</u></p> <p>IA provided an update on recent progress. CD provided an update on consultation undertaken to date. He acknowledged that the majority of contact has been north of the river so far and advised that he is working hard to readdress the balance. He has contacted a community centre south of river to get contacts from that side of the city and his emphasis over the next few weeks will be heavily weighted to the south. He is engaging with a diverse and wide group of stakeholders and setting up direct contact has taken longer in some areas, i.e. college students. He advised that he has experienced difficulty in some areas due to compliance issues, i.e. direct contact with Youth Council representatives.</p> <p>LR asked Board Members to contribute to the list of names if they feel groups or voices are missing: LINK</p> <p>CD advised that there is an exciting range of proposals being put forward, including addressing more use of the river, sports and culture, food and drink, creative industries, etc. many that</p>	

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	<p>optimise the assets we already have and that do not require large amounts of money. He provided information about some of the proposals put forward.</p> <p>IA noted that we're going to be in a position where we need to be selective about what proposals to take forward, at the heart of the towns fund is the ideas of jobs and growth, we need to manage expectations.</p> <p>JN queried if a full documentary record is being kept of all consultations undertaken. IA confirmed that detailed records are being kept and advised that a weekly summary report is being developed. He acknowledged the need to demonstrate that everything has been considered.</p> <p>JN highlighted that it is important to Govt that all proposals are tied together and that they fit with local understanding, planning and future development. IA confirmed that they are working with HC to ensure that they have access to documents from partners, and these will be considered alongside the direct discussions.</p> <p>FM felt we need to ensure we refer to the prospectus re growth and keep this focus. DL agreed that we need to ensure our bid meets what the funder is looking for, it's about economic regeneration, it has to tick the criteria boxes otherwise it won't get funded.</p> <p>ECH highlighted that we need to ensure we consider what different generations consider to be culture. A recent conversation with her 16 year old son highlighted this difference, he was dismissive of what the older generation view as culture and advised that youth culture includes skate parks, etc. He highlighted that people are attracted to come to the city to study as result of this sub culture, and that a number of businesses have opened to support this culture, i.e. skate clothing shops. This is contributing to the economy and making it a more vibrant.</p> <p>ECH noted a recent announcement about Broadband and the fully private funded full fibre roll out through the company Zzoomm. LINK to broadband info. IA advised that they will seek additional information on this from NW.</p> <p><u>Project Prioritisation Process</u></p> <p>IA advised that the prioritisation element of the report sets out how to sift the proposals when they come in so that they to meet Govt priorities. The Towns Fund have appointed a consortium led by Arup to offer capacity support to evolving Towns Fund partnership and they have developed a tool to support project prioritisation; Towns Fund Project Prioritisation Tool.</p> <p>There are two components to the tool, one is a series of measure that look at local priorities, and then five measures looking at HM Treasury Green Book priorities. It then provides a composite score for the project and ranks it against each of the other projects put into the tool. Govt have backed the use of this tool and it's promoted on the website as an example of best practice. The Board are asked to agree to the use of the tool by the Technical Group.</p> <p>We are in a good position to start thinking about this process as we harvest ideas, we are going to be deluged with ideas so we need to be clear on managing expectations that there will be a process that refines this list. We are likely to get into a busy phase in the next few weeks. We need to ensure that the members of the Technical Group are independent and it needs to be comprised of people not conflicted by interests. They can use this tool to make a final priority listing to the Board.</p> <p>LR queried if the Technical Group will select what goes into the TIP; IA advised that the Board will make the decision on what is finalised, it will be the Boards final decision.</p> <p>JN queried what technical skills the Technical Group will have to deploy, we don't want the bid to fail because it's technically inadequate, he queried if Rose Regeneration (RR) have the skills required; IA confirmed RR have the skills in place to scrutinise deliverability issues, etc.</p> <p>JN noted that a vast amount of work is required and queried if we have the resources available to undertake this; IA felt there are a few people on the Board with the necessary experience, and advised they are open to the idea of having additional external people to undertake some of the hard work. JN advised that he would be happy to help but felt it was not appropriate for him to be involved.</p> <p>LR advised that she didn't think it would be board members on this group; IA advised that it can be Board members and external.</p> <p>KH queried what part Covid 19 recovery will play when assessing projects; IA advised that there are two core components that are part of the list asked for by Govt, one is that it is paramount that projects are Covid proof for the future, the second is that they need to deliver</p>	<p>IA</p>

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	<p>clean growth. Projects will assessed against this. KH queried what clean growth mean; IA advised that there are a number of key indicators that are used, such as sustainable building techniques, energy efficient, etc. There is a clear list that is applied when looking at projects</p> <p>NW endorsed IA's suggestion for a Technical Group and the need for it to be independent, transparent, open and objective. He asked RC to comment on the prioritisation tool; RC advised that many other towns are using the tool, it makes it easier for towns to find a logical way to prioritise projects. The technical detail provided for projects varies based on the maturity of the projects being put forward, some have a high level of detail, others have limited detail dependant on status of engagement. The detail will be worked through at the Business Case stage and we need to be conscious of the level of work required at that stage. She advised that she is happy to provide support as required.</p> <p>ACTION: NW, IA and RC to discuss level of input required</p> <p>RP queried if it was possible that some of the projects could deliver community skills, etc. RC confirmed this is being discussed elsewhere with attempts to follow the London Olympic park example where everyone involved in the park development had to make a commitment to provide skill opportunities locally. She felt that this was a great idea and something that can be looked at. It was suggested this could be encapsulated in our values. NW advised that the HC procurement team are in the early stages of working up something similar to get a social element in HC procurement, using local skills, etc.</p> <p>Recommendation: The Board are asked to confirm the appointment of the Technical Group and to agree the use of the tool. Approved by the Board</p>	<p>NW, IA, RC</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>REVIEW OF STRATEGIES</p> <p>The strategies review is part of the 'evidence gathering' stage for the Town Investment Plan and sits alongside the data profile and engagement process. The purpose of undertaking the review is two-fold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a strategic context to inform the Vision, Strategic Framework and Options Appraisal. Aligning existing policies and strategies with proposed Investment interventions. <p>JS ran through a summary of the national, regional and local strategies reviewed so far, and the insights for the Implementation Plan. She queried if the Board were able to identify any gaps in the work undertaken to date.</p> <p>ACTION: Board members to notify RS of any gaps within the strategy review</p> <p>ECH felt it was important that the levelling up agenda is covered, it needs to be a core focus. Sustainable dimension is not mentioned, nor is the zero carbon commitment, the green growth priority, or the work being done to develop a zero carbon policy. These need to be included in the going forward also. JS advised that it is included within the longer document and agreed that looking forward is very important.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>FORMATION OF TECHNICAL AND COMMUNITY GROUP AND IDEAS EXCHANGE SESSIONS</p> <p><u>Technical Group;</u> Discussed under item 4 also. The role of this group is do an initial sense check of projects, which ones will work / not work, etc. They will so an initial sift of the long list and bring the project prioritisation back to the Board.</p> <p><u>Community Group;</u> This group will ensure pressure is kept re inclusivity, and help to drive the process and monitor who's responded and identify any cold spots. It would be useful it included people with good local intelligence and connections. It will be important to think about an influencing strategy, engagement with treasury and DCMS re writing of strategy will bring a lot to the project. We need to identify how we might seek to manage influence with people. There are a lot of connections within the group, we need think about how to manage this process, its public face and influence.</p> <p>JN felt we need to have an entirely developed strategy about how to lobby different parts of the Govt, the more we have shape and structure on possibilities the easier it will become to influence, community groups, etc.</p> <p>KH suggested that WL would be a good fit for this group, his work with HVOSS means he has a huge connection with the community groups across the city.</p>	

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	<p>KH queried how this will link with input from communities i.e. knife angel project. This has potential for bringing income and interest into the city, could it be eligible for this project, how do smaller projects fit into the wider context of the project. IA commented that one if the really good things that comes out of the TF is that it generates a lot of things that aren't directly incorporated, it generates interest from other funders, and creates a store of good ideas aligned with contribution, etc. Some might not be ideal for TF but could be things we can get into the net and see how we can support. He felt we should include all ideas at this stage. LR liked the idea of having store of ideas that could feed into other programmes. She reiterated the importance of collating ideas.</p> <p>LR queried if any of the Board members had an interest in being part of these groups. Volunteers are shown below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Group: DL, FM, • Community Group; KH, ECU, WL <p>ACTION: LR to email Board members to seek volunteers for the Technical Group and the Community Group</p> <p><u>Ideas Exchange Session;</u> CD advised that it has been identified that there is a need to expand the ideas process. He hopes to start developing engagement asap for an exchange of ideas, and asked for ideas of people to be included in those groups.</p> <p>ACTION: CD to email Board members to summarise requirements for Ideas Exchange Session and to seek comments</p>	<p>LR</p> <p>CD</p>
7.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Chair</p> <p><u>Technical Sub-Group</u> DL nominated FM to chair the Technical Sub-Group and to progress setting up of this sub-group. This was supported by JV.</p> <p><u>Comms and website;</u> RP provided an update on comms; she is writing basic content for website, but needs clarification on collection of ideas, who to share with etc. It will have an events tab which she can open up to anyone else that wants to edit it, she can provide training if necessary.</p> <p>The original comms group had RP, LR & LH, but recently it has all fallen to RP to deal with. She advised she could do with some social media support, either external or internal.</p> <p>ACTION: LR & NW to discuss getting additional comms support in place</p> <p><u>Budget / Support for Sub Groups</u> FM commented that a large amount of the available budget has not been committed yet. He felt that the sub groups will require an immense amount of support and proposed spending some of the budget on clerical support for them. The inputting of projects to the project prioritisation tool is likely to be time consuming and this something that admin support could undertake. KH agreed that if funds are available we need to get support in place asap. JN agreed that timing is paramount, we don't want the sub groups to be held back by the sheer amount of work required, they need to be able to have strong opinionated discussions and not be held back by admin.</p> <p>ACTION: NW to query with IA what support is required for the sub groups and how they are facilitated elsewhere</p> <p><u>Board representation;</u> FM noted that there is a vacancy on the Board as there are only 14 members at present. He proposed inviting Gareth Williams, a local expert in sustainability to join the Board.</p> <p>ACTION: LR & NW to review Board membership and establish if further members are required</p>	<p>LR, NW</p> <p>NW</p> <p>LR, NW</p>