

STRONGER HEREFORD

Notes from a meeting of the STRONGER HEREFORD – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT GROUP (PDG) MEETING held on 22 November 2023, 8.30-9.30 am via MS Teams

Members:	Frank Myers MBE Abigail Appleton	FM AA	Chair Principal, Hereford College of Arts (and Chair of Hereford Stronger Towns Board)
	James Newby Paul Stevens	JNe PS	President & CEO, NMITE Hereford City BID
Attendees:	Ivan Annibal Graham Biggs Christian Dangerfield Joni Hughes Jesse Norman Ruth Parry	IA GB CD JH JNo RP	Rose Regeneration (RR) Councillor, Herefordshire Council Rose Regeneration (RR) Portfolio Manager, Capital Development, HC MP for Hereford & South Herefordshire Director Operations & Marketing, Simple Design Works Ltd
Invited Guests:	Hilary Hall Sarah Lee Susan White	HH SL SW	Corporate Director, Communities & Wellbeing, HC Lead, Culture and Leisure, Herefordshire Council Programme Manager, Herefordshire Council
Apologies: /Absences	Cat Hornsey	CH	Councillor, Hereford City Council
Notetaker:	Jan Bailey	JB	Herefordshire Business Board

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1.	<p>Notes of previous meetings</p> <p>The notes from the PDG meetings held on 8th and 15th November were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
2.	<p>New Declarations of Interest</p> <p>2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.</p>	
3.	<p>Library and Learning Centre Project update</p> <p>3.1 SL provided a presentation on the project, which included: background information; stakeholder engagement activities and feedback; artist's impressions of the proposed Shire Hall location; comparisons of original criteria with Shire Hall proposal; benefits summary and an outline of the overall Shire Hall refurbishment project.</p> <p>3.2 A number of comments/queries were raised by attendees and are summarised below.</p> <p>3.2.1 PS expressed concern that comments he had raised previously that the City Council had not been consulted about the project had not been addressed. He acknowledged that the City BID had been consulted on the proposals but stated that they had expressed a preference for the Maylord Orchards option. GB/HH agreed to follow up with PS after today's meeting to address and respond to PS' concerns.</p> <p>3.2.2 AA asked for clarification regarding the phasing of the Shire Hall work programme and in particular how proposals would affect the Library/Learning Centre user experience. She also asked for more information on the relative space allocation between traditional books and digital learning resources. SL/SW assured AA that the 1st (Library/Learning</p>	GB/HH/PS

<p>3.2.3</p> <p>3.2.4</p> <p>3.2.5</p> <p>3.2.6</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p>	<p>Centre) phase of the project includes budget provision to ensure the user experience is highly positive. They also shared provisional plans to illustrate that there is lots of space allocated to digital resources.</p> <p>Members requested clarification on the extent to which wider plans for the refurbishment of the Shire Hall would affect the Library/Learning Centre. In particular, how would the Library/Learning Centre be affected if funds could not be found for later phases. SW responded that further phases for refurbishment of the building would not affect the Library/Learning Centre project. She said that Phase 1 completion would ensure the building could be opened and able to offer library services.</p> <p>In response to a query from RP regarding disabled access, SW confirmed that plans are in place to improve disabled access to the building.</p> <p>IA reminded PDG that within the terms of the Stronger Towns agreement, a fully functioning library has to be delivered by March 2026. SW responded that she was confident of being able to deliver to these timescales. She added that consultants had been engaged to look at costs of the project and in order to provide surety around costs.</p> <p>JNo commented on the long term strategy for the Shire Hall. In particular, what could be done to secure funding for the future phases of the building's refurbishment/ redevelopment. GB said that JNo's support with future fund raising campaigns would be very welcome. GB and JNo will discuss outside of today's meeting with a view to writing a short paper to outline a possible approach.</p> <p>Following the above discussions, PDG agreed that at the forthcoming Board Meeting (Friday 1 December) they would be seeking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassurance that the Phase 1 programme would deliver a library/learning centre that had the impact they are seeking. • An understanding of the plan/process for further development phases for the Shire Hall • Reassurance regarding repayment of costs incurred for work undertaken on the Maylord Orchards site • A comparison of original outcomes from the Full Business Case for the Maylord Orchards site compared with those for the Shire Hall. <p>HH undertook to provide a written response to all of the questions raised at today's PDG by the end of the week.</p>	<p>GB/JNo</p> <p>HH</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Next PDG Meeting: Wednesday 29 November 2023, 8.30 – 9.30 am (Further discussions on the Library/Learning Centre)</p> <p>Next Stronger Hereford Board Meeting: Friday 1 December, 8.30 – 10.00 am (hybrid meeting)</p>	