

## **Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030 – Engagement Journey**

### **Overview**

The Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030 has been developed in partnership with a wide variety of stakeholders. It has taken account of key successes and achievements since the publication of the Inclusive Economic Growth Strategy 2018-2021 and has built on the framework set out in Doncaster Delivering Together. In addition, the strategy has also looked to best practice regarding regenerative and inclusive economic development and engagement.

The Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030 has considered the changing and increasingly uncertain global and national context which will influence the scope and scale of challenges faced by residents, businesses, and stakeholders as well as the resilience that people and their communities will have to adapt to these challenges. Within this context, facilitating deep engagement with residents, elected members, and public and private sector organisations has remained critical to develop a better understanding of current and emerging needs within the borough.

For the Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030 we have decided to take a different approach, that enabled us to ‘develop through engagement’ to support greater co-production and collaboration with key stakeholders and residents. This strategy represents a live document, which through the use of the ‘Double Diamond’ model we aim to continually learn from residents and stakeholders to continue to develop and refine our approach over time.

We sought to develop the strategy through a regenerative, inclusive approach to engagement in which we have focussed on building relationships with key stakeholders who have a stake in ‘what could be’ and are therefore empowered to take ownership of driving forward change across the borough. This was about learning about the current and future potential of Doncaster. These discussions have included key local, regional, and national stakeholders including residents, businesses, community organisations and the Team Doncaster partners.

This evolving conversation has helped to shape longer term mission and priorities for the Borough to deliver an inclusive, regenerative economy for thriving people, places, and planet by 2030.

## Key points raised through consultation

There was broad support for the 5 priority areas with agreement that these would help deliver an economy for thriving people, places, and planet.

<b>Industry led Ecosystems</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Businesses would benefit from greater linkages within sector specific clusters which focus on centres of excellence in the borough.</li><li>• To increase innovation, businesses would need to attract greater levels of investment and business support.</li></ul>
<b>Green Economy</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Green Economy will be key to accelerate Doncaster's transition towards a low carbon economy to achieve our Net-Zero ambitions by 2040.</li><li>• This transition represents an opportunity to provide good green jobs and sectors of the future, including hydrogen and green technology.</li><li>• A more sustainable, regenerative approach to land management would protect biodiversity and ensure the resilience of our food system.</li></ul>
<b>Employment and Skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good employment was identified as a key contributor to improved wellbeing and living standards across the borough.</li><li>• Compassionate employment support could enable improved employment outcomes for residents who face barriers to employment.</li><li>• It was recognised that employers have a responsibility to support wellbeing by providing good employment opportunities locally.</li></ul>
<b>Recruitment and Retention Support</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Businesses faced substantial challenges recruiting and retaining employees, this trend was particularly pronounced in certain sectors.</li><li>• Businesses could work more closely with education and training providers to close the skills gap.</li></ul>
<b>Quality &amp; Thriving Places</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City Centre and Local High Street regeneration was widely supported with the emphasis on access to culture, leisure, and green space.</li><li>• Organisations in Doncaster should be supported to adopt more socially and environmentally conscious practices.</li></ul>
<b>Culture &amp; Heritage</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Doncaster's culture has a key role to play in our visitor economy building on successes such as the Rugby World Cup and Festival of Light.</li><li>• Cultural career pathways should be developed to retain local talent.</li></ul>
<b>Digital Skills and Infrastructure</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater emphasis on 'digital by default' has led to a greater need to address gaps in digital skills and high-speed broadband access across the borough.</li></ul>
<b>Transport</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transport was recognised as key to ensure access to opportunities.</li><li>• Accessibility, affordability, reliability, and carbon emissions continue to remain key challenges for our transport system.</li></ul>

## ***The Starting Point***

The Doncaster Economic Strategy has sought to embed existing policy and strategy frameworks to build on existing engagement across the borough rather than starting from scratch. This has enabled us to deliver a strategy which can truly deliver an inclusive, regenerative economy for people, places, and planet.

## ***Inclusive Growth Strategy 2018-2021***

Launched in November 2018, the Doncaster Inclusive Growth Strategy 2018-2021<sup>1</sup> set out a single mission to enable people, places, and businesses to enjoy improved prosperity by participating in a growing and productive economy. The strategy outlined six drivers of inclusive growth with associated ‘game changing



actions.’

## ***Doncaster Delivering Together Borough Strategy 2021***

The Doncaster Delivering Together Strategy 2021<sup>2</sup> The Strategy, published in September 2021, set out a key mission to support wellbeing across the borough through contributing to the development of thriving people, places, and planet. Delivering a Doncaster which is Prosperous and Connected, is key to the Strategy's long-term wellbeing goals and will be achieved through developing a stronger, greener, and fairer economy that provides good jobs for all.

To deliver this, the Strategy outlines the ‘Great Eight’ priorities which include, making Doncaster the best place to do business and developing the employment and skills opportunities which can support people to thrive in life and work. The Strategy was developed by Team Doncaster through extensive consultation with residents, businesses, and wider stakeholders.

• <sup>1</sup> [Doncaster inclusive growth strategy - Doncaster Council](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Doncaster Delivering Together - Team Doncaster](#)

## Key Strategy Consultations

- **Education and Skills 2030 Strategy<sup>3</sup>** - set out 5 key priorities covering Education, Skills, and training from early years throughout the lifespan to enable Equitable and Inclusive learning opportunities for all. The strategy aims towards a 10-year vision to deliver “Equitable and inclusive lifelong learning that empowers people to fulfil their aspirations and thrive in life and work.’
- **Environment and Sustainability 2020-2030<sup>4</sup>** – the strategy was agreed in January 2021 and entailed wide consultation through the Climate and Biodiversity Commission with relevant stakeholders and a survey of 450 respondents. The engagement highlighted climate change as a key issue with 91% of respondents agreeing that tackling climate change is extremely or somewhat important to them. The Environment and Sustainability strategy set out 17 priority areas across 4 themes.
- **Doncaster Housing Strategy Update 2020-2025<sup>5</sup>** - The Housing Strategy (refreshed in January 2021) was shaped through engagement with numerous key stakeholders including the Mayor and Portfolio Holder, Elected members, developers, landlords and other key stakeholders. The Housing Strategy set out 4 key aims which link to the borough’s wider wellbeing goals.
- **Doncaster Community Safety Strategy 2022-25<sup>6</sup>** - A reviewed Community Safety Strategy was agreed upon in Autumn 2021. The development of this strategy was established through a public engagement survey which sought views; on feelings of safety, experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour and how the partnership could better respond to community safety issues. The Community Safety Strategy set out 6 priorities.
- **Doncaster Culture Strategy 2030<sup>7</sup>** – the Doncaster Culture Strategy outlined a clear ambition to develop Doncaster as a place of culture which is underpinned by six key priorities. Through the strategy engagement activity was carried out with residents, sector partners, elected representatives and local creative organisations.

## Taking a different approach – the Double Diamond model<sup>8</sup>

For the Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030 we decided to take a different approach to ‘develop through engagement’ to support greater co-production and collaboration with key stakeholders and residents. Through utilising the Design Council’s four-point Double Diamond approach we were able to integrate stakeholder feedback throughout strategy development as follows:

---

<sup>3</sup>[Education and Skills Strategy 2030 - Doncaster Council](#)

<sup>4</sup>[Environment Strategy AppendixA.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

<sup>5</sup>[Doncaster Housing Strategy - Doncaster Council](#)

<sup>6</sup>[Community Safety Strategy - 2022-25 - FINAL.pdf \(windows.net\)](#)

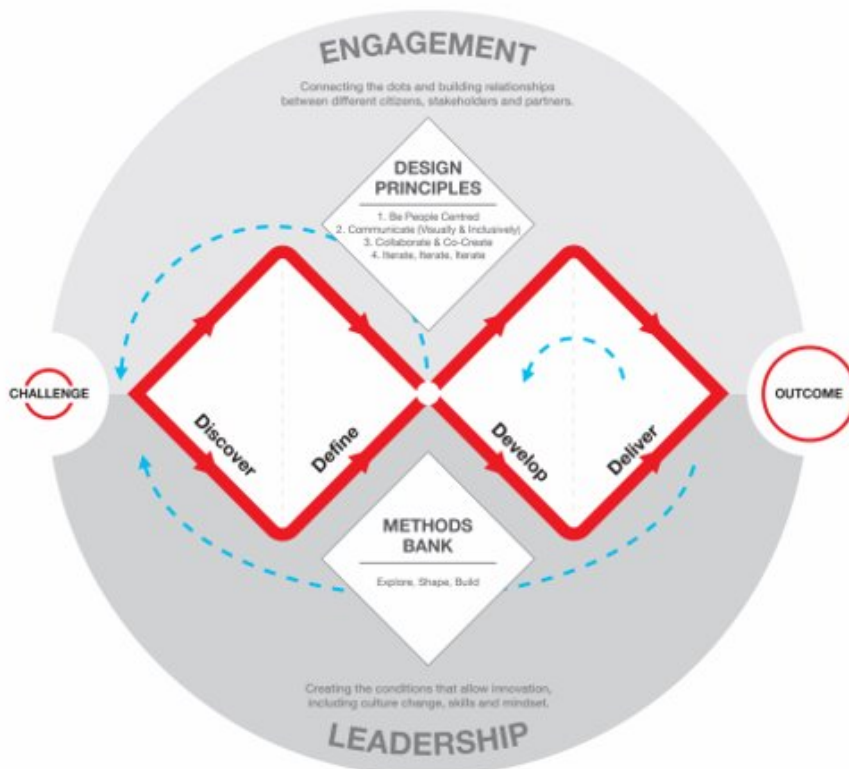
<sup>7</sup>[Issue - items at meetings - Approval of the Doncaster Culture Strategy. - Modern Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

<sup>8</sup>[Framework for Innovation: Design Council's evolved Double Diamond - Design Council](#)

- **Discovery** - We began with an initial discovery phase where we sought input from a range of key stakeholders to identify the key issues the strategy should address.
- **Define** - This information enabled us to begin to define these key issues in a different way and consider how the strategy could address them.
- **Develop** - We then returned to stakeholders to sense check whether the issues we had defined and solutions to address them were aligned with the different perspectives on optimal solutions that stakeholders brought to the table.
- **Deliver** – following the publication of this strategy we expect to move through the delivery phase where we will seek to test out different solutions to address the issues identified in the first three phases and further develop the solutions which are shown to work.

As demonstrated in the graphic below, the Double-Diamond approach does not represent a linear process of engagement. We expect that the challenges and solutions outlined in this document will continue to be refined and redeveloped as part of an iterative process.

This will enable us to take a collaborative, continual learning approach, to deliver an inclusive, regenerative economy for thriving people, places, and planet. Stakeholders appreciated that they were able to utilise multiple opportunities to feedback throughout the development of the strategy as part of the Double-Diamond model approach.



## [Framework for Innovation: Design Council's evolved Double Diamond - Design Council](#)

### How did we get here?

The journey we have taken has involved engagement with a wide range of stakeholders outlined in the roadmap below. It has included broader discussions around the challenges people across Doncaster face, alongside wider consultation exercises focussed on the missions and priorities in this strategy. This has enabled us to develop a fit for purpose strategy which is reflective of the concerns that residents and stakeholders have raised.

We expect the roadmap to represent an ongoing journey through which we seek continual engagement and learning from residents and key stakeholders to refine the strategy and to ensure our approach to delivery is working and to shift our approach where things are not working.



### Economic Strategy Engagement

Alongside the engagement events highlighted above we have also conducted wider engagement work with the following key stakeholder groups:

<b>Business</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Doncaster Chamber of Commerce Roundtables #DNBusinessTalks – conversations with business leaders in Doncaster</li><li>• Doncaster Chamber of Commerce Business Conference</li></ul>
<b>Team Doncaster</b>

- Team Doncaster Economic Board
- Strategy Delivery Groups
- Team Doncaster networks:
  - Horizon Policy and Design
  - Health and Wellbeing Board
  - Voluntary Action Doncaster
  - Minorities Partnership Board
  - Health and Social Care Forum

#### **Residents and Localities**

- Doncaster Talks Survey with Doncaster Residents
- Young People at Doncaster College
- Localities team engaged with Local Businesses across Doncaster
- To gain a better understanding of the ways in which the Economic Strategy can reduce inequalities and remove barriers faced by some residents in Doncaster, we have engaged with several groups that are working in Doncaster to tackle those inequalities:
  - Gypsy, Roma & Travellers
  - Veterans Steering Group
  - Live Inclusive (Disability Support group)
  - Citizens Advice
  - Complex Lives (Mental Health and/or Substance use Support Group)
  - City Hearts (Support for Marginalised people)
  - Refugee Council

### **Business Doncaster Breakfast Roundtable (July and October 2022)**

On 27th July, Team Doncaster teamed up with the Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) to host a roundtable event at CAST with a group of Doncaster's business leaders to help shape Doncaster's economic future. The session went across the three horizons from short term through to long term horizons, with each table sharing their thoughts. The feedback gathered from the session was captured creatively by Sarah Smith through the three horizons model. Key points raised throughout the session which highlight what businesses would like to see are outlined below:

- Short Term Horizon (H1):
  - Support with recruitment and retention challenges
  - Improved transport links
- Medium Term Horizon (H2):
  - Increased uptake of decarbonisation support
  - Regeneration of the City Centre
  - Improved safety in the City Centre
  - Closer links between businesses and education to close the skills gap
- Long Term Horizon (H3):
  - Increased appetite for innovation and collaboration
  - More inclusive employment opportunities available locally
  - Greater focus on culture and the arts



On 4th October, Team Doncaster hosted a second roundtable event at CAST with a group of Doncaster's business leaders to help shape Doncaster's economic future. As a follow-up to the July Business Roundtable, this session developed our findings and focused in on some of the key themes that emerged from our Economic Strategy development. Partners and business leaders at the session provided valuable insight on the emerging strategy including:

- The need for businesses including SMEs to be embedded in the education system.
- Providing lifelong learning opportunities including degree level apprenticeships with a clear link to our University City ambitions'
- Developing Doncaster's experiential and cultural offer, building on successful events including the Royal Ballet at the CAST and the Rugby League World Cup
- Developing a sense of place in Doncaster with linkages between cultural and transport hubs, with a greater mix of commercial and residential property in the City Centre.
- Improving transport connectivity and active travel routes
- Addressing perceptions of safety in the City Centre
- Facilitating greater collaboration between SMEs and large businesses
- Development of sector specific technical clusters
- Working closely with partners at a local and regional level



**Doncaster Economic Strategy Consultation Forum (19<sup>th</sup> Oct)**



On the 19th of October, the Economic Strategy Consultation Forum was hosted to bring together Team Doncaster and wider stakeholders to provide a final sense check of the five priority areas we had defined through our engagement as part of the Double Diamond approach. Stakeholders were asked whether these priorities were the right ones for Doncaster and whether there were any other key challenges which did not fit under these priorities. Through the Consultation Forum we received the following feedback:

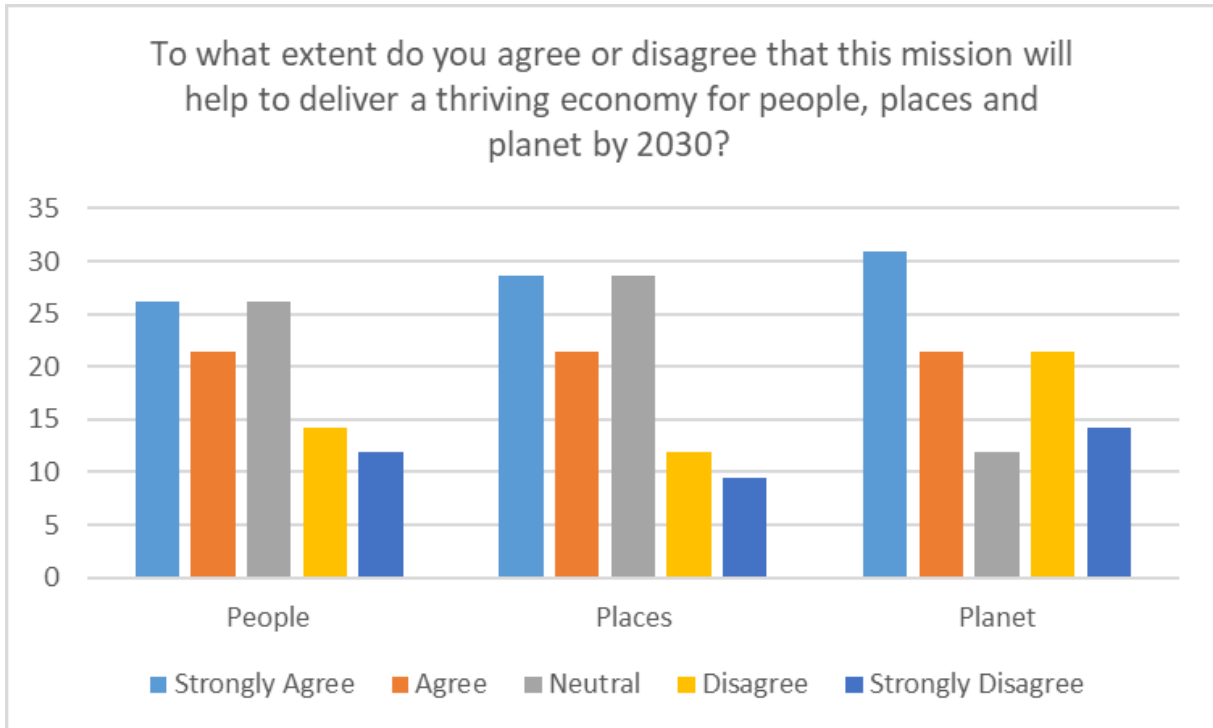
- Stakeholders agreed with the 5 priority areas outlined in the Economic Strategy
- Innovation, skills, and equity were recognised as key cross-cutting themes across all 5 strategy priorities
- It was felt that ecosystems should be developed from industry strengths, with a greater focus on inward investment, wider business support and developing business clusters
- Stakeholders suggested that in to develop a strong base in emerging Green Jobs that industry would need to work more closely with the local education and training system to close the skills gap.
- Stakeholders suggested that encouraging employers to adopt more socially conscious and inclusive business practises could enable greater access to good employment opportunities and address the recruitment and retention issues in certain industries
- Stakeholders welcomed greater clarity about the role of the economy in supporting the development of our culture sector
- The potential of community hubs was felt to be key in the wider delivery of culture activities and digital skills
- Physical connectivity was felt to be key to link people to education and employment opportunities and drive forward our net zero ambitions

### **Doncaster Talks Survey (5th Oct - 28<sup>th</sup> Oct)**

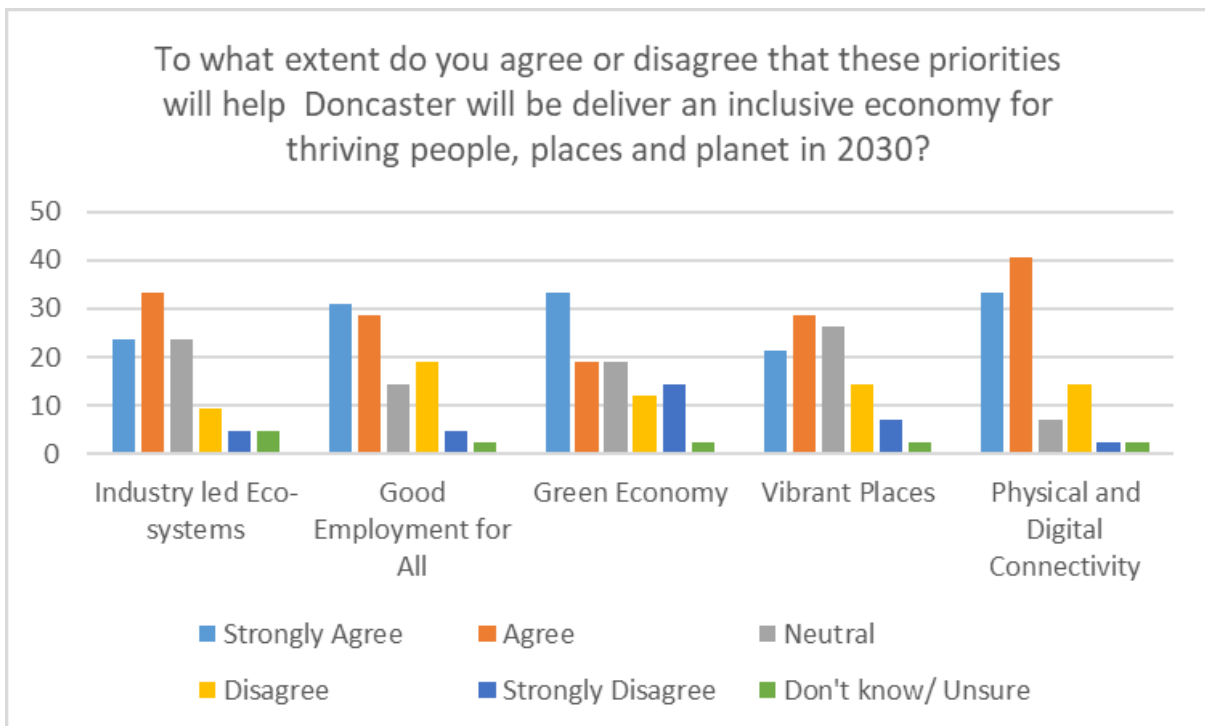
During October 2022, we held a Doncaster Talks engagement consultation dedicated to the Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030, which invited residents to answer 22 brief questions on the wellbeing goals and priorities developed based on all the previous consultation insights outlined above. Residents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the wellbeing goals and the affiliated priorities. This survey was open for three weeks ending 28.10.2022 and received 42 responses. This low response rate will affect the ability to which we are able to generalise the findings to the wider population of people who live and work in Doncaster.

The feedback from the engagement is summarised below.

### **Overall Missions and Priorities**



Out of the three overarching missions within the economic strategy people most agreed with the mission for Planet (52.4%)<sup>9</sup> followed closely by places (50%) and people (47.6%).



The majority of people agreed with 4 of the Economic Strategy priorities and half of respondents agreed with the Vibrant Places priority. The priorities people most

<sup>9</sup> Response percentage rates are rounded to 1 decimal place.

agreed with was Physical and Digital Connectivity (73.8%) followed by Good Employment for all (59.5%) and Industry led Ecosystems (57.1%).

As part of the survey, respondents were also asked to leave further comments if they felt anything had been missed from either the missions or the priorities. The following themes emerged from the general comments provided:

<p>Implementing the Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents expressed concern that the strategy could be considered too high level or intangible.</li> <li>• It was felt important that the high-level strategy should be able to be easily translated into programme delivery through clearly defining the concepts outlined in the missions and priorities.</li> <li>• In addition, respondents felt that the priorities in the strategy should be associated with clear measures and targets which can motivate action and be easily measured to indicate progress on any given priority.</li> <li>• Finally, in terms of delivery respondents expressed concern regarding the current economic climate and how this would affect the overall strategy delivery and Doncaster's ability to attract inward investment into the borough.</li> </ul>
<p>Good Employment for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents felt that to champion access to Good Employment across the borough it would be important to define some of the key characteristics of Good Employment. Suggestions from respondents included:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work that pays a Real Living Wage</li> <li>○ Flexible work</li> <li>○ Work which enables a good work life balance, particularly for parents and carers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In addition to championing Good Employment across organisations across the borough, it was felt that the council needs to lead by example through committing to Good Employment standards both internally and through its procurement processes.</li> <li>• Respondents also expressed concern about the quality and pay associated with certain jobs, with particular reference to warehouse work.</li> <li>• It was felt that tackling this priority would be key to mitigate some of the negative effects of cost-of-living pressures and address wider determinants of anti-social behaviour.</li> </ul>
<p>Green Economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents felt it important that there should be greater recognition and protection of the wider value that land contributes to our economy.</li> <li>• With the current economic and political climate, it was felt important that Doncaster should focus on developing shorter, more local food supply chains.</li> <li>• Respondents highlighted the importance of transport to our Net Zero ambitions and how incentives round public</li> </ul>

	<p>transport should be rationalised to encourage positive action in this area.</p>
Vibrant Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to green space, was deemed important by residents, and for many, a key thing they liked about where they lived. Residents noted the wider benefits of access to green space to promote wellbeing and a sense of place.</li> <li>• Respondents felt there was a balance to be struck between providing access to affordable, quality housing through new housing developments and protecting green space and biodiversity in their local areas.</li> <li>• It was felt that there were several brownfield sites in the City Centre which could be redeveloped for residential or commercial purposes.</li> <li>• In addition to green space, it was felt that access to and maintenance of leisure and recreational facilities was important to promote the wellbeing of young people and engage them in productive activities which could reduce the risk of engaging in Anti-Social Behaviour.</li> <li>• In terms of Anti-Social Behaviour residents were particularly concerned around safety in the City Centre and the negative impact this would have on the wellbeing of residents and deterring visitors into the centre.</li> <li>• It was felt that there should be greater investment and commitment to improving the City Centre and Town Centres across organisations in the public and private sector.</li> </ul>
Physical and Digital Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst the survey was live, there had been a great deal of uncertainty around the future of the Doncaster Sheffield Airport site. Respondents reflected this concern and highlighted the benefits of the airport in terms of connectivity, the economy, and the vibrancy of places.</li> <li>• In addition, respondents highlighted the importance of bus services and reiterated the need for bus services to be regular, reliable, and affordable to enable greater access to opportunities across the borough.</li> <li>• Traffic flows into the City Centre were raised as a key issue for respondents and it was felt that greater uptake of public transport could contribute to reduced traffic congestion into the centre.</li> <li>• Respondents acknowledged that regardless of efforts to increase use of public transport there would continue to be people who would need or prefer to drive into the City Centre. It was felt that affordable car park rates in the City Centre could encourage these people to come into the City Centre more often and stimulate local businesses.</li> <li>• With regards to access, respondents acknowledged that promoting digital access amongst those on low incomes</li> </ul>

	would be important to enable them to access services and opportunities.
--	---

Based on the work undertaken above, Mission Priorities were amended and modified to take into account the engagement activities and feedback.

### ***Inclusion and Equality***

Our aim with the Economic Strategy was to set out the strategic direction to develop an inclusive economy which works for all people and places across Doncaster and addresses long standing inequalities. To do this, we have trialled new methods of engagement to better identify and engage with people who have been historically underrepresented in policy making processes. To gain a better understanding of the ways in which the Economic Strategy can reduce inequalities and remove barriers faced by some residents in Doncaster, we have engaged with a number of groups that are working in Doncaster to tackle those inequalities:

- Gypsy, Roma & Travellers
- Veterans Steering Group
- Live Inclusive (Disability Support group)
- Citizens Advice
- Complex Lives (Mental Health and/or Substance use Support Group)
- City Hearts (Mental Health and/or Substance use Support Group)
- Refugee Council

This engagement has been crucial in informing some of our wider thinking and approaches around the following key issues:

- Compassionate employment support and outreach
- Holistic approach to supporting people facing complex challenges
- Addressing discrimination and stigma
- Flexible recruitment and employment practises
- The role of socially conscious employers
- Breaking down barriers to employment
- Facilitating work transitions

### ***Future approach to engagement***

As part of our diamond model processes, engagement will be ongoing, so we can see if the priorities we have established in this Economic Strategy continue to align with what stakeholders and residents identify as the key missions for promoting an economy in Doncaster which contributes to thriving people, places, and planet

Going forward we will continue to engage stakeholders and residents in conversation about our approach to the Economic Strategy and how it can be refined to better deliver for people, places, and planet. As part of the continued engagement, the Team Doncaster will be undertaking an exercise to identify our communities across

Doncaster so we can more effectively engage with communities through our strategy development process.

If you would like to be involved in providing future feedback on the Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030 and other aspects of our work, you can access the [Doncaster Talks website](#) to see which pieces of work we are currently consulting on.