

**Notes from a meeting of the
STRONGER TOWNS FUND – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT GROUP (PDG)
held 24 August 2022, 8.30-9.15 am via MS Teams**

Members:	Frank Myers MBE (Chair)	FM	Herefordshire Business Board / Marches LEP
	Ellie Chowns	EC	Cabinet Member, Environment & Economy, HC
	James Newby	JN	COO, NMITE
	Paul Stevens	PS	Hereford Business Improvement District
	Julian Vaughan	JV	Green Dragon Hotel, Hereford
	Will Vaughan	WV	Hereford Pedicabs and Pedicargo
Attendees:	Ivan Annibal	IA	Rose Regeneration (RR)
	Christian Dangerfield	CD	Rose Regeneration (RR)
	Joni Hughes	JH	Head of Chief Executive's Office, HC
Apologies/ Absent	Abigail Appleton	AA	Principal, Hereford College of Arts (and Chair of Herefordshire Stronger Towns Board)
Notetaker:	Jan Bailey	JB	Herefordshire Business Board

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1.	<p>Southside Project</p> <p>1.1 JN provided an overview of the current situation with regard to the Southside Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline Planning Permission has been/is about to be submitted for a new master plan (revised plan shared with the meeting). Outline Planning will highlight any issues and public challenges/objections. • The biggest challenge remains costs. The plan has been changed to reduce costs, particularly by relocating and resizing the building which will significantly reduce utilities costs. • An issue remains regarding VAT. Expert advice is being sought and feedback is expected within the next two weeks. Once received, decisions will be made regarding next steps. If the advice is to set up a charity this could further delay the project. <p>1.2 JN to circulate the Planning Reference for the project to members</p> <p>1.3 EC asked why a CIC had not already been set up for the Project. JN explained that the timeline for establishing a CIC was part of the overall critical path for the project, as outlined in the Full Business Case. As this was a complex, multi-faceted project, he explained that other aspects had to be addressed first. EC acknowledged this response, but expressed concern about the knock-on effects if further delays resulted from having to set up a charity.</p> <p>1.4 In the light of EC's comments, WV suggested that all projects could be reminded to sort out their organisational constitutions and shared values. This, he said, would significantly help projects if applying for future funding opportunities. FM reminded members that no direction had been given from DLUHC regarding constitutional arrangements for projects and that the PDG was not in a position to dictate this.</p> <p>1.5 FM asked whether the revised building design/location allowed for future expansion. JN confirmed that this was the case.</p> <p>1.6 EC asked JN to confirm that a water supply to the vegetable plots was part of the revised plan.</p>	<p>JN</p> <p>JN</p>

	1.7 FM asked when a decision on planning was expected. JN advised November or December, dependent on any objections received.	
2.	<p>Additional Updates</p> <p>2.1 IA gave an update on recent discussions with projects, at which financial profiles, ability to hit outputs and measurement of social value had all been raised. He said that these meetings had so far been held with eight out of the 15 projects, with the remainder taking place next week. RR will provide a report to the next Board meeting summarising the position for all projects.</p> <p>2.2 IA advised that once confirmation of final FBCs had been received from DLUHC, Funding Agreements would be generated for each project with the Council. Each project would also be asked to produce a Project Initiation Plan and these would be discussed and reviewed at PDG. FM stated the importance of the PDG fully understanding these documents and being aware of any potential issues and complications that could arise.</p> <p>2.3 IA highlighted an issue to do with financial profiling. In particular, potential variances between projects' financial profiles submitted at Heads of Terms stage and current expectations. He advised that he and JH would be discussing this with Ollie Hindle (MHCLG Representative) later today and was hopeful of developing plans to mitigate any such variances.</p>	RR
3.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>3.1 PS asked for further information regarding planning issues to do with the Castle Green project. CD advised that there had been objections to two aspects of the project. The Planning Officer was minded to overrule one of these and the second was being addressed and a resolution sought. CD advised that planning permission had been delayed because of these objections and was now expected in October. JH asked CD to send her details of these objections.</p>	CD
4.	<p>Dates of next meetings</p> <p>PDG Wednesday 7 September from 8.30 – 9.30 am and Then fortnightly, until further notice.</p> <p>Board Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday 2 September <p>Then first Friday of the month, until further notice.</p>	