

**Hereford Stronger Towns Board Meeting  
Friday 14 March 2025 (8.30 am – 10.15 am)  
held at Hereford College of Arts and via Zoom  
Notes and Action Points**

<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Abigail Appleton MBE</b>	AA	Principal, Hereford College of Arts
<b>Board Present:</b>	<b>Jago Frost</b>	JFr	Youth Board Member
	<b>Frank Myers MBE</b>	FM	Herefordshire Business Board
	<b>James Newby</b>	JNe	Chief Officer, NMITE
	<b>Jesse Norman</b>	JNo	MP for Hereford South & City
	<b>Ben Proctor</b>	BP	Councillor, Hereford City
	<b>Paul Stevens</b>	PS	Hereford Business Improvement District
<b>Other Attendees:</b>	<b>Ivan Annibal</b>	IA	Rose Regeneration (RR)
	<b>Christian Dangerfield</b>	CD	Rose Regeneration (RR)
	<b>Joni Hughes</b>	JH	Portfolio Manager, Capital Development, HC
	<b>Rachael Sanders</b>	RS	Section 151 Officer, Herefordshire Council
<b>Guests:</b>	<b>Paddy Nugent</b>	PN	Castle Green Project (item 5.2 only)
	<b>Grant Black</b>	GB	Digital Culture Hub Project (item 5.3 only)
	<b>Nic Millington</b>	NM	Digital Culture Hub Project (item 5.3 only)
<b>Apologies/ Absences</b>	<b>Graham Biggs</b>	GBi	Councillor, Herefordshire Council
	<b>Judith Faux</b>	JFa	Trustee, HVOSS
	<b>Ruth Parry</b>	RP	Director Operations & Marketing, Simple Design Works Ltd
	<b>Paul Walker</b>	PW	Chief Executive, Herefordshire Council
<b>Notes</b>	<b>Jan Bailey</b>	JB	Herefordshire Business Board

**Summary of Actions**

Item	Notes	Action
1.3	Develop proposals for additional programme management responsibilities proposed to be undertaken by RR and circulate to Board.	RR/RS
5.1.4	RS to speak to PW/GBi regarding attendance at Board meetings	RS
5.1.5	RR to ask Encore Project lead to attend April Board to provide update on current position and plans.	RR
5.1.6	RR to prepare document for April Board that show timelines and processes it would recommend for reallocation of any surplus funds from the programme.	RR
5.2.5	AA to advise PN of the Board's decision regarding additional funding requested.	AA
5.2.6	RR/RS to compile a report that outlines current position regarding contingency amounts across the programme.	RS/RR
5.3.7	RS to provide clarification on a number of points to do with charge on the Packers House property.	RS
5.5.2	Revenue plans for Southside project (Growing Local) to be presented at next Board meeting	RR
5.5.3	RR to provide separate board reports in future on Growing Local and Belmont Wanderers projects	RR
5.6	RR to ask Roger Allonby to attend next STF Board to provide an update on Hereford Museum and Art Gallery project.	RR

Item	Notes	Action
1.	<b>Welcome and Apologies / Introductions</b>	

1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies and absences are as noted above.	RR/RS																																								
1.2	The Chair advised that this is JH's last attendance at STF Board as she is leaving the council. The Board thanked JH for her support of the project over the years and wished her good luck for the future.																																									
1.3	The Chair advised that as a result of JH's resignation, RR will take on additional programme management responsibilities. The details are being finalised and a proposal will be circulated to Board when available. AA confirmed that HC are content with this proposal.																																									
2.	<b>New Declarations of Interest</b>																																									
2.1	There were no new Declarations of Interest.																																									
3.	<b>Minutes of the last Board meeting, held 14 February 2025</b>																																									
3.1	The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 14 February 2025 were approved as a correct record.																																									
4.	<b>Matters Arising</b>																																									
4.1	See updates below. There were no additional Matters Arising.																																									
	<table><tr><th>Item</th><th>Notes</th><th>Action</th><th>Update</th></tr><tr><td>4.2</td><td>RR to ask JH to provide update to Board on Wyeside final project closure amounts and works to be completed before closure.</td><td>RR/JH</td><td>To be provided at today's Board</td></tr><tr><td>5.2</td><td>Clarification to be sought from the lender that removal of the Council's first charge on the mortgage would yield financial benefit to the Digital Culture Hub project.</td><td>JH</td><td>In train.</td></tr><tr><td>5.5.5</td><td>Encore project issues to be discussed at PDG.</td><td>RR/FM</td><td>Completed</td></tr><tr><td>5.6.1</td><td>Invite Growing Local directors to attend PDG.</td><td>RR/FM</td><td>Completed</td></tr><tr><td>6.2</td><td>Update on Greening the City project to Board</td><td>RA</td><td>In train</td></tr><tr><td>6.3</td><td>Provide additional narrative to Board budget information.</td><td>RS</td><td>In train</td></tr><tr><td>6.4</td><td>Project-by-project matched funding analysis to be prepared for Board.</td><td>RR</td><td>In train – will be complete for April Board</td></tr><tr><td>7.1</td><td>Add Financial Control information to amended Terms of Reference and recirculate for approval/adoption.</td><td>RR/AA</td><td>To be provided before April Board</td></tr><tr><td>8.1</td><td>Comms support proposal to be developed and circulated.</td><td>AA</td><td>In train</td></tr></table>	Item	Notes	Action	Update	4.2	RR to ask JH to provide update to Board on Wyeside final project closure amounts and works to be completed before closure.	RR/JH	To be provided at today's Board	5.2	Clarification to be sought from the lender that removal of the Council's first charge on the mortgage would yield financial benefit to the Digital Culture Hub project.	JH	In train.	5.5.5	Encore project issues to be discussed at PDG.	RR/FM	Completed	5.6.1	Invite Growing Local directors to attend PDG.	RR/FM	Completed	6.2	Update on Greening the City project to Board	RA	In train	6.3	Provide additional narrative to Board budget information.	RS	In train	6.4	Project-by-project matched funding analysis to be prepared for Board.	RR	In train – will be complete for April Board	7.1	Add Financial Control information to amended Terms of Reference and recirculate for approval/adoption.	RR/AA	To be provided before April Board	8.1	Comms support proposal to be developed and circulated.	AA	In train	
Item	Notes	Action	Update																																							
4.2	RR to ask JH to provide update to Board on Wyeside final project closure amounts and works to be completed before closure.	RR/JH	To be provided at today's Board																																							
5.2	Clarification to be sought from the lender that removal of the Council's first charge on the mortgage would yield financial benefit to the Digital Culture Hub project.	JH	In train.																																							
5.5.5	Encore project issues to be discussed at PDG.	RR/FM	Completed																																							
5.6.1	Invite Growing Local directors to attend PDG.	RR/FM	Completed																																							
6.2	Update on Greening the City project to Board	RA	In train																																							
6.3	Provide additional narrative to Board budget information.	RS	In train																																							
6.4	Project-by-project matched funding analysis to be prepared for Board.	RR	In train – will be complete for April Board																																							
7.1	Add Financial Control information to amended Terms of Reference and recirculate for approval/adoption.	RR/AA	To be provided before April Board																																							
8.1	Comms support proposal to be developed and circulated.	AA	In train																																							

	9.5	Circulate presentation to Board once seen by Cabinet.	SL	Awaited	
	9.6	Provide update on contingency situation at the Library & Resource Centre Project	SL/DJ	In train	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Key Programme Updates</b> (See also Board report, <a href="#">which can be viewed here</a> .)				
<b>5.1</b>	<b><u>Encore Project</u></b>				
<b>5.1.1</b>	IA advised that the Encore Board had decided not to proceed with the purchase of St Nicholas Church. The Chair said that since the last STF Board meeting, she, FM and PW had been in touch with various members of the Encore Board and the CEO but the directors' decision on this was final due to the perceived level of financial risk to them in proceeding with the purchase.				
<b>5.1.2</b>	In light of this decision, the Chair sought the Board's approval to release the additional monies earmarked for this project (to purchase St Nicholas) to be returned to the programme. This was unanimously approved by Board attendees.				
<b>5.1.3</b>	JNo regretted the Encore Board's decision and the factors that had led to it as he said it would have benefited the city of Hereford to have St Nicholas restored and brought back into use. As it stands he said the risk is that the building will become derelict and an eyesore on this key route into the city centre. Board members agreed with this analysis.				
<b>5.1.4</b>	JNo also regretted that neither PW nor GBi were present to answer questions or enable the Board to seek clarification from the council on important matters, raising a general concern about their attendance. RS said she would feed this back to PW/GBi.				RS
<b>5.1.5</b>	Board members expressed concern about the future of the Encore project and the viability of it being able to meet its stated objectives. Encore project leads will be asked to attend the April Board meeting to provide an update of its current position and future plans.				RR
<b>5.1.6</b>	The Chair asked RR to prepare a document for the April Board meeting that outlines the timeline and processes it would recommend for reallocation of any surplus funds available to the programme.				RR
<b>5.1.7</b>	Following a query from JNo, JH confirmed that Encore will retain its original allocation of STF funding. This is the subject of a Funding Agreement which would have to be rescinded if the project could not meet its objectives within stated timeframes.				
<b>5.2</b>	<b><u>Castle Green Project</u></b>				
<b>5.2.1</b>	IA referred to the information provided in <a href="#">the Board papers</a> which outlines the additional funding requested by this project and the rationale that sits behind it. Following a query from BP, he confirmed that there is no significant match funding allocated to this project.				

<b>5.2.2</b>	PN joined the meeting to respond to questions and points of clarification from the Board. He was then asked to leave the meeting while the Board considered their response.	
<b>5.2.3</b>	Based on the reassurances given by PN, the Chair proposed that the Board supports the request for additional investment into this project.	
<b>5.2.4</b>	A caveat was proposed: that in return for the additional investment the project undertakes a fundraising campaign to raise a target sum of £50K. Board felt the opportunity provided by the opening of the Pavilion in August meant that this is a realistic target.	
<b>5.2.5</b>	Board agreed to this proposal. The Chair said she would advise PN of the Board's decision verbally later today with formal paperwork to follow.	AA
<b>5.2.6</b>	Following a comment from JNe regarding the variation in contingency amounts across the Stronger Hereford programme, the Chair asked RS and RR to prepare a report that outlines the current situation across the programme and confirms the position with Castle Green.	RS/RR
<b>5.3</b>	<b><u>Digital Culture Hub</u></b>	
<b>5.3.1</b>	RS presented on this Project Leads' request to remove the council's first charge on the mortgage for the Packers House property. She referred to a document circulated to Board members ahead of today's meeting which outlined the financial impact of this change. She reminded Board that the council's intention was to remove its first charge on the property once all the project outcomes had been delivered. However, the project leads were asking for this to be done now that they had achieved 90% of their outcomes and so that they could reap the financial benefits for the benefit of the project.	
<b>5.3.2</b>	FM asked for clarification as to why Herefordshire Council had insisted on first charge on the property. JH reminded the Board that this was a risk management strategy that reflected the fact that the property had been purchased at above its then market value.	
<b>5.3.3</b>	NM and GB joined the meeting. GB provided an update on current progress with the project: structural changes at the building are now in place and staff are returning to work there in two weeks. In addition, targets for collaborative activities had been exceeded (147 against target of 100).	
<b>5.3.4</b>	GB added that removal of the council's first charge on the mortgage would enable the project to purchase additional items such as new signage, fixtures and fittings and complete all final project objectives.	
<b>5.3.5</b>	RS confirmed that until all objectives were completed, the council would only consider a move to second charge on the property. GB said he would discuss this proposition with the mortgage lenders (Charity Bank).	
<b>5.3.6</b>	The Chair requested that GB and NM leave the meeting so that the Board can consider its response.	
<b>5.3.7</b>	Board agreed to support the council's move to a second charge on the property, if they (the council) felt this was an appropriate decision. However, members wanted to understand the risks associated with the move to second charge and at what point the council would feel it would appropriate to move to no charge on the property.	RS

<b>5.3.8</b>	Board sought further clarification on the matched funding element of this project. This will form part of the overall programme matched funding report already in progress with RR.	
<b>5.4</b>	<b><u>Greening the City</u></b>  IA advised that there has been a delay of about three months to this project due to contractual issues. However, he said this was not a cause for concern.	
<b>5.5</b>	<b><u>Southside Project</u></b>	
<b>5.5.1</b>	IA reminded Board of the governance changes at this project whereby two of the Trustees have resigned.	
<b>5.5.2</b>	IA advised that the remaining project trustees had attended PDG, where they had been requested to provide additional details about their future revenue plans. These will be presented at the April STF Board meeting.	RR
<b>5.5.3</b>	Following a request from JNe, RR will provide separate updates on the Growing Local and Belmont Wanderers project progress in future Board reports.	RR
<b>5.6</b>	<b>Hereford Museum and Art Gallery</b>  CD advised that VINCI building has now been contracted to work on the project. RR to ask Roger Allonby to come to next STF Board to provide an update on the project.	RR
<b>6.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>  None	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>  Friday 11 April 2025, 8.30-10.00 am Hybrid: Online or face-to-face at Hereford College of Arts, College Road campus	