

STRONGER HEREFORD

Notes from a meeting of the STRONGER HEREFORD – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT GROUP (PDG) MEETING held on 10 September 2025 from 8.30 – 9.15 am via MS Teams

Members:	Frank Myers MBE Abigail Appleton MBE Graham Biggs James Newby	FM AA GB JNe	Chair Principal, Hereford College of Arts (and Chair of Hereford Stronger Towns Board) Councillor, Herefordshire Council President & CEO, NMITE
Attendees:	Ivan Annibal Christian Dangerfield Jane Mann Jesse Norman Ruth Parry Ben Proctor Rachael Sanders Paul Walker	IA CD JM JNo RP BP RS PW	Rose Regeneration (RR) Rose Regeneration (RR) Rose Regeneration (RR) MP, Hereford City & South Herefordshire Director Operations & Marketing, Simple Design Works Ltd Councillor, Hereford City Council Section 151 Officer, Herefordshire Council Chief Executive, Herefordshire Council
Apologies:	Paul Stevens	PS	Hereford City BID
Notes:	Jan Bailey	JB	

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1.	New Declarations of Interest None	
2.	Notes of Previous Meetings The notes of the PDG meetings held on 20 and 27 August were approved as a correct record.	
3.	Hereford Museum and Art Gallery (HMAG) Project	
3.1	The Chair welcomed PW and RS to the meeting.	
3.2	PW stated he recognised the importance of the HMAG and Library & Learning Centre projects to STF, being the largest in the programme portfolio. He said they were also the two largest non-infrastructure projects for the council, and of significant importance as part of its 'year of delivery'. As such, he wanted to reassure PDG that they are receiving significant political and financial oversight throughout all stages of delivery.	
3.3	RS and PW gave a presentation on the current situation with the HMAG project, referring to slides previously circulated to attendees. This particularly focused on project funding and assurance, as requested by the Chair.	
3.4	PW referred to the cost plan which is expected from the contractors (Vinci) in mid-November. Once this document is received, he requested time for the council to review its content before sharing the findings and options with the PDG. It was agreed that the council be given three weeks to review the cost plan before presenting to PDG. The Chair and AA will be given an overview before it is presented to PDG.	

4.	Library and Learning Centre Project	
4.1	RS gave a presentation on this project, presenting slides that had been circulated to attendees in advance of today's meeting. This covered key dates and background to the project, funding and current expenditure, contingency amounts, project oversight and governance, risks and issues.	
4.2	PW added information on the current status of the project, which is at pre-contract (PCSA) stage.	
4.3	GB added his reassurance that the last time both this and the HMAG project were discussed at cabinet, members had indicated their commitment to the delivery of both projects.	
4.4	JNe raised some queries to do with the contingency amounts for this project. Specifically, how the budget figures presented included the contingencies. RS provided a detailed response to this question stating that the contingency is included in the budget figure as a reporting requirement but that no allocation had been made against the contingencies. She assured PDG that she will return to PDG for further discussion before any contingency amounts are spent.	
4.5	It was agreed that PW/RS would return to PDG within three weeks after pre-contract survey reports had been received from the contractors (Vinci). These would provide greater cost certainty and enable the council to review outcomes and options before presenting to PDG. RR to liaise with PW/RS to confirm timelines and schedule meetings for this and the HMAG project reviews. A programme of on-going reviews will also be agreed to provide updates that cover the duration of the projects.	RR
4.6	With regard to contingency amounts, the Chair commented on the importance of understanding the extent of any unspent contingencies across all projects so that monies can be reallocated to other projects within the #StrongerHereford portfolio. He referred to recent conversations with Sean Dubberley (Government officer) who had indicated that processes surrounding both the movement of funds between projects and capital vs revenue expenditure are going to be simplified, enabling greater flexibility in terms of how resources can be spent. RS confirmed that there is more freedom as a result of 'simplification'	
4.7	AA welcomed the detailed information provided by council colleagues at today's meeting and their commitment to getting these projects delivered. She said she was reassured to hear about the assurance processes in place at the council but that these needed to be more regularly communicated and understood by the STF Board.	
4.8	GB commented that projects of this nature, ie involving the development of listed buildings, would always bring with them challenges. However, he welcomed the reassurance he had heard from RS/PW that processes are in place to manage these challenges.	
6.	Date of Next Meetings PDG – Fortnightly. The next scheduled meeting is 24 September at 8.30-9.30 am via Teams. Board – Friday 12 September 8.30-10am (hybrid and in person at Hereford College of Arts, College Road campus).	