STRONGER HEREFORD

Notes from a meeting of the STRONGER HEREFORD – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT GROUP (PDG) MEETING held on 29 January 2025 from 8.30 – 9.30am via MS Teams

Members:	Frank Myers MBE	FM	Chair
	Abigail Appleton MBE	AA	Principal, Hereford College of Arts (and Chair of Hereford Stronger Towns Board)
	James Newby	JN	President & CEO, NMITE
	Paul Stevens	PS	Hereford City BID
Attendees:	Ian Annibal	IA	Rose Regeneration (RR)
	Christian Dangerfield	CD	Rose Regeneration (RR)
	Joni Hughes	JH	Portfolio Manager, Capital Development, HC
Apologies: /Absences	None		
Notetaker:	Jan Bailey	JB	

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1.	**New Declarations of Interest** None	
2.	**Notes of previous meetings** The notes of the PDG meeting held on 9 January 2025 were approved as a correct record.	
3.	**Castle Green Project**	
3.1	IA reported that the Funding Agreement had now been issued to the Castle Green project to formalise the transfer of an additional sum from the Wyeside project.	
3.2	IA advised that he had had a request from the Castle Green project lead for a sum of money from its grant to be advanced as working capital. This is to help with cash flow issues primarily caused by delays in reimbursement of VAT claims. IA referred to an email and supporting document that he had received from the project lead that provides more detail on this request.	
3.3	Members discussed this request in some detail. It was agreed that IA will forward this correspondence to PDG members. JH will then contact the project lead to discuss this request further.	IA JH
3.4	The Chair suggested a possible resolution could be provided through a loan from Herefordshire Community Foundation (subject to approval). This option is to be explored as needed after JH and the project lead have met.	
3.5	Members discussed the loss of monies from this project that had resulted from the main contractor going into administration. All agreed that it is important to pursue repayment of these funds at least by being registered on the list of creditors. As the Accountable Body, JH will contact Paul Walker (Chief Executive at Herefordshire Council), copying in FM and AA, to raise his awareness of the situation and to ask if any support could be provided in this regard from the council's legal team.	JH

4.	**Encore Project**	
4.1	IA reported that there had been some issues to do with planning permission for this project that had caused disquiet amongst the project lead and trustees.	
4.2	JH provided some detail on the issues and said a meeting is scheduled for this afternoon (29 January) to discuss them with the project lead. She was hopeful that a resolution could be found. Members requested an update on the outcome of these discussions as soon as possible after the meeting.	JH
4.3	Members agreed with AA's suggestion to write to the project lead and his trustees this morning to acknowledge today's meeting and to send the Board's best wishes for a successful outcome. In addition, the note will invite the project lead and his trustees to a meeting with AA/FM with the aim of alleviating any concerns and to build their confidence in the project..	AA
5.	**Wyeside Project**	
5.1	IA advised that funds had now been moved from Wyeside to the Castle Green project but a final reconciliation figure is still outstanding. This is dependent on the status of the crane, which depends upon discussions between the project lead and Natural England. He confirmed that no specific timescales have yet been set for the reconciliation to be completed.	
5.2	The Chair advised that he and AA had met with the Left Bank who are aiming to instal their own pontoon. They are also seeking the opinion of Natural England on their plans, but this is separate to the Stronger Hereford project.	
6.	**Digital Culture Hub Project**	
6.1	IA referred to previous discussions with the project lead for additional funding which had been declined by the Board. IA said that the project lead understood the reasons for the refusal but requested that the Board revisit the subject of the Council's first charge on the Packer's House property, which means that the mortgage interest rate is high.	
6.2	Members discussed the related topic of matched funding on this project and the progress that had been made so far in achieving these targets. RR will provide a detailed analysis of all projects' matched funding commitments and progress towards their achievement in time for the next Board meeting. It was recognised that the Board has a responsibility to ensure that matched funding targets are achieved by all projects.	RR
6.3	The Chair asked what the implications would be for the mortgage repayments if first charge for the property moved to the bank (the Accountable Body would move to second charge). It was agreed that the project lead will be asked to provide a statement endorsed by the bank that outlines the impact of 1st charge moving to the bank. In the meantime, JH will discuss the implications of this request with her colleagues.	RR JH
7.	**Any Other Business**	
7.1	The Chair and AA advised that they had had a positive meeting recently with government representatives to provide a case study on the Electric Buses project.	
7.2	IA advised that he had heard from the Library and Resource Centre Project lead that permission had been given at yesterday's Planning Committee for the next stage of works at Shirehall to proceed. Members welcomed this good news.	
8.	**Date of Next Meeting** PDG – to be confirmed	

	Board – Friday 14 February, 8.30-10am (hybrid and in person).	