

#STRONGERHEREFORD

COMMUNICATIONS BRIEF FOR CONTRACT

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Contract name Communications for the #StrongerHereford board

Background **About the Towns Fund**

Hereford was one of 101 places invited by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to be part of the £3.6 billion [Towns Fund](#) to support economic growth. #StrongerHereford put forward a bid for £24.9 million to Central Government in January 2021 and secured £22.4 million later that year to put towards the assigned projects outlined in their [Town Investment Plan](#). The guidelines for the bid stipulated that projects needed to be in Hereford city and focus on improved transport, broadband connectivity, skills and culture; the successful projects echoed these themes. The name of the scheme has changed over the years – firstly being the Towns Fund for England, then the Towns Fund followed by the Stronger Towns Fund.

#StrongerHereford name

Hereford Towns Fund board is called #StrongerHereford. The media has called it by other names – the Towns Fund Board, Herefordshire Stronger Towns Partnership – but in its communications, it refers to itself as #StrongerHereford.

Description of #StrongerHereford

#StrongerHereford is an independent board for Hereford city made up of a blend of people from private, public and community sectors who all have Herefordshire in their heart. It is a mix of parents, students, educators, business owners, employers, employees, creatives and politicians.

#StrongerHereford works in collaboration with Herefordshire Council and Hereford City Council, and each has one seat on the board.

Vision

Hereford aspires to be one of the greenest and fairest cities in the country, with fantastic opportunities and quality of life for people of all ages. Deeply rooted in our unique rural heritage, we're blossoming into a richly creative, digital, connected and highly-skilled place to live, work, study, invest and visit.

Themes

GREENEST Hereford is a green and sustainable city, always working towards zero carbon as it grows.

FAIREST Hereford is always levelling up with opportunities for all, fair wages, and social and economic regeneration that improves the lives of all residents.

HERITAGE Hereford's individuality always shines through. With our rich history, unique landmarks and assets and our rural legacy, there is no other city in the country like Hereford.

CREATIVE Hereford is a city where innovation and creativity always flourish across all sectors.

DIGITAL Hereford is a digitally smart and ambitious city that always embraces emerging technologies.

CONNECTED Hereford is an integrated city; our people, places and projects always connect to each other.

HIGHLY SKILLED Hereford is a city of learning and skills for all ages, a place where highly skilled people and businesses always thrive and come together to ensure that skills are shared.

As the #StrongerHereford board has been successful in securing £22.4 million for 15 projects, the business cases are now moving into the delivery stage.

There are varying degrees of expertise and resource for communications within the projects, and the #StrongerHereford board itself had formed a sub-group for communications.

Digital platforms have been created for the board activities but also to support the activities and communications of our projects.

The #StrongerHereford board is now keen to make the most of the opportunities following the success of the #StrongerHereford bid and its implementation for Hereford and Herefordshire. Whilst widespread engagement with local stakeholders has been intrinsic to the development of the Town Investment Plan from the beginning (and also to the business case development of each project) there is an opportunity for greater impact across the portfolio with a new strategic plan and central resource to implement it. This resource will support the achievements of the Board's objectives and work directly with the projects to inform and amplify the impact of their continuing communications work.

Effective communications and engagement which connect with a range of participants and stakeholders are key to the successful delivery of the investment and the projects. People need to feel that they have a stake in what's happening, that it is meaningful to them, and it is important that they are aware and thus enthused about the benefits that the projects will bring. Targeted,

impactful, and accessible communications and engagement will support the delivery of the projects, and will demonstrate to government that proactive participation and information has underpinned project delivery.

The foundations for communications and engagement are already in place with #StrongerHereford brand and assets such as web and social media channels:

Website: www.strongerhereford.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/StrongerHereford
Twitter: www.twitter.com/StrongerHerefo1
Instagram: www.instagram.com/strongerhereford/

However brand assets and guidelines need updating and their use embedding with the projects.

A CRM has been set up and subscription lists for newsletters are in place.

Purpose

To develop a communications and engagement plan, and deliver associated activities, that will connect with a range of stakeholders and participants, engendering interest, enthusiasm, and aspiration for what the #StrongerHereford projects will bring.

Outcomes

The long-term outcomes of this plan aims to build on the work already done and generally bring about greater understanding and participation to our targeted communities.

Some of those communities include:

Central Government

- Who will feel assured that our projects are underpinned by community engagement, and;
- That their investment will result in the desired outcomes outlined in the Town Investment Plan.

Local Government

- Who will have mutual support towards the promotion of Hereford as a dynamic, developing city within a county rich with heritage and innovation making the region more attractive to live work, visit and invest in, and;
- Has an improved local reputation of working with other groups that are working towards the same objectives.

The Public

- Who will understand the collective messaging of our themes and projects, and what they're achieving together, and;
- Greater awareness and understanding of the #StrongerHereford projects and the benefits they will bring locally, regionally and nationally, and;
- An appetite to use/get involved in the #StrongerHereford initiatives.

The Projects

- Who will receive appropriate communications support, and;
 - Will see tangible outcomes through the plan setting benchmarks for measuring increased pride and aspiration amongst the communities that benefit from the investment.
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Key responsibilities

You will be working with board stakeholders to shape an initial strategy. From this you will develop a targeted and deliverable communications and engagement plan to amplify impact.

You'll continue to work with project stakeholders including Herefordshire County Council and Hereford City Council for a joined-up approach to regeneration activities. You'll deliver key activities as agreed by the Board which is likely to include:

- Updating and sharing key messages and core narrative for #StrongerHereford communications.
- Generating ideas around telling the story of the #strongerHereford
- Development of a #strongerHereford campaign
- A communications timeline mapped to project milestones.
- Stakeholder (digital) newsletter on behalf of the Chair and board.
- A digital newsletter for the public.
- Maintaining data in the CRM (subscribers and media lists).
- Developing #StrongerHereford website content to meet governance requirements as well as general communications.
- Diversifying the voices involved in communications e.g. producing website news from different project sponsors/users.
- Press releases and in-person press engagement.
- Social media content (visual and text), monitoring and engagement.
- Support multi-media storytelling across the projects.
- Some educational workshop support for project teams around communications.
- Creating and distributing branding toolkits (e.g. where contractors require a logo or messaging for hoarding).
- Support public engagement events such as a proposed cross project public engagement event.
- Keep across other relevant development projects within the area (e.g. Shared Prosperity) seeking to align and maximise communications impact as relevant.
- Creating content that is accessible to both adults and young people to understand

The Board currently meets monthly online (the first Friday of each month 8.30am - 10am) with approx. three face to face meetings a year. In addition, the project sponsors usually meet on the third Thursday of each month.

The successful bidder will be expected to attend the majority and provide updates to both meetings.

You will also be expected to build on your knowledge of each project so that a clear understanding is established so that you can excel in the effective timing and messaging of the #StrongerHereford board and the individual projects.

Considerations

You should be a natural ambassador for Hereford. Local knowledge and understanding local communities will be vital.

The communications you will be providing should be jargon free and in plain English. To maximise understanding, you should be familiar with clear examples or case studies on how the projects are likely to affect different sections of society.

The level of input into activities is likely to fluctuate. Some flexibility during the year to vary work patterns will be required (i.e. a public engagement event may be during the weekend day, whereas a project sponsor event may be in the weekday evening).

Commitment for the contract and evaluation

We anticipate a 3 – 4 day mobilisation period followed by approximately two days per month. We are keen that the commission is output led rather than set days so will be happy to agree how this looks with the successful bidder.

We are expecting a fixed price for the contract and our evaluation criteria will be based on quality, price and location. The quality assessment will also consist of an interview with shortlisted submissions.

Quality – 50%

Price - 20%

Locality – 30%

We would recommend you having an informal discussion with us so you are clear on how to price the contract which is anticipated to be for one year.

How to respond

Please email strongerhereford@gmail.com if you'd like an informal discussion and/or to submit your written application. If you'd like to submit a video to accompany your written application, please keep it under two minutes long.

In your application, please include as a minimum:

- An outline of how you'd approach the brief.
 - Your relevant experience including links/access to relevant work.
 - The profile of the lead individual managing this work.
 - Why this work has attracted you.
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Timescales

Brief distributed externally: w/c 9 January 2023 onwards.

Deadline for submissions: 9am on Monday 6 February.

Assessment of submissions: w/c 6 February and w/c 13 February.

Response to tenderers: w/c 20 February.

Interviews for shortlisted submissions: w/c 27 February.

Decision on successful submission: w/c 6 March.

Inception meeting with successful bidder: w/c 13 March.
