Aim 4: A strong economy based on lifelong learning, innovation and enterprise that delivers decent living standards for everyone

**Employment**

Our economic vision is for everyone in the city to be able to reach their full economic potential and achieve a decent living throughout their working life. At a basic level this means creating more, and better paid, jobs. But it’s also about ensuring that everyone has access to a good education and life-long learning and training opportunities, regardless of where they live or grow up.

The **Sheffield City Region Strategic Economic Plan** aims to create 70,000 additional jobs across the city region between 2015 and 2025, with an additional 25,550 jobs set to be created in Sheffield. Whilst more jobs are needed to cater for the city’s growing population, an important aim is to increase the overall number of skilled and better paid jobs.

These new, higher value jobs are needed to develop a strong and growing economy. They need to focus on the city’s strengths of advanced manufacturing, creative and digital industries, financial and professional services, higher education, the outdoor city, and health and medical services.

As the only city in the Sheffield City Region, Sheffield is a major employment centre for the SCR economy, particularly for higher skilled jobs. Sheffield must develop as a destination city or ‘Magnet City’ where its unique economic, cultural and sporting assets become a stronger attraction to innovative and creative businesses and visitors. This will involve building on existing assets, in particular a high quality physical environment.

The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (AMID) covers much of the Lower Don Valley and extends into Rotherham. It is rapidly becoming Europe’s leading innovation led, advanced manufacturing cluster where world-class manufacturers collaborate and co-locate alongside a concentration of skilled engineers, high-tech firms and applied research facilities. It is a place where new technologies and operating methods are explored, and industry relevant research and development can be turned into products that can be sold across the world. The city will also seek to build on the strengths of the AMID by looking to expand its area where appropriate.

The Sheffield Plan aims to support jobs and economic growth in Sheffield by making 140 hectares of employment land available.

There are, however, areas where the city under-performs compared to national levels and other UK cities. Like many major cities in the North, Sheffield suffers from a ‘productivity gap’ whereby its productivity does not match the national average. The make-up of our economy is important and if we support the direction of travel to rebalance the economy towards opportunities in more highly productive industries, as well as skills development and job creation in high productivity occupations, then we will start to increase our performance relative to other places. Put simply,
Sheffield should be doing better given its size and assets and to continue to underperform prevents both the city as a whole, its residents and the wider City Region from fulfilling their potential.

Prospective economic growth in Sheffield as the Outdoor City is captured by a study by Sheffield Hallam University. It shows that Sheffield has higher than average participation in outdoor activities, and with that comes higher than average expenditure on outdoor trips and equipment.

Failure to consolidate these growth sectors will lead to significant economic inactivity and have an adverse impact on economic growth. This will disproportionately affect those with more limited ability to access job opportunities and exacerbate the problem of low incomes for those in low-paid jobs and on benefits. Furthermore, retaining and creating higher skilled and higher paid jobs within Sheffield will help to reduce the number of people commuting out of the city.

The full potential for economic development and the job growth required in Sheffield cannot be achieved without a supply of land and sites available for new business and industrial premises. The Sheffield Plan must, therefore, ensure that there is sufficient land available to meet the needs of existing and new businesses, especially in the employment growth sectors. Each sector, however, will have preferences for where they locate (e.g. City Centre or close to motorway links) and the plan must seek to meet their needs as much as possible.

The link between economic activity, transport, housing and health cannot be underestimated. Better access to higher wages and jobs of all levels has a positive impact on housing and health.

This Aim must be achieved at a time when the city will be dealing with the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. There are likely to be changes in the way we work, in particular how we use office space. The plan will need to consider what impact this will have on the type, location and amount of office space needed. The crisis is also likely to have had a disproportionately negative impact on lower paid and less skilled people in our workforce, so we will have to work even harder to create the right conditions to ensure there are new employment opportunities for all our residents.

We estimate that the amount of land required to accommodate the new jobs in the City Centre is around 2 hectare/year. The amount of land estimated to accommodate new businesses in other parts of the city is around 8 hectare/year. We can meet our employment land need and supply requirements for around 10 years but will need to identify further employment land when reviewing the plan in 5 years’ time. The city’s employment needs will continue to be met within the main established employment area, particularly the City Centre, the Lower and Upper Don Valley, Smithy Wood and Halfway/Oxclose.

Other established employment areas include- the Blackburn Valley/Ecclesfield Common, the Sheaf Valley, Dore House Industrial Estate, Stocksbridge steel works, Wharncliffe Industrial Area at Deepcar and the Thorncliffe industrial area in Chapeltown.

More information can be found in a
Vision and Aims for Sheffield

Consultation questions

Q11: Where should land be allocated for employment uses and why?

Q12a: Should some of Sheffield’s employment land requirements (e.g. for warehousing and distribution) be met on sites in other parts of Sheffield City Region?

Q12b: Please explain your answer.

Draft objectives for a strong economy

- To enable more and better quality jobs to be created in the city’s economy in order to raise average incomes and build a future based on Sheffield’s competitive advantages in the areas of advanced manufacturing; education, learning and knowledge; creative and digital industries; advanced technology; research and innovation; medical technology and services; sports science; outdoor leisure
- To ensure there is a sufficient range of locations and premises available for new businesses and those relocating from within the city and elsewhere
- To support the growth and development of the city’s universities, colleges and training providers to enable an increase in the skills and capacity of the workforce