

HEREFORD STRONGER TOWNS BOARD
Notes and Action Points
Wednesday 13 January 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
	Ian Christie	IC	Big Business Representative / MD, Welsh Water
	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
	Jesse Norman	JN	MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire
	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:	Laura Hughes	JH	Director, Signs And Labels
	Will Lindesay	WL	Chief Executive, HVOSS
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 Hitchiner	DH	Leader of the Council, Herefordshire Council
	Nick Webster	NW	Economic Development Manager, Herefordshire Council
Other Apologies:	<i>None</i>		

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.	
2.	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING The minutes from the meetings held on 22 December and 30 December will be circulated for comment.	
3.	FEEDBACK FROM CHECK AND CHALLENGE SESSION A constructive session was held with MCHLG, Grant Thornton and Arup on 11 January to review all of the draft documents. Key recommendations for the TIP were received, including not selling short the amount of engagement undertaken, and the potential to strategically package some of the projects. This needs further consideration prior to submission. All comments made were very fair and help us to think about how to reset prior to submission. It was noted that RC has managed the process in a great way, it was done in a positive spirit and was very comprehensive, and we feel we've had proper scrutiny and engagement. The only issue that could change the content is thinking about grouping, particularly scale with some of the smaller projects, it could be better to wrap them together. We now have a real sense of direction that will enable us to progress to submission. TIP part one crucial and there is still work to be done to pull together info for the spreadsheets. The general feedback was that this is the area missing info and requires additional work. It is important that this element receives focus. TIP part two was also checked and approved as ok. JN expressed thanks to RC for the incredibly helpful process. He felt it was a benefit to be a late submission as we can learn from others. From a political standpoint the fact we have done so much engagement is a huge selling point. On grouping we need to make sure all are coherent, we want it to succeed as a collective entity rather than separate projects.	
4.	TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN PART ONE OVERVIEW – CONTENT AND DESIGN IA expressed thanks to all for their input and comments, IA & CD have tried to ensure they have incorporated as many of the comments as possible. The comments were all on a similar wavelength which suggests we have produced something that feels and tastes of Hereford.	

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	<p>Orphans Press are producing the final draft, if anyone has any final comments please forward them by EOD 15 January.</p> <p>IA provided an update on the content of the TIP. LR, RP and JN offered to assist with proof reading of the finalised document. Work is ongoing with the project sponsors to ensure the final forms are completed and received by 18 January. Momentum needs to be maintained to ensure that the final version captures all of the good advice received.</p>	
5.	<p>PROJECT UPDATE <u>TIP Part 2 Project Discussions – Quick Readiness Review</u> IA provided a brief update of where each project is at;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerhouse • Encore • Skills Foundry • Lines Project • Digital Culture Hub • Digital Futures • Future of Work Skills Hub NMITE • Maylord • Greening the City • Museum • Castle Green • Soil from the City • Extreme Sports • Meadow Arts • Electric Buses • River Wye Infrastructure <p>The independent appraisal commissioned by HC has allowed risk analysis for a number of the projects. Risk analysis, costings and drawings for other projects e.g. Museum has been commissioned directly by Rose Regeneration. This additional support for projects was agreed by board in Dec 2020. Active dialogue is ongoing with each project lead to ensure a good level of information for the green book form.</p> <p>A discussion took place about which projects could be grouped, the common themes and how they link back to our vision and five key themes. It was felt that any grouping must be because it makes sense and not just because it makes the next stage easier. Serious consideration needs to be taken of the recommendations from the check and challenge session.</p> <p>It was suggested that a pie chart is including with each project to clearly indicate where they meet the different elements of the vision and key themes, this would make it easier to understand for anyone with limited knowledge of Hereford. For example commercial and social is much closer in Hereford than it is in other cities, and there is a linkage between skills, entrepreneurship and liveability, this a strand that could be teased out to tie together projects.</p> <p>DL queried the Board’s thoughts on getting someone from outside of the group to read through the draft documents to provide a view from someone with no knowledge of the process or the city. He has received an offer from Steve Bassom, a former Govt Minister involved with stronger towns and city deals, he is deeply knowledgeable and has offered to read through and provide comment.</p> <p>LR queried if there are any key stakeholders that we need to engage with now the TIP is drafted, and do we seek an endorsement from them or just share for information; it was suggested that those that have shown support for the process should be asked to endorse / demonstrate their support, i.e. NMITE, Hereford Enterprise Zone, Hereford City Council, HBID, etc. FM advised that he is seeking endorsement from the Marches LEP Board. It was felt it would be a great idea to get a list of endorsements and logos, we could potentially get a huge number of them arising from the community engagement work. This is a broad Board and we are part of organisations that can bring that endorsement. It was queried and agreed that we could reach out to wider stakeholders, e.g. Open University, University of Wolverhampton (Cyber Centre), Arts Council, etc.</p> <p>ACTION: if anyone has any linkage to people / organisations that would be happy to endorse our application please forward to LR so it can be progressed</p>	ALL

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6.	<p>COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE</p> <p>RP provided an update on communications; linking with Pocket Rocket to take on some of the social media side of things and they are creating a plan for social messaging. She asked if anyone wants to get involved to provide feedback, ideas, etc.</p> <p>LR advised that the draft Communications Plan will be circulated for comments once it is completed. We need to start sharing information about the projects with the public. There is a need to link with the HC and HCC communications team. JB advised that the Hereford Times often promote anything mentioned at cabinet.</p> <p>It was queried if information could be published on the Boards social media channels so that it can be shared by Board members on their own social media channels.</p> <p>RP advised that she can create a short biography on LinkedIn. She asked if members could let her know of any Facebook handles, twitter posts that require promoting and she can ensure this is done.</p> <p>WV felt that a strategy is required for media roll out for organisations such as his, i.e. is he allowed to put anything on his business social media. There is a risk as nothing has been confirmed yet, some projects may not be aware of this. He recently saw a social media post from one of the projects, there is a risk of damage in the future, we need to be clear with the projects what can / cannot be shared at the moment. There is so much stuff in the projects that could controversy, we need to ensure the projects are not damaged by negative responses. LR confirmed that the Communications Plan will set out this detail.</p> <p>JV agreed that we need to ensure anything shared at this stage is not damaging or detrimental to the future of the project. He queried if there is any way for projects to communicate the work undertaken to get to this stage, to enable people to understand how / why they have got to where they are. WV queried if Orphans Press could produce a graphic that can be shared by everyone.</p>	
7.	<p>HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL SIGN OFF Link to Cabinet Decision on HC website</p> <p>NW provided an update on the HC sign off process; feeder sessions have been held with Management Board and Cabinet ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 21 January. This has been a smooth process with no major issues raised. The Cabinet meeting is a public meeting so the papers will be published on the HC website. NW will feedback to IA comments received on the TIP.</p> <p>One point raised by Cabinet is the overall project management and programme management. HC will be acting as the accountable body so they will need to have overall oversight of the project in order to be able report back into Govt, etc. This will require a degree of project management, although at this stage not sure what this will mean, as we don't know the offer form Govt yet, it needs to be proportionate.</p> <p>JN felt that HC control is different to accountability, this is voluntary sector led and a balance needs to be struck. Also with the projects, money has to be spent appropriately and effectively, smaller projects may require more support. NW advised that he only wanted to flag at this stage that oversight will be required as HC are the conduit between projects and Govt. They want reassurance that projects understand what is expected, he is aware that a number of the projects will already have thought of this and have support in place.</p> <p>The role of RR after submission of the TIP was queried, along with the role of the Board, will it have oversight of the implementation of the projects? CH advised that we don't need to worry about this before submission, it can be looked at in stage 2. Hopefully the guidance will alleviate some of the concerns re board role vs council role. RC advised that they are already working with cohorts re business planning, and that she will pick it up with NW to start the process once the TIP has been submitted. She will continue to share experience from elsewhere as its progresses, on how the roles of the board etc. will change once submitted. There will still be role for the board, but we might need to revise TOR's, etc.</p> <p>JF noted that there will be a resource implication, and queried where does this come from; NW agreed that is the point, 11+ projects that need oversight of, who, how. The Board has a good momentum and representation, we don't want to lose this, we want to continue to work with and ensure that everyone has an oversight.</p> <p>NW advised that there is £40k of funding left to work up the business cases following submission; JN queried how other towns are managing this shortfall issue elsewhere, and</p>	

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	<p>advised he would be supportive of extracting additional funding from Govt to ensure that it's able to progress. CH advised there are ongoing discussion re resource support, etc. and that she will feedback any specifics requirements so that they can be shared. RC informed the Board that there are very few towns that have signed HOT, so far the two costs identified are for development and delivery, and then for more overarching costs to run the portfolio of projects. Once they know what other towns are doing they will keep us informed. IA advised that he has made it clear that there will be project reporting and management requirements for each of the projects. The TIP's in Lincoln, Boston and Skegness are indicating that once they have the offer it is costing between 3-5% of the total funding to manage. Likely to be a balance of contribution of what can be offered. This can be the difference between viability and non-viability. Until we know what we're being offered it's not worth to much work at this point, it's something that can be progressed going forward. NW noted that it's likely it will need to be covered in the HOT agreement.</p>	
8.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p><u>Technical Sub Group</u> Board agreement was sought for a final tech sub group meeting prior to 25/01. Agreed</p> <p><u>Younger Persons Representative</u> LR advised she has been unable to get hold of the replacement for Elise Cummings, but will continue and report back to the board on youth rep.</p> <p><u>Rejected TIP's</u> JV queried if examples of TIPs that haven't been approved are available; CH advised that any that look they are going to fail they work through the issues and try and get it through; RC advised she was not aware of any being rejected to date. There is no substantive feedback about the individual projects that have been rejected. Most submissions have not got the full amount bid for, they have received approval for the projects but not the full funding amount.</p> <p>JV queried if there is any transparency on the TF award, can we view what has been awarded; CH stressed that it is not a competitive fund, there is no risk that they will say they have run out of money, they will work with treasury re additional funds if required. It is difficult to see how much has been allocated to date as only a small number of TIP submissions have been offered HOT so far; those that have are shown on the website.</p>	