

Policy Committee Decision Report

Title of Report: Sheffield Growth Plan

Date of Decision: 11th December 2024

Report To: Strategy and Resources Policy Committee

Report Of: Kate Martin, Executive Director, City Futures

Report Author: Diana Buckley, Director of Economy, Skills and Culture, City Futures and Jen Rickard, Economic Policy Officer

Executive Summary: *Throughout 2024, Sheffield City Council has developed a Sheffield Growth Plan 2025-35, based on economic evidence and considerable stakeholder engagement. This builds on the draft principles and strategic priorities set out in the 'Growth Framework', which was agreed by Strategy and Resources Committee in March 2024 as a basis for the plan. This report outlines the development of the Growth Plan since then and seeks Strategy and Resources approval of the final plan and its endorsement the proposals for the delivery of the Growth Plan.*



Council Plan outcomes:

[A place where all children belong and all young people can build a successful future](#)

[Great neighbourhoods that people are happy to call home](#)

[People live in caring, engaged communities that value diversity and support wellbeing](#)

[A creative and prosperous city full of culture, learning, and innovation](#)

[A city on the move – growing, connected and sustainable](#)

Policy Committee remit:

“This report is to be considered by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee as its remit includes ‘Responsibility for any issue identified as being of significant strategic importance or financial risk to the Council (which is considered to be by its nature cross-cutting)’: [Part 3C - 3.3 Matters Delegated to Committees May 2024.pdf \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](#)”

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? No

Recommendations:

Strategy and Resources Policy Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider and approve the adoption of the Sheffield Growth Plan 2025-35 as set out in Appendix A, noting how the Growth Plan builds on the Growth Framework which was endorsed by Strategy and Resources Policy Committee earlier this year.
2. Thank stakeholders for their comments and insights provided on the draft Growth Plan as part of two phases of engagement in its development
3. Request that Economic Development and Skills Committee and Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee consider the Growth Plan and its implications at their committees and lead on implementation which falls within their remit.
4. Notes the work of Economic Development and Skills Committee and Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee in developing the thematic strategic plans which sit below the Growth Plan.
5. Endorse the development of an Investment Plan to guide deliver and the formation of an 'Invest in Growth Compact' as set out in the Growth Plan section 'Making it happen Together'.
6. Endorse the action areas detail in 2.16 to utilise the Council's resources, convening and direct powers to support the delivery of the growth, subject to the scheme of delegation.

Financial Implications: No Approved by: Louise Hibbert

Legal Implications: Yes Approved by: Gemma Beecroft

Equality and Engagement Implications: Yes Approved by: Bashir Khan

Full Equalities Impact Assessment completed with EIA number: 2590

Climate Change Implications: Yes

Climate Impact Assessment completed

Background Papers: No background papers

Appendices:

A: The Sheffield Growth Plan

B: List of stakeholders who took part in Growth Plan engagement

1. Background to the issue

- 1.1 With the City Goals and Council Plan in place, now is the time for Sheffield to set out its ambitions for economic growth. The city has been without a plan for the economy for over a decade and whilst great progress has still been made, the city cannot fulfil its full potential without a clear plan for growth over the next 10 years.
- 1.2 The lack of a plan and growth story to date was acknowledged in the 2023 Local Government Association (LGA) peer challenge report to the Council, which recommended that a clear narrative was required for the city's regeneration and economic plans. It identified that in 'making a strong and visible connection between the regeneration of the 'place' to meet the needs of the 'people' the Council can create greater social value and demonstrate the tangible impact it is making on improving the quality of life of residents.' The Sheffield Growth Plan directly addresses this recommendation.
- 1.3 An economic evidence base was commissioned in 2023 and initial stakeholder engagement took place at the beginning of 2024. This informed the basis of the development of the Growth Plan. A Growth Framework was developed from this foundational research and set out the principles and strategic priorities for growth in the city. It was endorsed by Strategy and Resources Committee on the 12th March 2024. The report introduced plans for a full Growth Plan later in the autumn. The Growth Plan builds on this Framework, incorporating further comprehensive stakeholder engagement and analysis of evidence.

2. Proposal

The purpose of the Growth Plan

- 2.1 A Growth Plan will ensure that new strategies and policy decisions connected to economic growth align to a set of shared ambitions and outcomes. It will galvanise collaboration and partnership at a local, regional, national and international level to deliver key ambitions as well as provide clear messaging for potential investors and our partners in the city on what Sheffield wants to achieve and how it will do it.
- 2.2 Within the context of a new national government that has placed much emphasis on the roles of towns and cities in driving the UK's economic growth, and the requirement for Local Growth Plans at a regional level, the need for Sheffield to set out its vision for growth has become even more important.
- 2.3 To meet the challenges and opportunities facing a large major city economy, the Growth Plan must reflect the ambitions for the city, not one organisation. Although the Council has led the drafting, it is



important to note that the plan is informed by city partners and stakeholders (this is why there have been two significant engagement phases in the plan's development) and stands as the City's Growth Plan.

- 2.4 The Growth Plan is a Tier 1 city strategy, and it seeks to lead the economic elements of the City Goals, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's Plan for Good Growth, and the Council Plan. This Growth Plan is underpinned by thematic strategic plans (Tier 2) which set out delivery and investment plans and priority initiatives. These include the Transport Vision, City Centre Strategic Vision and the forthcoming Culture Strategy and Employment and Skills Strategy.
- 2.5 Once the Growth Plan receives approval from Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, the document will be professionally designed with images and case studies as well as summarised in different formats for different audiences (for example, public facing and investors). We welcome ideas from Strategy and Resources Policy Committee for potential case studies to include in the designed version.

Process of development of the full Growth Plan

- 2.6 The development of the plan can be grouped into three phases, which culminate with Strategy and Resources approval:

Phase 1 (January - March): Early political, partner and stakeholder engagement and evidence gathering, informing the principles and strategic themes of the Growth Framework endorsed by Strategy and Resources Committee.

Phase 2 (April – August): Building on the Framework, mapping of current and future activity and undertaking additional economic analysis to inform a draft Growth Plan.

Phase 3 (September - December): Re-engaging with Members, partners and stakeholders to share the draft Growth Plan and incorporating feedback into the final version.

- 2.7 Both the Growth Framework and the Growth Plan are based on evidence and insights from a variety of sources. This includes two phases of dedicated stakeholder engagement (set out in more detail in section 3 of this report); statistical and lived experience data from the extensive first phase of city-wide engagement for the City Goals; the Sheffield Economic Evidence Base for Sheffield; and further sector-based analysis of Sheffield's strengths which was undertaken by independent economic consultants Metrodynamics.
- 2.8 In generating the draft Growth Plan in Phase 2, the Growth Framework developed in several ways:



- A fourth strategic theme was created that focused on transport and infrastructure to reflect the scale of ambition and investment required.
- A clearer economic rationale was provided behind the proposed activity – identifying the strengths and challenges of the economy.
- Setting out a clearer relationship with the city’s sub-strategies that make up the plan’s component parts and building a golden thread to the Council Plan and City Goals.
- Acknowledging that the Plan needs to set our delivery mechanism for the short, medium and long-term policy areas.

2.9 Following stakeholder engagement through Phase 3, changes were made to respond to feedback. The most significant of these changes can be summarised as:

- More detail on how the Growth Plan will be delivered and the role partners across the city can play in this – now outlined in ‘Making it Happen Together’.
- Including measures to show progress with delivery and achieving outcomes – Appendix 2 within the Growth Plan highlights our draft Mission Metrics.
- Making climate and environmental challenges and opportunities more prominent throughout the document – Actioned across the document.
- Highlighting more directly the role of Skills in delivering inclusive economic growth – Actioned across the document
- Embed how culture and heritage can contribute to growth and inclusion – Actioned across the document
- Strengthening and giving more prominence to the ‘Grow our Neighbourhoods Together’ Mission by being clearer about how the issues within it relate to economic growth - Actioned
- Greater emphasis on health and wellbeing and its relationship to economic growth – Highlighted connections to relevant strategies and policy areas.

2.10 In addition to these areas, we mapped all feedback from our engagements and made numerous changes to structure, wording, context and actions, because of partners engaging with the plan development. The plan is stronger because of this input, and we would like to thank everyone who took the time to feedback.



Summary of the Growth Plan

2.11 This plan is structured around four key economic missions which are ambitious, long-term and underpinned by our analysis of the structural challenges we need to focus upon in the next 10 years, if we are to realise and deliver long-term growth and productivity at pace for the city.

OUR MISSION

Our economy: global, green and growing - We will grow the economy and improve living standards in Sheffield by scaling-up our business base and generating more and better jobs for residents.

OUR PLAN TO DELIVER

- A growing city centre that plays a major role in our region's economy
- Driving growth and building our global position through technology, investment and innovation
- Bigger, more productive business base
- More good jobs, with better access to skills and training for all
- Be a global demonstrator in the journey to net zero & climate resilience

OUR MISSION

Grow our neighbourhoods together - We will deliver high quality neighbourhoods, offering a good choice of homes and ensure people are able to play an active role in their community and local economy.

OUR PLAN TO DELIVER

- Sharing prosperity and connecting more people to growth
- More and better new homes for a growing city
- A successful city with thriving neighbourhoods

OUR MISSION

Celebrate and grow a vibrant, cultural and creative Sheffield - We will grow our reputation internationally, attract visitors, create vibrancy and pride of place through growing our cultural and creative industries and harnessing our rich heritage.

OUR PLAN TO DELIVER

- Accelerate the growth and reach of the city's creative and cultural economy
- Inspiring people to visit Sheffield
- Put Sheffield on the global stage
- Curate and harness our rich cultural heritage

OUR MISSION

A city on the move, connected with the infrastructure to grow - We will deliver the reliable and low carbon infrastructure network that the city needs by securing large-scale and long-term investment

OUR PLAN TO DELIVER

- Transform our city-to-city connectivity
- Connected communities with accessible, affordable, safe and reliable public transport and active travel networks
- Low emission travel that supports good health
- Future-proofed infrastructure

2.12 The Growth Plan is underpinned by five guiding principles which act as a 'test' for new growth policies, partnerships and programmes to ensure investment and energies align with how we want to grow as a city:

- **We build on the city's uniqueness and maximise our assets:** - harnessing our strengths and having the confidence to promote and

build on these assets as drivers of growth, including our cultural and heritage assets.

- **Fair and prosperous for all** - ensuring that all parts of the city share in Sheffield's success, and that growth connects more people to opportunity. Our strategies will enable and support a fair, inclusive and creative local economy
- **We will work with the community, voluntary, public and private sector to get things done** – to deliver our strategies, we will work with citizens, business, community organisations and build on our successful strategic partnerships for Sheffield and our communities.
- **A strong partner to business** - foster our dynamic business base and become the UK city for start-ups and scale-ups. Business will know that Sheffield is a place where they can grow their business and will be supported to do so.
- **Meet our environmental and climate ambitions**- as Sheffield continues to grow and prosper, we must protect and invest in its unique environment and minimise its environmental impact as we prepare for a changing future. Sustainability isn't just about setting targets, but ensuring businesses and individuals have the right support as the city transitions to a new, lower- carbon, sustainable economy where people and nature thrive.

Delivery of the Growth Plan

- 2.13 One of the key pieces of feedback received through stakeholder engagement on the draft Growth Plan was to provide more detail on how the plan will be delivered. The final plan responds to this feedback by setting out a delivery framework that aligns existing resources, stakeholder engagement, and performance outcomes. This framework considers the role of various partners across the city:

Sheffield City Council: The Council Mission is 'together we get things done' which means that Sheffield City Council as an organisation will act as one, working together to deliver for our customers, the people and businesses of the city. City Futures, the Council's economic development arm will particularly align to Growth Plan and set their 5-year delivery plan against it – using the Council's enabling, convening, direct delivery powers.

South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA): The city is playing a lead role in rebuilding the [pride, purpose and prosperity of South Yorkshire](#), using our economic assets to put the region at the forefront of national economic renewal. We will play an active role in the collective leadership of SYMCA, and working with all local Leaders across South Yorkshire.

Business: We are working ever more closely with the private sector; the City's Pride of Place Board brings together large-scale businesses to make a positive impact on the local economy. We also work



collaboratively with the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses. Institutional Investment will be a critical mechanism to deliver of ambitions in the Growth Plan, and the city is building positive and powerful relationships with global investment funds.

VCFSE: The Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector is critical to the successful delivery of the Growth Plan. We have strong strategic and delivery relationships in projects already across the city. We have tested the plan with VCFSE partners, and sought to highlight their importance in ensuring this plan delivers for our communities and local areas. The skills, expertise, commitment and passion throughout the VCFSE sector and in our communities will be harnessed through the Investment Plan, outlined in the Growth Plan.

Government: Whilst, as a region, we have the assets - businesses, talent, culture, and community - to grow our economy, 'Team Sheffield and South Yorkshire' cannot do this alone. We are focused on developing a great city and region, but the path to get there also needs support from national enabled solutions too. Nationally, we need complementary public, private and institutional investment and focus to unlock the growth potential of the 4th largest city to benefit the UK.

Investment Plan

- 2.14 An Investment Plan (2025 – 2030) will follow as a critical next component of delivering the Growth Plan, providing a structured approach to public and private resource allocation and market leverage, attracting funding and steering longer term investment and business decision-making. Consecutive 5-year investment plans will be developed (2025-2030 and 2030 to 2035) which will identify priority initiatives for investment, ensuring that those with high impact, return on investment and achieve the strategic objectives are resourced. The Growth Plan will also be reviewed in 2030, before the 2030-2035 investment plan is finalised.
- 2.15 The investment plan will also serve as a roadmap for decision-makers. It will help us make the case collectively to regional and national government bodies, institutional investors and partners about where we focus our resources and efforts.
- 2.16 We know that in some areas there will be an 'investment gap' against the full delivery of the ambition set at the start of the plan period. This Growth Plan sets out our collective commitment to work in partnership to align our secured and earmarked resources and the leverage that it already brings, as well as highlight where gaps may remain. We will bring forward investment frameworks and delivery models - linking into new asks from regional and national government bodies, to 'close'

these gaps. This could include, but is not limited to the following actions:

- Maximising the use of local assets, such as research institutions, cultural venues, land supply and transport networks, integrating them into initiatives to enhance their impact on the local economy.
- Joining up our delivery with partners to create scale and efficiencies in our core economic programmes, including at a regional and national level
- Using public finances and seed funding to crowd in private investment – through preparing land, pump priming, improving investor readiness, reducing delivery and variability ‘risks’ and accessing to finance.
- Creating the wider conditions for growth in the city through the provision of homes, transport, skilled workers, data and information insight and being a good partner or client to business.
- Tackling areas where there has been systematic underinvestment by building the business case for collective action.
- Encouraging public-private partnerships, co-investment funds and Joint Ventures, alongside investment vehicles which can leverage additional resources and expertise from the private sector.
- Using our statutory powers as public body to enable and accelerate growth, such as spatial planning policy and transport planning and infrastructure planning and powers.
- City Futures direct capacity and capability as a partner and the interface between the Council and the Growth Plan partners, investors, businesses and communities to support and enable the growth missions.

Investment Compact

- 2.16 To deliver the Growth Plan 2035, we will need to continue to foster an active and collaborative partnership environment that shares our ambition for growth and success for our city. The Sheffield City Goals provides the foundations for a new City ecosystem ‘Sheffield Stronger Together’ which will activate partners in the common aim of collective leadership and action to support the delivery of the goals.
- 2.17 To enable progress against the 'Creative and Entrepreneurial' City Goal and the Goals relating to the economy, through the Growth Plan, a space is needed where multiple parties can be engaged in the investment planning process. A space where, as a city, we can join up our core economic programmes, co-design initiatives, build business cases and champion the city and our investment plans to crowd in further investment - whether that be expertise, physical or human resources or capital and revenue funding. Through working together, we will build a ‘compact’ that will enable long term decision making, facilitate collective investment and ensure we foster a sense of



shared responsibility and collective action toward achieving our 4 growth missions.

- 2.18 This new 'Investment Compact' interface will be launched in 2025, after a period of co-design with city partners. We will proactively engage with the Sheffield Stronger Together Partnership to ensure the investment compact is supported by partners across the city.

Growth Plan Outcomes Framework

- 2.19 Progress will be tracked using both outputs and outcomes measures through an outcomes framework set out in Appendix 2 within the Growth Plan. Outputs will be integrated into the investment plan to ensure that the activities being delivered can be monitored. We will also monitor a set of outcomes measures to test that our investments if are making a measurable change in the economy, against the delivery of the plan. Critically we will use the performance of our outcomes to influence future Investment Plan decisions enabling us to respond to underperformance and gaps in areas of activity.

3. How does this decision contribute to the Council Plan?

3.1 Council Plan outcome

- 3.1.1 The Growth Plan, will be a significant tool in the delivery of the Council Plan. In setting out the principles and themes for the city's growth ambitions, it will contribute towards all six of the strategic outcomes but most strongly towards the strategic outcomes of 'A creative and prosperous city full of culture, learning, and innovation' and 'A city on the move – growing, connected and sustainable'.

3.2 People – Prosperity - Planet

- 3.2.1 The Growth Plan will support the Council Plan policy drivers across People, Prosperity and Planet:

People - The more people succeed, the more Sheffield will succeed. Growth should have the impact of improving people's lives. Growth needs to tackle the disparities in outcomes across the city, most notably in levels of employment, health and wages and inclusive growth is vital to addressing these issues, if harnessed in the right way. The Growth Plan should enable and support a fair, inclusive and creative local economy and neighbourhoods.

Prosperity – The Growth Plan will focus on our world leading sectoral strengths and be the best place for businesses to start and grow. We will build the high-quality, sustainable homes, places and infrastructure to attract, retain and move people around the city, ensure that more



people are part of our prosperity, tackling to enable people to fulfil their potential to create a brighter, cleaner future for all.

Planet – As Sheffield continues to grow and prosper, we must minimise its environmental impact. As we prepare for a changing future and develop infrastructure that fosters our growth ambitions, the Growth Plan sets out how the city will grow in a sustainable way for the future, harnessing our energy and power, city connectivity and natural resources management.

4. What community or partner engagement has been undertaken and how has it informed the proposal?

- 4.1 The Growth Plan builds on the Growth Framework, which was developed through considerable stakeholder engagement. Throughout January and February 2024, Thinkingplace undertook 65 in-depth interviews with stakeholders from the business community, central government, local community and voluntary sector and the culture sector. They also ran 8 Focus Groups including with the Diverse Business Board, the Community Sector, the Voluntary and Charity Sector Employment and Skills Group and Sheffield BID High Street Forum.
- 4.2 A Growth Reference Group was also created to provide feedback and input at the start and end of Phase 1 and city-wide engagement from the City Goals and other consultation, such as the Local Plan were used to inform the shaping of the Growth Framework and themes.
- 4.3 Further engagement has taken place with the draft Growth Plan. Over 20 group sessions were held with stakeholders, including with the University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield Youth Cabinet, Chamber Council, Sheffield College, Culture Consortium, Culture Collective, Sheffield Property Association, the VCS Employment and Skills Group, Sheffield Equality Partnership and a consultation group of several climate and sustainability organisations, brought together by South Yorkshire Climate Alliance. A full list of the stakeholders involved can be found in Appendix B of this report.
- 4.4 After each phase of engagement, changes have been made to the emerging Growth Plan. These are set out in 2.7 and 2.8 of this report.



5. What alternative options did we consider?

5.1 Alternative Option 1:

Do not develop a growth plan

This was rejected due to the needs of the city, and the need identified in the LGA Peer Review, for a strong and visible statement of ambition that brings together the city's regeneration plans for partners, investors, elected members and citizens.

5.2 Alternative Option 2:

Continue with a suite of strategies and action plans with no overarching plan

This was rejected due to the opportunity to create a coherent narrative across various areas of economic and regeneration activity. In doing so, the narrative can connect the city's growth ambitions, partnerships, investment and community engagement to better support and improve the quality of life of the people of Sheffield.

6. How has equality, diversity and inclusion been actively considered?

6.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

6.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. Also identified and considered is care experience which is now treated as a protected characteristic in Sheffield. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.

6.3 The delivery of the Growth Plan is expected to have a positive impact on equalities. Engagement on the Growth Framework and Growth Plan has strived to be inclusive, involving voluntary and community groups, as well as protected characteristics through the Sheffield Equality Partnership.

6.4 A growing city, if harnessed correctly, can provide security, safety and opportunity for all of its residents. One of the Growth Plan's principles is 'Fair and prosperous for all' to reduce disparities in economic and



social outcomes as part of a more inclusive economy. By setting this as a principle, it will influence future activity that helps to reduce economic inequalities across the city. The Growth Plan's emphasis on partnership working recognises the needs for partners to work together to maximise the benefits of growth, so the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

7. Financial and Commercial Implications

- 7.1 Although there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, there will be a longer-term requirement to source both external and internal funding, plus a need for adequate internal resources to co-ordinate external grants and manage joint working arrangements.
- 7.2 Achieving the goals set out in the plan will be reliant upon securing the required level of funding (both external and internal). There will be a number of dependencies and external conditions that will need to be met before the resources become available and these will need to be considered as part of the financial planning.
- 7.3 Alongside the securing of resources, further cost modelling will be required to ensure that the expected financial benefits can be realised. This should include consideration of any changes in the external environment and identification of any financial or commercial risks. This data will be used to inform further separate reports relating to the delivery of the Growth Plan.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There is no legal requirement for the Council to have a Growth Plan. However, the production of the Growth Plan assists the Council in the delivery of the City Goals and Council Plan. It will also support the Council in meeting other legal obligations such as its Best Value obligations under the section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 and is permitted by the subsidiary power in section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 that allows the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 8.2 As the actions described in the report are developed, they will require further decision making in accordance with the Council's Constitution and the legal implications of each decision will be considered fully at that time.

9. Climate and Environmental Implications

- 9.1 Sheffield City Council has declared climate and nature emergencies and has set the target to see both the city and council greenhouse gas emissions reduce to net zero by 2030. As such, in adopting the Growth Plan a climate impact assessment has been undertaken, and much consideration given to ensure that the Growth Plan will help to drive

and join-up activity to address climate change and reduce emissions. To this end, the following elements have been priorities for the Growth Plan. One of its principles is to 'Meet our environmental and climate ambitions' and one of the four missions is 'Our Economy: Global, Green and Growing.' These in particular have the potential to have a positive impact on how the city responds to the climate emergency. Another mission is 'A city on the move - connected with the infrastructure to grow' which includes actions around low-emission travel and future proofed infrastructure.

10 Other implications

10.1 *Health and Wellbeing Implications* – The Growth Plan acknowledges the links that an inclusive and sustainable economy can have with supporting better health and wellbeing. The plan includes an action to align with the new Fair and Healthy Sheffield Plan to identify opportunities to make those links stronger. Following feedback on the draft Growth Plan, references to health and wellbeing have been strengthened through the document.

11 Reasons for decision

11.1 This is a pivotal moment in Sheffield's journey. Sheffield has ambitious plans for the future of its economy. Bringing these together into a coherent plan to communicate the city's priorities benefits the city's partners, investors and Sheffield citizens. It helps to identify areas of joint working and investment opportunities and sets out the Council's commitment to the city's prosperity.

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