

TOWNS FUND BOARD
Notes and Action Points
Friday 2 September 2022, 8.30-10.00 am via Zoom

Chair:	Abigail Appleton	AA	Principal, Hereford College of Arts
Board Present:	Judith Faux	JF	Trustee, HVOSS
	Kath Hey	KH	Councillor, Hereford City Council
	David Hitchiner	DH	Leader of the Council, Herefordshire Council (on behalf of Councillor Chowns)
	Frank Myers	FM	Herefordshire Business Board / Marches LEP
	James Newby	JNe	Chief Officer, NMITE
	Jesse Norman	JNo	MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire
	Ruth Parry	RP	Director Operations & Marketing, Simple Design Works Ltd
	Lauren Rogers	LR	Project Manager, Rural Media Company
	Paul Stevens	PS	Hereford Business Improvement District (HBID)
	Paul Walker	PW	Chief Executive, Herefordshire Council
Other Attendees:	Ivan Annibal	IA	Rose Regeneration (RR)
	Christian Dangerfield	CD	Rose Regeneration (RR)
	Olli Hindle	OH	MHCLG Representative (from 9:00 am)
	Joni Hughes	JH	Portfolio Manager, Capital Development, HC
	Andrew Lovegrove	AL	Chief Finance Officer, Herefordshire Council
Apologies:	Ellie Chowns	EC	Cabinet Member, Environment and Economy, HC
	Will Vaughan	WV	Hereford Pedicabs and Pedicargo
Absent:	Alan Anderson	AAAn	British Land – Old Market, Hereford
	Ian Christie	IC	Big Business Representative/MD Welsh Water
	Julian Vaughan	JV	The Green Dragon Hotel, Hereford
Notetaker:	(Meeting recorded and later transcribed)		
	Jan Bailey	JB	Herefordshire Business Board

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. She advised that OH will be taking up a new post and that today's STF Board meeting would be the last he attends. She thanked OH for his support. OH advised that recruitment was underway to replace him, but in the interim his deputy would be supporting the STF.</p> <p>Apologies and Absences are as noted above.</p>	
2.	<p>Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>There were no new conflicts of interest.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting (held 5 August 2022)</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 August 2022 were approved as a correct record.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1 The Chair advised that discussions were ongoing with respect to financial reporting requirements to Board for the Project Delivery phase. This item will be covered in greater detail in today's Agenda. Previous discussions had highlighted that the Board wants</p>	

	<p>greater understanding in terms of Projects' drawdown of monies from the fund. RR will ask Projects to provide an overview of their claims against the 5% advance funding budget.</p> <p>4.2 All other items listed in the 'Matters Arising' grid have either been completed, are in progress or will be discussed in today's meeting.</p>	RR
5.	<p>Progress Update and Future Planning</p> <p>5.1 IA referred to his report, previously circulated to Board members. In particular, he highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation has been received from DLUHC of approval of all Hereford's STF FBCs, subject to final financial checks. OH confirmed that this was the case and that payment to the Council could be expected by the end of September. • Discussions have been ongoing with projects since the last Board meeting to achieve spending profiles without the need to request Project Adjustments. Further details will be provided at the next Board meeting. • A confirmed list of outputs/outcomes for each project has been agreed with DLUHC and discussions on these are ongoing with projects (12/15 already taken place). <p>5.2 IA referred to his report previously circulated to Board members to outline the next steps in relation to the implementation phase of Hereford STF. In summary, this is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Confirmation of funding from Government → Confirm up-to-date spending profile and evaluation outputs with each project → Set up Funding Agreement for each project (HC) → Develop Project Initiation Document (PID) for each project → PIDs presented at PDG → PIDS come to Board <p>5.3 The Chair asked for clarification with regard to the Funding Agreements. Would these be standard for each project? AL confirmed that the same wording would be used, but that the funding profile for each project would be different, dependent on their needs. AL further advised that discussions are already underway between project leads and HC financial officers.</p> <p>5.4 The Chair asked for clarification regarding the development of the PIDs. IA confirmed that the development of these documents was a parallel process with the above (5.3).</p> <p>5.5 The Chair asked for claims for funding to be copied to RR so that they can report accurately to PDG/Board and ensure they are in line with spending profiles.</p> <p>5.6 JNo asked how communications regarding the confirmation of Hereford's STF bid are being managed. LR responded that a press release and social media content had already been drafted and the website would be updated when official confirmation of funding has been received. LR stated that she would be contacting some members of the Board for quotes to include in these materials. She also confirmed that she and RP were currently managing any incoming messages/queries about the STF.</p> <p>5.7 JNo asked how cash flow would be managed to projects so that they were not exposed to financial risk. AL advised that his team was already working closely with projects to ensure invoices are paid promptly – most within 24 hours of receipt.</p> <p>5.8 JNo raised a further point with regard to cost escalation and stated that he would be discussing this issue with Government. Notwithstanding this, he recommended that the Board stay alert to other potential funding opportunities. The Chair stressed the importance of being able to demonstrate 'added value' to achieve additional funding for projects that had already received Government funding. JF reminded Board of the opportunities available via local and regional funding streams, which could be of particular relevance to the smaller projects within the STF.</p>	LR

	<p>5.9 JNe highlighted the issue of how risk is allocated between projects and the Accountable Body. He stated that the Funding Agreements need to reflect this, particularly that many Agreements may be signed by project leads without cost certainty. The Chair agreed with this analysis and stated that projects had addressed this uncertainty as part of their FBCs. She said she would welcome any proposals from the Board regarding how to mitigate risk. FM added that at every meeting with projects, this issue is being raised and possible mitigations discussed.</p> <p>5.10 JF asked for confirmation that monitoring and evaluation of projects would be tied in with funding arrangements. IA acknowledged the importance of ensuring that key phases of finance, output monitoring, reporting to PDG and Board are aligned and confirmed RR would be working to achieve this.</p> <p>5.11 The Board confirmed their understanding and acceptance of the next steps process, as outlined in IA's document.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Current Programme Overview and Budget</p> <p>6.1 IA referred to his report, previously circulated to Board members, which outlined the current situation of all projects. He stated that he would provide a report for the October Board meeting that summarised the issues being faced by all projects regarding inflation.</p> <p>6.2 FM requested that future Board reports also include a summary of final outputs required/achieved by each project.</p> <p>6.3 IA presented the Project Level Risk Register, contained within the documents previously circulated to Board members.</p> <p>6.4 LR highlighted the importance of the Communications sub-group being kept informed if any project looked like it might fail.</p> <p>6.5 The Chair suggested a sub-group is established to look at additional funding opportunities available to projects. She suggested that this topic is discussed at a future Project Sponsors Meeting. JF stated that she would be happy to be included in such a sub-group.</p> <p>6.6 IA talked through the budget details contained within the report previously circulated to Board members.</p> <p>6.7 The Chair advised that charges for the renewal of the HSTF website hosting/domain name were due shortly and further details would be provided to PDG. She asked that delegated authority be given to the PDG to approve expenditure of up to £1,000. There were no objections from Board members to this proposal.</p> <p>6.8 The Chair also advised that a brief regarding comms support (for up to £5,000) would shortly be presented to PDG.</p>	<p>RR</p> <p>RR</p> <p>RR</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Communications Update</p> <p>7.1 LR provided an update on recruitment of youth members (x 2) to the Board. Two candidates were currently interested (out of an initial three), but promotion of the opportunity would continue with a deadline for applications (via online form) of 30 September. Board members were requested to share the details with their networks. Interviews will be held on 13 and 14 October, followed by recommendations from the Chair/LR to Board by email. LR advised that the target is to have two new Youth representatives in place for the November Board meeting.</p> <p>7.2 RP advised that a brief is being developed to secure communications support. This would be targeted at supporting projects (potentially including the delivery of a comms workshop) as well as to communicate key messages about the project as a whole.</p>	<p>All</p>

	<p>7.3 PW stressed the importance of communications being aligned across all parties. RP agreed, stating that an overview had been developed for the Council as part of a broader toolkit, which was in production. LR stated that she would contact the Herefordshire Council Comms team to discuss further.</p> <p>7.4 The Chair suggested that all projects be contacted with a request to wait for official confirmation of funding via the STF press release rather than issuing their own news items. LR to action. PS highlighted the importance of stressing that the STF is a collaboration of many parties, not a Herefordshire Council initiative.</p> <p>7.5 The Chair provided an update regarding Board membership. She advised that she would shortly be meeting AAn and IC to discuss their capacity to commit time to STF matters and will report back to Board.</p> <p>7.6 The Chair referred to previous discussions regarding Board members sponsoring individual projects which are of particular interest to them. She will write soon to all members to take this item forward.</p>	<p>LR</p> <p>LR</p> <p>AA</p> <p>AA</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>8.1 LR will circulate a recent report from Southampton Institute of Arts and Humanities, which has some useful recommendations with regard to monitoring and assessment.</p> <p>8.2 Congratulations to James Newby on his recent appointment to President and Chief Executive Officer at NMITE.</p>	<p>LR</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Date of Next Meetings</p> <p>PDG – Fortnightly (next meeting Wednesday 7 September)</p> <p>Board Meeting – Next meeting Friday 7 October from 8.30 – 10.00 am via Zoom (details to be circulated)</p> <p>November Board Meeting – Friday 4 November – Face to Face – venue tbc</p> <p>Then, the first Friday of each month until further notice.</p>	

Action Items
STF Board Meeting – 2 September 2022

Minute No	Action	Responsibility
4.1	Projects to provide details of drawdown from 5% Advance funding pot	RR
5.6	Seek quote(s) for press release from Board members	LR
6.1	Report on inflation risks by project to be available at next (October) Board meeting	RR
6.2	RR to include summary of project outputs in Board reports	RR
6.5	Funding alternatives sub-group to be discussed/set up	RR
7.1	Share details of board Youth member opportunity	All
7.3	Contact HC Comms team regarding communications strategy	LR
7.4	Contact projects with a request not to pre-empt official communications on funding award	LR
7.5	Report to Board on discussions with IC and AAn	AA
7.6	Communication regarding Board sponsorship of individual projects	AA
8.1	Circulate report from Southampton Institute	LR