



# City of Doncaster Council

Date: 11/09/24

To: Cabinet

## Report Title: Get Doncaster Walking Strategy 2024

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision?
Cllr Nigel Ball	All	Yes

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report has been developed to endorse the Get Doncaster Walking Strategy and commit to supporting the development of the recommendations.
2. Walking is a key mode of transport and along with cycling is the most sustainable and healthy means of travel. Walking requires only a fraction of the space needed for using a car, is more economical both for individual and in terms of investment in infrastructure and causes no noise or air pollution. For longer journeys it is the most carbon friendly link to and from public transport. It is affordable for everyone and therefore is the most equitable of transport modes. It is also one of the simplest and easily accessible forms of physical activity.
3. The Get Doncaster Walking Strategy is a refresh following an initial Get Doncaster Walking Strategy that was adopted in 2018. This refresh sets out our vision and objectives for increasing walking within our Borough following review of the previous strategy and consultation with key stakeholders and members of the public.
4. The Strategy is broken down into seven sections:
  - Sections one to four set out the purpose of the strategy, reviews the previous strategy, gives an overview of local/ national policy and data, details the results of the public online survey.
  - Sections five to seven give an overview of the stakeholder engagement, details the refreshed objectives and vision and lastly sets out the strategy's action plan which will become a working document to track progress.

### EXEMPT REPORT

5. Not Exempt



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6. The recommendations for this report are to:
  - Endorse and adopt the Get Doncaster Walking Strategy
  - Commit to supporting the development of the recommendations within the Strategy.
  - Give delegated authority to the Director of Public Health, and the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Public Health, Communities, Leisure and Culture to deliver the Strategy recommendations.

## **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

7. Adopting the refreshed Get Doncaster Walking Strategy will ensure a continued coordinated approach to improving the whole walking offer available to Doncaster citizens. The Walking Strategy enables opportunities to bring together the complex strands of what makes the best pedestrian environment and tackle the barriers that can make walking less attractive for some.
8. For Doncaster residents we want walking to be easy, accessible, attractive and the first choice for short trips.
9. The benefits to everyday lives for Doncaster residents include; improved health and wellbeing, improved accessibility and connectivity, high quality well designed walking environment, safety.

## **BACKGROUND**

10. Doncaster's first walking strategy 'Get Doncaster Walking' was produced in 2018 and outlined the need for Doncaster to be designed in a way that enables people to walk regularly as part of their day to day lives. A lot has changed in Doncaster and nationally since 2018, with the COVID pandemic in 2020/21, increased focus on the Climate Emergency, and the ongoing cost of living crisis impacting how we travel, work, and engage with our local neighbourhoods.
11. Encouraging more walking can ease traffic congestion which enables the borough to grow, has positive health and wellbeing benefits that improves people's quality of life and helps to reduce air and noise pollution. More walking will help to create a better environment for all residents, businesses and visitors. It is also better for businesses with healthier and happier staff, and a better retail and leisure environment.
12. Doncaster has excellent opportunities for walking in both urban and rural areas. It needs a clear strategy and action plan based on evidence, engagement, and best practice to capitalise on these opportunities and move towards a Doncaster where walking is an integral part of everyday life.
13. By adopting the walking strategy, the ambition to make Doncaster a more accessible and attractive place for walking will sit with a wide range of key

stakeholders and not just the Council, including local walking organisations, health organisations and the Police. This is imperative to ensure the strategy is considered when making decisions across the city not just in relation to active travel but also planning, public health and development to help the city realise its ambitions in relation to walking.

14. Walking forms part of one of the Get Doncaster Moving Strategy Priority actions; Active Travel (Walking, Wheeling and Cycling). Assurance on the progress of the Get Doncaster Walking Strategy will be provided by Doncaster Active Travel Alliance and overseen by the Get Doncaster Moving Board.
15. The baseline analysis undertaken to underpin the formation of this strategy shows that Doncaster has high levels of deprivation and inequalities, with an ageing population and poor health outcomes for residents across most demographics. When researching how people currently travel, data has indicated that walking comprises a low mode share in the city and that several areas have low and falling pedestrian counts. However, in recent years there has been investment and commitment to infrastructure interventions which are beginning to improve the situation.
16. Despite an overall reduction in pedestrian numbers relative to the 2018 Walking Strategy, travel behaviour surveys and traffic counts in some locations have shown an increase in active travel and specifically pedestrian numbers. These increases have typically occurred along improved active travel infrastructure routes.
17. Improvements to these active travel routes have led to increases in pedestrian numbers using the routes, including the Bennethorpe route, which has seen a 30% increase in pedestrians between 2021 and 2023 during the months of June to November.
18. Funding will sought from external grant funding to deliver initiatives identified within the action plan.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

19. Two options have been considered;
  - Do something – Implement the refreshed Get Doncaster Walking Strategy and its action plan.
  - Do nothing – The absence of an adopted Walking Strategy restricts the ability of the stakeholders to work in a coordinated and cohesive way ensuring the best value for the resources that we have.






## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**




20. The Strategy will enable Doncaster to continue to develop and grow our walking aspirations in order for communities and residents to not only improve their health and wellbeing but provide wider benefits to the borough's environment, economy and communities. It provides focus on the priorities and recommendations that the

strategy has identified from the public consultation, stakeholder engagement and existing evidence base.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

21.

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 <b>Tackling Climate Change</b>	✓			
Comments: 				
 <b>Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work</b>				✓
Comments: N/a				
 <b>Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs</b>	✓			
Comments: Walking is a reliable form of travel which many city centre commuters rely upon for traveling to work. Improving connections ensure the reliability and attractiveness of these journeys				
 <b>Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all</b>	✓			
Comments: A modal shift to more active modes will ensure that more residents are meeting the daily recommended levels of physical activity and less likely to develop inactivity related conditions.				
 <b>Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs</b>	✓			

<p>Comments:          Increasing opportunity for active travel could positively impact on reducing emissions creating a cleaner greener Doncaster.          Connecting communities to improved infrastructure will improve road safety for residents whilst enabling more active travel</p>				
 <b>Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough</b>	✓			
<p>Comments:          The strategy will give focus to improving walking routes so that they are accessible by families and children</p>				
 <b>Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future</b>				✓
<p>Comments:</p>				
 <b>Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities</b>	✓			
<p>Comments:          Increasing walking connections and accessibility across Doncaster will improve the opportunity for residents to access cultural, sporting and heritage opportunities.</p>				
<b>Fair &amp; Inclusive</b>	✓			
<p>Comments:          The Strategy aims to creating walking opportunities that are accessible and inclusive</p>				

**Legal Implications [Officer Initials: NJD Date: 24.07.24**

22. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with the so-called “General power of competence” by stating that “A local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally may do.”
  
23. S111 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that “a local authority shall have power to do any thing (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

24. Section 2B of the National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended by section 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012) places a duty on the Council to take appropriate steps to improve the health of the people who live in the area.
25. Any external spend must be made in accordance with the terms and conditions of any grant funding agreements the Council may enter into and in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules.

#### **Financial Implications [Officer Initials: AH | Date: 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024]**

26. The Strategy identifies key actions to be implemented to meet the Strategy objectives at Table 3, which are both capital and revenue in nature. Assessment of costs given for the actions at Table 3 are for indicative purposes only and have not been fully costed at this time.
27. The actions are generally funded from within existing staff budgets. This report recommends that delivery of the strategy is delegated to the Director of Public Health and Chief Financial Officer who will ensure that funding is identified for any additional costs of implementing the strategy before commitments are made.
28. There are no further financial implications arising as a direct result of this report at this stage.
29. It is expected that a significant proportion of the operational activities of the Strategy will be funded by external grant funding, and Finance will be involved when grant funding is awarded to ensure assurance and appropriate governance sign off. Appropriate governance arrangements will need to be followed in order to draw down the necessary funding and ensure compliance with Financial Procedure Rules and grant terms and conditions.

#### **Human Resources Implications [Officer Initials: SB | Date: 18/07/2024]**

30. There are no HR implications associated within this report.

#### **Technology Implications [Officer Initials: PW | Date: 19/07/24]**

31. There are no technology implications in relation to this report. However, any technology requirements to support the delivery of the Get Doncaster Walking Strategy should be discussed with Digital & ICT.

#### **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

32. The main risk is the Get Doncaster Walking Strategy is not endorsed this will cause significant impact on the Council's ability to see an increase in walking and achieve its ambition to be a more active Borough.

#### **CONSULTATION**

33. The Get Doncaster Walking Strategy has been refreshed through consultation with key internal and external stakeholders in addition to an online public survey.

- **Online Survey** - An online questionnaire-based survey was conducted between 18th March and 8th April 2024 with a total of 1,875 respondents. This was a record level of engagement for the Council for a survey of this nature, which demonstrates the strength of feeling and interest in walking in Doncaster. The survey was sent out to 94,000 residents through the Council's public health mailing list and was included in the Your Life Doncaster newsletter. It was also promoted through Facebook community groups that CDC have access to, as well as specifically targeting participation from marginalised groups in the city.
- **Stakeholder workshops** - Key stakeholders were invited to take part in workshops delivered by SYSTRA to contribute local knowledge and expertise to shape the walking strategy for the city. Workshops took place on:
  - Workshop 1 (**22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024**)
  - Workshop 2 (**9<sup>th</sup> May 2024**)

Workshop attendees included:

- Public Health Improvement Coordinator.
- Public Health Theme Lead, Wider Determinants.
- Strategic Transportation Manager.
- Public Health Communications Officer.
- Senior Policy and Insight Manager.
- Transport Planner.
- Public Health Improvement Coordinator, Active Travel Social Prescribing.
- Public Right of Way Officer.
- Active Travel Engagement Manager.
- Senior Pollution Control Officer.
- Club Doncaster Foundation.
- Active Travel Hub.
- Flourish Enterprises.
- Yorkshire Bike Shack.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

34. Get Doncaster Walking Strategy 2024

## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

35.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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