Consultation synthesis
Introduction
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For all of us, the world looks very different than it did six months ago.

The crisis caused by COVID-19 means the need for collaboration between partners across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is more important than ever. Both universities are also facing challenging financial circumstances as a result of the crisis. However, their response to this collective challenge has been to “double-down” on the importance of the Universities for Nottingham initiative as the primary mechanism for the two institutions to work with local partners in support of recovery and renewal. We all have a stake in the economic prosperity, educational opportunity, environmental sustainability and health and wellbeing of our local area.

The first stage of the University of Nottingham initiative began in 2019, with both Nottingham Trent University and the University of Nottingham undertaking a joint economic, social and cultural impact study to benchmark the contribution made to the local area. The universities also ran a complementarity mapping exercise exploring the hundreds of locally focused programmes and initiatives run across the institutions. The aim of this exercise was to identify those areas where, if they worked together in collaboration, they might have a bigger impact on the lives of local people. Drawing from the recommendations of the UPP Foundation Civic University Commission, the Universities then used this work as the foundation for a programme of renewed, focused and impactful collaborative working with local partners. This has been a process of co-curation and consultation to lead to the creation of the first “Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement”.

Following early conversations with over one hundred local stakeholders and organisations, the universities structured this evidence-gathering and co-curation phase around five main areas. These were:

1. Economic prosperity
2. Educational opportunity
3. Environmental sustainability
4. Health, wellbeing and culture
5. Unlocking the universities
This document... consultation synthesis

Both universities initially paused the evidence-gathering and co-curation phase in March 2020 - the height of the COVID-19 crisis – focusing the resources of the project team on coordinating the mutual aid programmes both institutions were running to directly support local and national partners tackle the impact of the pandemic. However, in consultation with partners, this phase recommenced in May 2020 with a focus on also capturing what partners were identifying as the most urgent challenges caused by the pandemic and developing some early ideas for joint projects to help drive local recovery and renewal. In total, over 400 hours of consultation took place, including 1:1 interviews, written submissions and a (virtual) Challenges and Solutions Summit, including co-curation workshops.

This document provides a synthesis of the results of the consultation and co-curation phase, as well as the many other inputs provided by stakeholders and partners over the previous 18 months. It serves as the foundation document for the first Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement.

Throughout the consultation process almost all stakeholders identified that, whilst Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have genuine strengths and huge potential; the area could and should do better. There was consensus that there has for some time been a need for greater ambition and coherence (across sectors, geographies and administrative boundaries) in how organisations work together collectively to grow the economy, to improve education and health systems, and to tackle the area’s significant economic, environmental and societal challenges. However, stakeholders also pointed out that the combined local response to the pandemic through the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum had been exceptional – and there was a real opportunity for this to provide a model for collaboration moving forwards.

The effects of the COVID-19 crisis are additionally exacerbating inequalities in employment, skills and educational opportunity, and health and wellbeing. However, they are also creating a new impetus to bring together innovators in universities, businesses and entrepreneurs, and the public sector to address these challenges. With this, there is a real opportunity to “build-back-better”; through measures to boost economic growth and to create jobs in the short-term, whilst putting in place the foundations for a more productive, resilient, inclusive and sustainable growth over the medium to longer term. The government’s agendas around the industrial strategy, “levelling up”, increasing R&D investment to 2.4% of GDP, and devolution also create opportunities where the universities need to play an important role. By establishing a set of considered initiatives, a mechanism can be put in place to maximise the benefits and minimise the negative across all themes.

The financial challenges facing the Universities mean that working with partners needs to be strategic, coherent, and focused. Now is the right time for discussion to identify the areas for intervention where the universities, local authorities, the LEP, the wider education and health systems can work better together to really make a difference. There was consensus that local authorities and the D2N2 LEP could engage the universities further to enable them to play a clearer and greater role in taking the area forward. This would benefit the city and county, and it would, in turn, strengthen the universities. Strong universities need a close connection to a strong city and region.

The following chapters of this document synthesise the many discussions and inputs gathered by the consultation across each of the five themes that, together, inform this first Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement.
Economic prosperity
Economic Prosperity

Through the Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement we will...

1. Realign business support programmes and develop new initiatives with partners to support COVID-19 local economic recovery and renewal. This will encompass: delivery of current business and innovation support programmes for local SMEs; reducing further the graduate talent drain from the local area; ensuring the area is more successful in securing enterprise, innovation and skills funding; and engaging in the government’s levelling-up and innovation-led growth agendas.

2. Work together to ensure the safe and secure return of students to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire from September 2020, and develop a new long-term integrated student-living, community cohesion and regeneration strategy to build stronger relationships between local residents and local communities.

3. Explore developing a joint live, work, study and invest ‘place marketing’ campaign to attract investment in and people and businesses to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

4. Support the East Midlands Development Corporation’s proposals for innovation-driven, zero-carbon growth hubs at Toton and Ratcliffe-on-Soar.

Our mission...

+ To support the inclusive economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and sustained economic growth that supports local towns as well as Nottingham City.

+ To work with partners to ensure that the economic contribution of returning students is a key factor in catalysing business recovery and protecting jobs in the local sectors hardest hit by the pandemic.

+ To help make Nottingham and Nottinghamshire an outstanding and prosperous place to live, work, study, invest and start a business through contributions to innovation, talent pipeline, skills development, improving business productivity and developing the jobs of the future.

+ To anchor the long-term economic future of the local area, underpinning investment in innovation, the talent pipeline, improving business productivity and developing the jobs of the future.

“We need to use this [COVID-19] to reimagine the economy. To look at how we can create more and better jobs, to move to a low carbon, economy, and to increase innovation. The universities have a central role in this.”

Nicki Jenkins, Nottingham City Council

Summary of the Universities for Nottingham consultation process

Partners involved in the consultation process included Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, Nottingham Integrated Care Partnership and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.
Partners suggested economic prosperity was the area of greatest priority for the Universities for Nottingham initiative - particularly in terms of how it could immediately help drive local recovery and renewal following the COVID-19 crisis.

Referring to the role played by both universities and the spending of their students and staff in supporting jobs and businesses in the local economy, partners and university stakeholders identified the importance of working together now to ensure the safe and secure return of students in the autumn.

Partners believe that employment is now possibly a more important short-term metric than productivity in the immediate recovery following the COVID-19 crisis - recognising that there is also a need to put in place the foundations for a more productive economy.

Partners stressed that there is a real opportunity for the local economy to be ‘built back better’ – focusing on low-carbon economic growth, increasing rates of local entrepreneurship, innovation and new business creation.

Skills were seen by partners to remain a stubborn issue for the local area to try to solve – and both universities working together can play an enhanced role here.

The role played by both universities in helping to anchor and unlock major economic regeneration and investment stalled because of the COVID-19 crisis, this was highlighted as an area of major importance by partners - with the Toton and Ratcliffe-on-Soar opportunities highlighted in particular.

A strong, coherent and ambitious place-marketing, talent attraction and inward investment offer was highlighted by partners and both universities as being significant to local businesses and the visitor economy and partners – particularly in the context of the forthcoming Brexit.

Partners noted that there is already a large amount of joint university-partner activity taking place in this area to build from - with both institutions investing tens of millions in innovation and enterprise support programmes, anchoring local economic regeneration projects and providing joint training, CPD and talent development programmes.

State of play – the universities and economic prosperity

The role of Nottingham’s two universities in economic prosperity can be summarised as follows:

The incidental annual economic impact caused by the spending of our students, staff and operations.

Together, both universities add an additional £1.9bn GVA & 26k jobs to the D2N2 LEP area.

The spending of staff, students and their visitors in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire’s economy adds an additional £1.1bn every year. £146m is added by international students alone.

Both Universities undertake significant capital investment in new buildings and facilities to support economic regeneration, attract investment and support jobs in local construction.
The talent pipeline provided for local organisations

+ The universities work with employers to offer Degree Apprenticeships, combining full work experience with degree-accredited study.
+ The universities work in partnership to support graduate retention in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (the N2 area), including coordinating local internship schemes and graduate career opportunities.
+ 916 doctors, nurses and other medical staff working in the local community trained at our universities in the last 3 years.

The intentional programmes of support run for local business, innovators and entrepreneurs – aimed at increasing productivity.

+ The universities have worked in partnership for over a decade to help secure tens of millions of pounds of EU innovation funding to deliver training, access to facilities, consultancy and innovation support to small companies and entrepreneurs across the region. They are currently providing over £20m in match-funding to bring a further £20m in ERDF SME support funding into the region up to 2023.
+ 700+ new businesses and enterprises have been created by university programmes run by NTU Enterprise and the University of Nottingham’s Ingenuity Lab.

The UK Government has continued to signal its intention to put research and innovation at the heart of its levelling-up agenda, using this investment to drive place-based recovery and renewal. The Universities can play a significant role in delivering this agenda. They can also help to mitigate any further challenges to businesses, local healthcare organisations and the institutions themselves that result from a possible No-Deal Brexit in December.

Local challenges highlighted by partners

1. Getting the Student and Adult Working Population back into the local environment to boost spending and increase local economic impact. The negative impact of the Universities and wider employers being closed will grow in significance the longer this continues. The need for partners to work together to address this quickly and collectively is an important step in the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

2. Addressing unemployment. As the section above, the COVID-19 crisis will lead to significant job losses due to the shutdown of the economy, the acceleration of structural trends such as automation, the shift from “bricks to clicks” in retail, and the structural impact on some sectors such as aviation. There is likely to be a long-term “scarring effect” on people’s careers and prospects from a long period of unemployment, particularly for young people and graduates. There is also the risk of a long-term loss of highly skilled productive capacity from the economy.

3. Raising productivity. While the area has some successful and highly productive firms, there are not enough of them. Too many firms in the area under-invest in training, management development, R&D, premises and modern processes. This has led to weaker productivity growth. Addressing this issue is critical to improving economic performance and prosperity. Harnessing the experience and talent of returning graduates is an important challenge that Nottingham will benefit from as part of raising productivity. Greater focus on entrepreneurs and start-ups is needed with intervention funding for them to upscale and those displaced by the COVID-19 crisis should be retrained and redeployed.
4. **Tackling deprivation and low pay.** There are widespread areas of longstanding deprivation in Nottingham and in various towns in the county. The causes and consequences of deprivation are complex and multi-facetted. They include worse than average quality of housing, educational and skills attainment, multigenerational unemployment, ill-health (including mental health), confidence and aspiration, crime, and the strength of families as units. Poverty, which was once synonymous with unemployment, is increasingly an issue affecting working people and households. Increasing numbers of workers are in low paid, often insecure, jobs with limited prospects for career progression due to issues with skills and the changing structure of the labour market.

5. **Image, profile and inward investment.** Nottingham and Nottinghamshire currently punch below their weight in terms of their global image and profile as a place to invest, live, visit, and study. The image of Nottingham needs to be established as a city within a wide city region.

6. **Skills.** There is a need to increase skill levels in the workforce. This links to graduate retention, skills to enable career progression, retraining to help people adapt to a changing economy, and tackling higher-level skills shortages.

7. **Increasing innovation-driven growth.** While Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have a rich history and many contemporary success stories in commercialising innovation, there is the potential to build a stronger ecosystem for supporting the start-up and growth of innovation-driven enterprises. This includes seeking to grow R&D intensive sectors such as health and medical technologies, knowledge intensive business services, digital and data analytics, and advanced manufacturing. There is also the challenge of raising productivity in lower productivity sectors such as retail or social care.

8. **Strengthening the economic role of Nottingham through development and regeneration.** An economically competitive region needs a strong core city. There is scope to strengthen the economic role of Nottingham, and in particular its city centre, which lacks the concentrations of Knowledge Intensive Business Services and Grade A office space that other core cities have. The city centre is on the cusp of significant regeneration, and there is concern that this will stall because of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and the pressures this is putting on the retail sector.

9. **Regenerating towns.** There is a need to further improve the economic position of former industrial towns and coalfield settlements. Many of these places lack the economic diversity, dynamism, workforce skills and connectivity to be economically successful.

10. **Culture and heritage.** There are pockets of excellence and significant assets in local culture and heritage. However, the city and county still need to invest in a strong collective brand for this sector and the wider visitor economy offer, particularly given its vulnerability to the economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis. Nottingham has the opportunity to establish itself as a leader in creative economy and cohesive lobby will be critical to drive this, bringing partners together as one voice.

11. **Economic leadership.** There is a need to improve the collective economic leadership of the area. There is potential for much stronger and coherent joint working and leadership in relation to economic growth at senior level across the City and County Councils, the Universities, the LEP, and the private sector which will address cross-border issues. There is a particular need to advocate with one voice, a vision for the City and County that all partners can be part of.
Impact of the Covid-19 crisis

The impact of the COVID-19 related actions will have damaging economic consequences as a result of the expected widespread unemployment that will follow "lockdown" which is forecast to be particularly high in Nottingham City, especially for skilled trade jobs. This includes the expected long-term "scarring" impacts on youth unemployment or underemployment as well as the loss of skilled and productive capacity from sectors such as aviation and engineering (for example, from the redundancies at Rolls-Royce in Derby). Nottingham is considered vulnerable in terms of economic recovery from COVID-19. The D2N2 Economic Recovery Analytical Group identified, for example, that as of June, 98% of businesses were being affected by Covid-19 (the majority in a negative way), 71% of respondents had furloughed staff and 5% made redundancies, and 74% of respondents had experienced over 50% decline in sales.

The crisis response is, however, also accelerating structural trends such as digital transformation and automation from which there will be winners and losers in terms of people, places and businesses.

Whilst productivity may have previously been the priority metric for economic prosperity, it is clear from our consultation with partners that employment may have superseded this as an urgent shorter-term priority with bottom-up benefit. Whilst Nottingham must move quickly to support recovery from COVID-19, it will be important that longer-term solutions are well considered and that this is not overshadowed by desire for ‘quick-fixes’.

Opportunities and ideas identified by partners

1. Economic stimulus projects.
   There is an opportunity for the universities, local authorities, local businesses and the LEP to shape and help deliver a major economic stimulus package of regeneration, infrastructure, housing and economic growth projects in order to kickstart economic recovery. This could include keeping existing projects moving and identifying new ones. This could require bold interventions in the property market to kick-start stalled schemes. There will be an urgent need for job creation projects, which could include large scale housing retrofit for example.

2. Building back better.
   There is an opportunity to put in place the building blocks for a more inclusive and sustainable economy for the future. Partners need to think about how best they can strengthen support for key workers and people in less secure jobs as well as put in place initiatives to reskill people and get them back into work and to support people to progress out of low-paid, insecure jobs. There is also a need to address the lack of support for newly unemployed skilled people as a quick win to boost productivity. There is an opportunity to develop a more coherent skills system; with a stronger focus on training and education of people to help them respond to rapid economic and technological change. The city’s commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2028 is important with this regard and creates opportunities for innovation and new businesses.

3. An economic focus on societal challenges.
   Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are well placed to drive forward the rapid innovation needed to tackle societal and health challenges in response to the COVID-19 crisis. This can support economic growth because many of the solutions will have national and global commercial applications. There is potential to connect innovators, entrepreneurs, the
health and social care system and other providers of public services to work together to develop products and services which would realistically and significantly meet a societal need that has emerged or increased due to the covid-19 pandemic. This also applies to the needs of an industry sector that has also been severely impacted and disrupted. This could include a refocus of student enterprise competitions to develop projects which respond to economic recovery and renewal. The scope could include med-tech, social care, autonomous deliveries, redesigning towns and city centres for social distancing, ed-tech and so on. This could be part of a wider mission-orientated approach to supporting innovation-driven economic growth. The ‘what works’ initiative being championed by the Universities could be further enhanced to measure and evaluate best practice as well as to drive its adoption in local and national, future policy making.

4. **Building districts and ecosystems for innovation.**
There is an opportunity to create stronger networks of innovators from universities, knowledge intensive firms, entrepreneurs, corporates, investors and the public sector to accelerate innovation-driven growth; and, in doing so, to really get behind innovative start-ups and scale-ups. These potential high growth businesses, which make a huge contribution to the economy through their investment in people, technology and innovation, are likely to find securing growth finance harder than before the crisis. There is also the scope to build on the success of initiatives such as the creative quarter, BioCity, and the Nottingham Science park in order to strengthen the innovation districts in Nottingham, as well as looking at the opportunities that will be created at Toton around HS2, and at Ratcliffe-On-Soar. This can build on sector strengths such as health innovation and med-tech, low carbon, digital and data analytics, and creative industries.

5. **Stronger Towns.**
There is potential for the universities to consider their roles and footprint in the area’s towns, potentially working with the FE sector. This can build on the example of how NTU has joined up with Vision West Nottinghamshire College in Mansfield to offer Higher Education under its branding.

6. **Enhancing the global image and profile of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.**
The universities have strong global brands, an overseas presence and extensive alumni networks. All of these can be mobilised as part of a more effective approach to promoting the area better on the global stage. A more prominent, and ambitious approach to developing and selling the area’s cultural and tourism offer as envisaged in the D2N2 LIS also needs to be part of this approach, whilst being mindful of other city aspirations in the region.

7. **Economic Leadership.**
There is the potential to build on the work of the Economic Growth Board to enhance the collective economic leadership of the area across the City and County Councils, the Universities, the LEP, and the private sector. Securing a devolution deal or similar with Government should be part of this.

8. **Strengthen the universities interface with existing businesses and entrepreneurs.**
This could include the creation of an ‘integrated front door’ to the business support offered by both universities, linked to the D2N2 LEP Growth Hub. With an economic recovery focus specifically, this could include targeted demand stimulation of the local supply chain in specific sectors, for instance within the local medical technology cluster.
External/internal strategic and policy drivers

National

+ The Government has a commitment to “Levelling Up” the economy, by seeking to address the economic underperformance of towns, cities and regions, particularly outside London and the South East. The government’s Research and Development (R&D) Roadmap sets out the UK’s vision and ambition for science, research and innovation. The One Public Estate programme provides revenue funding to cross-public sector partnerships for projects which seek to make better use of the public estate.

+ The Devolution White Paper sets out the Government’s commitment to extend devolution and this creates a significant opportunity for the area

+ Through interventions such as the Stronger Towns Fund, Government is seeking to improve the economic position of former industrial towns outside the Core Cities. This is part of the economic strategy Vision 2030 for the D2N2 LEP area.

+ The developing government Free Ports programme which would establish hubs for global trade and investment, promote regeneration and job creation, and create hotbeds for innovation.

+ DIT’s network of International Trade Advisers as accessible support for SMEs and Capital Investment Team as built environment advisors through the D2N2 Growth Hub.

+ At some point, the UK Government will announce details of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which will replace the EU Structural Fund

+ The last of the EU Structural Funds are available via routes like Local Growth Fund – for programmes running to 2023

+ There will be raft of opportunities and new policies that will be launched as part of place-based economic stimulus packages, both over the summer and in the Autumn’s Comprehensive Spending Review

+ Universities have access to the Higher Education Innovation Fund and Strength in Places Fund via Research England

+ Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants – an open access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects. This funds thousands of individual artists, community and cultural organisations.

+ MHCLG’s upcoming Brownfield Housing Fund to boost the supply of homes in local areas and bring underutilised brownfield land in to use.

+ Transforming Cities Fund – to drive up productivity and spread prosperity through investment in public and sustainable transport.

+ Sustainable Travel Access Fund – to encourage councils to offer sustainable transport initiatives which can improve access to jobs, skills, training and education and additionally, as a result of COVID-19 the £250 million Emergency active travel fund and £5 billion package for cycling and buses.
Local

+ The development of the East Midlands Development Corporation as a potential delivery model.

+ The D2N2 Local Industrial Strategy will set out how the economic growth priorities for the D2N2 LEP area, with a focus on improving productivity. In the context of COVID-19 and Brexit, it is likely the Government wants to work with local areas to identify a small number of bold economic growth initiatives and a recent call for projects has been issued by the Secretary of State for Local Government in this vein. The Government has announced an ambition to increase R&D spend to the OECD average of 2.4% of GDP, and to focus it more on commercial applications and business. Recent Nesta report “The Missing £4bn” sets this out in greater detail.

+ Relevant Nottingham City Council strategies and initiatives include:
  + Nottingham City Council’s Regeneration in Nottingham 2018: City of Opportunity – a city centre strategy for Nottingham to achieve its potential and ambition.
  + Nottingham City Council’s Growth Plan 2.0 – a strategy focussing fostering enterprise, developing a skilled workforce and building a 21st century infrastructure.
  + Nottingham’s ICT Strategy 2017-20 – to support the next phase of business transformation with an emphasis on delivering increasingly joined up public services that are effective, affordable and designed around the needs of service users.
  + Cultural Statement and Framework for Nottingham 2017-2027 – Nottingham City Council’s ambitious 10-year delivery plan to establish Nottingham internationally as a cultural city.
  + Nottingham’s Employment and Health Strategy 2020-30 – to enable more people to get into work where this is their goal and develop our workplaces to be settings that facilitate good health and wellbeing.
  + The launch of the Nottingham Project a new initiative with the aim of re-visioning and rejuvenating Nottingham after the worldwide COVID-19 crisis has launched today with an aim to securing and shaping the city’s cultural landscape.

+ Relevant Nottinghamshire County Council strategies and initiatives include:
  + Nottinghamshire’s Arts and Sports Development Strategy – a Statement of Purpose for the service offers: “We will inspire our communities and offer a wide range of opportunities to engage with the arts and sports and actively participate in the creative and sporting life of the County.”
  + Cultural Strategy for Nottinghamshire – sets out a clear, coherent and comprehensive overview of why Nottinghamshire County Council provides and supports, a range of cultural services for the people of Nottinghamshire and the many visitors who are attracted to the County.
  + Nottinghamshire County Council’s Place Departmental Strategy 2019 – 2021 – brings together a range of services in order to meet the needs and aspirations of the people of Nottinghamshire.
Nottinghamshire’s Local Improvement Scheme Integrated Funding Strategy – the Council’s approach to investing in and supporting local communities to be more resilient through encouraging active community support, volunteering and seeking wider funding opportunities.

Nottinghamshire’s Visitor Economy Strategy 2019 to 2029 – to grow tourism by volume and value, to create economic opportunity for businesses to grow, to create more jobs and to attract further private and public investment to deliver unique, defined and sustainable tourism.

How to measure impact and success

1. Economic activity rates / unemployment
2. Productivity (GVA per worker / hour work);
3. Wage levels, including number of workers with low pay;
4. Public and private sector R&D spend;
5. Business start-up and growth rates; particularly amongst innovation driven enterprises;
6. Office take-up rate / development rate; and
7. Inward investment completions and exports.

Key partnerships, fora and collaborations

There are several key organisations and partnerships which drive economic prosperity in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, some of which are listed below:

- Central Government;
- Midlands Engine
- D2N2 LEP (including recovery groups);
- Nottingham City Council (including its Growth Board);
- Nottinghamshire County Council;
- Marketing NG (Invest in Nottingham, Visit Nottinghamshire, Nottingham Partners);
- Nottingham BID;
- Nottingham Cultural Partnership Board;
- Major local corporates and employers; and
- LRF Recovery Coordination Group (plus various cells).

These partners are already involved in developing several of the projects across the Civic Agreement and will be invited to join the Universities for Nottingham initiative as is relevant.
Case Studies

Leeds MIT Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Programme

Greater Boston, Massachusetts has built one of the world’s most dynamic and successful economies based on innovation, anchored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and other world class universities. MIT, through its Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Programme (REAP) framework, has identified the components of a successful ecosystem for innovation-led growth: entrepreneurs, corporates, investors of risk capital, and the public sector working together.

Initiated and led by the University of Leeds, the MIT REAP Leeds team are developing a strategy for strengthening the commercialisation of innovation in the area. The Leeds team is led by the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Leeds and includes the Chief Executive of Leeds City Council, the LEP Chair, the Chief Executive of Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust, and several entrepreneurs, angel investors and corporates. The team has been developing a strategy focused on bringing stakeholders together to solve societal challenges in the city through innovation and entrepreneurship. An initiative has been developed quickly to support people who are considering becoming entrepreneurs as a result of losing their job or to exploit new opportunities as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

Eindhoven 365 - Place-Marketing

Eindhoven’s focus on place marketing started following the economic crisis in 2009, as it sought to become one of world’s top creative innovation regions. To achieve this, a long-term strategy was formulated to market the city and region in order to attract top talent working in high-tech and design, increase foreign direct investment, and to encourage technology enterprises and research institutes to come to Eindhoven.

Eindhoven365’s main strategy was to ‘tell and market the story of the city’ through influencers, using social media and big data to make an impact and draw interest to Eindhoven as a place to live, work and to be creative. Innovative tools such as temporary urban interventions in public spaces, together with on-brand events, use of big data analysis and availability of services with high tech appeal have created huge interest and excitement and generated interest from across the world. Key factors for success have been strong and persistent leadership, combined with the broad support of citizens and politicians. The campaign has resulted in an increase in visitors to the city, increased investment in technology, knowledge, and design businesses and the formal recognition of the Dutch government that Eindhoven is now the third key economic ‘pillar’ of the Netherlands.
Educational opportunity
Educational opportunity

Through the Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement we will...

5. Explore further a range of pioneering activities to support further educational opportunities locally. These could include: **integrated educational programmes** for the most vulnerable learners; a **place-based offering** for newly qualified teachers in order to **boost local retention**; and primary and secondary trainee teachers supporting students whose educational experience has been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

6. Work with partners to ensure that there is appropriate seniority of representation from both universities on local multi-partner education fora.

Our mission...

+ To help partners address and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on educational inequality as an immediate priority alongside longer-term support to the development of a more joined-up and integrated approach to educational opportunity and social mobility.

+ To increase higher education participation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire by supporting aspiration and capabilities development as well as supporting Schools and educators to improve attainment.

+ To provide support and training to up-skill, re-skill and help retain educators in the local area.

“We are teaching kids to pass exams, not preparing them for the real world. Perhaps COVID-19 might provide the opportunity to rethink education to prepare children for the future better”.

Sian Hampton, Archway Learning Trust.

Summary of the Universities for Nottingham consultation process

A number of core partners and other partners were engaged in workshops. These partners included: Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, the Nova Education Trust and the Archway Learning Trust.

+ Before the COVID-19 crisis, the Leaders of both City and County Councils highlighted Educational Opportunity as the area they felt the Universities for Nottingham initiative could make a significant difference to - by providing thought leadership, convening partners and aligning resources.

+ Partners believe that the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on school children and learners has been significant and will exacerbate existing educational inequalities - setting back a decade’s worth of progress in closing the attainment “gap”.

+ Partners referred to Nottingham being ranked 150th out of 150 local areas by the 2018 Youth Opportunity Index for the prospects of its children and young people. Nottinghamshire was 73rd. The East Midlands is one of the worst regions in the UK for social mobility according to the Social Mobility Commission.

+ Partners noted that both universities provide significant resources and programmes aimed at improving aspiration and attainment amongst local schools – but more can be done to join this up.
Partners referred to there being no social mobility strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire – the universities are one piece of a puzzle but could support this effort via their convening powers and expertise.

Partners felt that it would be beneficial to create an overarching forum to bring together local authorities, the LEP, academy providers and both universities. Providing clearer data, ‘what works’ interventions, better foundations to secure government funding and provide support to teachers was highlighted by partners as an opportunity.

State of play – the universities and educational opportunity

The role of Nottingham’s two universities in educational opportunity can be summarised as follows:

**Widening participation, increasing access and social mobility:** both universities are committed to running major programmes to ensure children from disadvantaged backgrounds are not only encouraged and supported to apply to and thrive at our two institutions, but also to consider studying at any university in the UK as a realistic and achievable goal.

- Both universities spend £33m annually on widening participation activities.
- 34,792 local children took part in widening participation and access programmes run by both universities last year.
- 813 teachers currently working locally were trained by the universities over the last three years.
- The universities offer tailored support for local people who are underrepresented in higher education - including mature students, care leavers, refugees and young carers.
- Nottingham Trent University has developed the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO) - a new ‘What Works Centre’ for the Higher Education Sector. TASO is committed to the generation, synthesis and dissemination of high-quality evidence about effective practice in widening participation and student outcomes.

**Partnerships with schools, providers and FE Colleges:** Universities are only one part of a complicated puzzle when it comes to improving educational opportunity and social mobility. Both recognise more needs to be done through working in partnership more effectively with each other, schools and academies, FE colleges, government and other educational agencies. Both universities are committed to helping turn this around.

- The University of Nottingham has previously sponsored three city academies - supporting and funding the improvement of facilities and building a brand-new facility to create the Nottingham University Academy of Science and Technology (NUAST).
- With IntoUniversity, the University of Nottingham have also created three ‘Nottingham Potential’ Centres in Broxtowe, Hyson Green and St Ann’s.
- NTU have launched a major new partnership with West Notts College which will see the university’s higher education (HE) provision delivered from the college’s main campus in Mansfield.
There have been extensive discussions between the University of Nottingham and NOVA Education Trust to develop Masters Programmes and co-author associated modules.

Apprenticeships and skills: in addition to their undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, both universities are working with local education providers and employers to develop new models of further and higher education for learners who might not necessarily want to follow a traditional academic route. For example, 340 young people are studying for Degree Apprenticeships at the two universities.

Local challenges highlighted by partners

1. Deprivation is the key barrier to improving educational outcomes, and the COVID-19 crisis is exacerbating problems for disadvantaged children and students from home environments that are not conducive to learning. These include lengthening holiday hunger, restricted access to the internet, violent homes, and a lack of parental support. The social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis for disadvantaged communities could have long lasting effects on educational outcomes as a consequence, and teaching and learning institutions may increasingly lack resources to deal with these wider societal impacts as future cost saving measures hit. More generally, it is also considered that closing the attainment gap will remain a challenge as interventions to support disadvantaged pupils also tend to benefit more advantaged pupils.

2. “Lockdown” has brought into focus huge challenges around home learning more generally; whilst there remains a hybrid of school closures and online learning potentially to the end of the year. Digital poverty and mental health issues are believed to be coming to the fore.

3. Aspiration and ambition for young people in Nottingham (and their parents) can be a challenge. The city ranks 150th out of 150 on the Youth Opportunity Index and the County 73rd and there is an ongoing problem of poor careers advice and lack of awareness of opportunities available. There is concern that the Impact of the COVID-19 crisis will hit young people the hardest, as for example graduate recruitment is postponed, and worsen issues of self-confidence and belief in Nottingham’s young population. Aspiration is critical for attainment of good high-quality qualifications and this in turn improves life chances going forward.

4. The education system does not respond to the needs of the ever-changing modern world of work. We are still stuck in an overly academic and subject focused curriculum, rather than encouraging personal development and broader skills that would better build up personal resilience and adaptability; such as digital and communication skills and approaches to unlock creativity. Equally, vocational skills are still considered inferior. Therefore, it is important that more weight is given to associated careers and on being a good citizen. Current circumstances have only reiterated the value of these roles to society, and there is concern that staff retention could be difficult in a post-COVID-19 crisis world. It is considered that funding is crucial to facilitate the move towards a more personal approach to learning, but could the shift towards online learning during the COVID-19 crisis help to broaden and diversify our approach to education?

5. There needs to be a wider, more joined up approach between the authorities, educational institutions and third sector groups working to improve educational outcomes in Nottinghamshire. Whilst there are many well-intentioned and individually effective bodies

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1 Learning and Work Institute’s Youth Opportunity Index, 2018
working towards positive goals, a void in co-ordinated collaboration across the city means such work is less effective and impactful than it could be. The school system is fragmented across different LEA Schools and Academies. There are varying administrative boundaries, and the Regional Schools Commissioner is not seen as playing a prominent role. This means that pockets of good practice are harder to adopt across the system than they should be and mutual support and learning is more difficult to put in place across schools. Despite the success of the universities’ work in Widening Participation and of initiatives such as the “cultural rucksack” (to provide a coherent menu of engagement between cultural bodies and schools), there is a lack of coherence across the system in employer engagement and careers advice. The Nottingham Education Improvement Board is seeking to address this challenge of a fragmented and uncoordinated system.

6. **There is a disconnect between schools and the places in which they are located, but overcoming this challenge is significant** in the context of reduced resources beyond statutory duties, the metrics by which schools are judged, the fact that some Academies are part of Multi Academy Trusts that are headquartered elsewhere, and the need to improve the calibre of school governing bodies.

7. **Adult Education is underfunded with insufficient local decision-making.** Adult education will become an even more pressing issue as a result of the labour market impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. However, it is underfunded and its budgets are not devolved. Take-up of Adult Learner Loans is low currently.

8. **Insufficient school finance.** Education providers are coming out of a period of austerity in terms of school finance. This has manifested in a focus on rationalisation based on core business and a reduction in support for teachers. Further, the Government has provided limited funding for capital expenditure. Whilst there is an expected uplift in funding for 2021, this may be eroded by pay rises, resulting in a small net increase in investment capacity. There is a need to continue investing in people, as reflected in the new Ofsted inspection framework; which seeks to focus energy on the quality of inputs, rather than outputs.

**Impact of the Covid-19 crisis**

Educational opportunity is a predictor of future prosperity. The impacts of the COVID-19 crisis will exacerbate the gulf in learning outcomes that already exists for children and young adults in different parts of the city and county. Finding new ways to close this gap, in a context of digital poverty, will require a different and creative approach going forward.

The work landscape following the COVID-19 crisis may also shift substantially, both in terms of the numbers and types of jobs available. Those just emerging out of education will be particularly vulnerable. Adaptable and agile learning throughout life will become more important than ever; and something which Nottingham’s educational institutions will need to bolster their roles in, against a backdrop of a likely shrinking of resources as the Government endeavours to address the cost of its approach to the crisis.

**Opportunities and ideas identified by partners**

1. There has been good progress in improvement of Nottingham’s schools over recent years – 86% of the city’s schools are now rated as Good or Outstanding, and there is genuine political commitment to this agenda. There is a need to secure funding and buy-in for an educational opportunity partnership forum that spans both City and Council, which builds
on what already exists in the City and County, but gains stronger engagement of partners within it, and increases the pace and prominence of its role. The work of the universities in Widening Participation is highly regarded. The priority for other stakeholders is not for more Widening Participation work, but a deeper and wider commitment from the universities to supporting and leading system-wide education improvement. This should include a more coherent approach in relation to future learning pathways, apprenticeships, employer engagement, and careers advice and guidance. Employers should also be encouraged to embed lifelong learning into career opportunities. A support package/CPD programme developed by the universities in collaboration with School could provide added value, create strong networks and encourage the retention and recruitment of local teachers.

2. **Continue to research and evaluate “what works” in primary and secondary education** across both the City and County and utilise this better to embed improvement actions locally. Actions that result in raising attainment and promoting better educational outcomes i.e. providing a better understanding of what jobs exist should be strengthened. Involvement should be broadened to all relevant partners to recognise the difference in City and County needs and reflect the breadth of shire County challenges.

3. **Retain and establish new pathways for widening participating**, enabling pupils to access opportunities in terms of university and employment; such as an integrated approach between UoN and NTU up to Year 10, possible joint offers in terms of apprenticeship provision, and creating an initiative similar to the Department for Education’s Opportunity Areas - which seeks to break generational problems hindering upward social mobility. This will be important as organisations will understandably have other priorities in the post-lockdown world. It will also be important to continue developing strong links between education providers, businesses, families and local stakeholders to maintain these pathways. Enhancing existing structures should be prioritised and these should be better joined up.

4. **Bolster and diversify existing social outreach initiatives.** For example, make it a requirement to deliver social outreach as part of degree courses and utilise the universities’ primary and secondary trainee teachers to support those who have suffered disproportionately from the COVID-19 crisis. The Universities could invite academics or aspirational speakers to share their personal education and career journeys with pupils.

5. **Develop a place-based offering based on the National Early Career Framework** for newly qualified teachers in order to boost local retention. Better utilisation of Enterprise Advisor Networks would additionally support students to work with employers to develop career skills.

6. **Utilise the switch to home learning** because of the COVID-19 crisis to diversify access to learning programmes. However, this will require concurrent measures to overcome digital poverty for many households/ communities.

7. **A review of local adult education** would help identify how provision could be strengthened and aligned more closely to the needs of the local economy in terms of reskilling and upskilling.

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2 [https://derbyopportunityarea.co.uk/](https://derbyopportunityarea.co.uk/)
External/ internal strategic and policy drivers

Key strategic and policy drivers in educational opportunity include the following:

National

+ **Future DfE funding** including the upcoming FE Fund for improvement of higher education facilities and T-Level Capital to support T-Level providers for improvement of facilities.

+ **Other DfE initiatives** such as supporting the wider skills system to deliver local and national needs as well as Institutes of Technology to connect high-quality teaching in science, technology, engineering and maths to business and industry and delivering provision tailored to local skills needs.

+ **Troubled Families fund** – which focuses on early intervention across all public services to tackle complex inter-connected problems.

+ **Widening Participation Framework** – overseen by the Office for Students and centred on closing attainment gaps of underrepresented groups at university.

+ Department for Education – notably their school workforce census shows worsening national problem of recruitment and retention in teaching profession which Nottingham also reports. The **DfE Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2019** is a commitment to transform support for teachers at the start of their career, with the launch of the Early Career Framework.

+ **The Social Mobility Commission’s State of the Nation 2017: Social Mobility in Great Britain** – makes a series of recommendations, drawing on some of the best practice in different parts of the country, to correct deficiencies in opportunities for children. Additionally, the **Social Mobility Commission strategy 2019** sets out the commission’s vision and strategic objectives.

Local

D2N2 LEP:

+ **D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership’s Strategic Economic Plan Vision 2030** – sets out the LEP’s vision and intentions, which include inspiring the careers and skills choices of the current and future workforce.

Nottinghamshire County Council:

+ **Nottinghamshire County Council’s Strategy for Improving Educational Opportunities for All** – aiming to improve outcomes in Early Years Foundation Stage, speech and language, phonics and reading to ensure the best possible start in life for all of Nottinghamshire children and young people.

+ **Nottinghamshire County Council’s Children and Young People’s Departmental Strategy 2019-2021** – sets out the priorities and key activities to support delivery of the County’s Council Plan, which includes ensuring that children and young people go to good schools and early years settings.

+ **Nottinghamshire County Council’s Closing the Educational Gaps** – outlines Nottinghamshire County Council’s promises, priorities and expected outcomes in relation to closing educational gaps for vulnerable children and young people.
Nottinghamshire County Council’s Special Educational Needs & Inclusion Strategy – outlines how the County Council will use its resources to remove barriers to learning and ensure that children and young people achieve their full potential.

Nottinghamshire County Council’s Pupil Place Planning and New School Funding Route Policy – enabling the Local Authority to meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient places for the children and young people of Nottinghamshire.

Nottinghamshire County Council’s Children Missing Education Strategy – to enable the County Council to fulfil its duties in relation to education provision, and the safeguarding and welfare of vulnerable children.

Nottinghamshire County Council’s Place Departmental Strategy 2019 – 2021 – outlines the Council’s intentions to work with schools and higher/further education partners to ensure that there is an excellent education and training offer which matches the skills requirements of the economy now, and in the future.

Nottinghamshire County Council’s ‘Your Nottinghamshire Your Future 2017-2021 plan’ – seeks to enable all children to have the opportunity to realise their potential, and to improve educational outcomes for vulnerable children.

Nottingham City Council:

Nottingham City Council Plan 2019-2023 – sets out priorities for 2019-23 with the aim of improving the future of the city for all

Nottingham City Strategy for improving outcomes for Children & Young People with SEND

How to measure impact and success

1. Attendance, achievement, attainment, progress, course completions, student satisfaction, graduate outcomes and access to higher level apprenticeships. However, it is important to consider how useful these metrics will be in a post-COVID-19 crisis world, given that past performance may be used to determine final grades at this time.

2. Schools and local Academy Trusts also monitor student progression and attainment (e.g. Progress 8), as well as observing datasets such as the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and NEET data to understand educational outcomes and opportunities for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Similarly, Ofsted is interested in how the metrics referenced impact social mobility.

3. The universities Widening Participation Framework, which monitors institution specific targets against an Access and Participation Plan to encourage and enable learners from less advantaged backgrounds to access higher education.

4. All institutions monitor success through comparison with other institutions also. Furthermore, there is good local data identifying best practice and to link-up strong performing education pockets locally.
Key partnerships, fora and collaborations

There are several key partnerships and collaborations which focus on Educational Opportunity in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, notably the:

+ **Nottingham Education Improvement Board** (now rebranded as the Education Partnership Board) – which seeks to bring together ideas to provide a world class education for every child and young person in Nottingham. It is focused on ‘Ambition 2025’, a 10-year programme for the renewal of educational provision in the city. However, the current terms-of-reference have only been extended by one year in recognition that a strategic refresh is required.

+ **East Midlands Strategic Improvement Group** – a collaborative, knowledge sharing group across the region which seeks to improve life chances for all children by increasing the numbers of learners in a great school, improving and accelerating outcomes, and narrowing the gap.

+ Both universities also collaborate on Widening Participation activities.

+ **Head Teacher’s Forum** – a valued local resource.

+ **Other key partners include:**
  + Nottingham City Council
  + Nottinghamshire County Council
  + Local Academy Trusts and schools
  + University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University
  + Regional Schools Commissioner
  + Department for Education
  + Local businesses

These partners are already involved in developing several of the projects across the Civic Agreement and will be invited to join the Universities for Nottingham initiative as is relevant.
Case Studies

System-wide Education Improvement in Finland

Over recent decades Finland had developed and implemented a system wide initiative to improve education outcomes for its people. As a result, education standards have increased, educational inequalities have decreased, and Finland has developed a highly competitive economy based on its skilled workforce. There are several factors for Finland’s success: clear objectives, support and a genuine commitment to improvement from all stakeholders; a long-term approach; putting teachers at the heart of the strategy, and widespread sharing of good practice, an evidence-based approach; and strong management and coordination of the system. There is close joint-working between pre-schools, schools, further education, universities, adult education, employers and trade unions, providing coherent system leadership, informing design of the curriculum to be responsive to economic priorities, and supporting progression of people through the system.

The Ahead Partnership: Made the Grade

The Ahead Partnership is a social enterprise that seeks to connect and integrate businesses more thoroughly with their local communities, improving pathways to employment. Make the Grade is their flagship education programme with over 17,000 students and 500 business engaged between 2013-16. Key aims of the programme are to better inform young people about career opportunities, improve employability of young people and to build effective practical connections between young people and local employers with support such as mentoring. 93% of those engaged on the programme said they felt more equipped for the world of work. The programme has a focus on improving the transition of young people into further training or work and improve the supply of skills to the labour market through better alignment of subject and course choices to local skills gaps. The Partnership have launched sector specific programmes such as #Aheadin, FinPro and #AheadinDigital to focus on widening access to these careers. The ability to tailor the programme locally, to meet specific needs has been a key factor in its success.
Environmental sustainability
Environmental sustainability

Through the Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement, we will...

7. Explore the development of a “green re-boot” of the economy, including aiming to secure funding that helps new and existing businesses develop products and innovations for a zero-carbon future.

8. Continue to invest in low and zero carbon infrastructure (physical and digital), building design and energy management practices within the University campuses and use these as living laboratories where new zero-carbon technologies, innovations and practices models can be developed, demonstrated and then deployed across the locality.

9. Extend our commitments to sustainable travel and transport to deliver improvements in walking, cycling, public transport and low emission. The Universities will develop joint programmes to change behaviour across our staff, students and community, ensuring the lessons learnt are passed on to all in the region.

Our mission...

+ To build on both universities’ award-winning reputation for sustainability to drive a cleaner, more productive and inclusive economy across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, ensuring we collectively meet ambitious local and national carbon neutral targets.

+ Through our research and innovation, to help partners improve the physical infrastructure and building refit across the City and County, which are major barriers to carbon neutrality.

+ To provide real actionable insight into the behavioural changes required to realise local ambitions to be carbon neutral, increase recycling rates and protect biodiversity.

“As we move forward, it is about the low carbon economy and green recovery being at the forefront of what we do.”

Wayne Bexton, Nottingham City Council

“The universities can help support and lead on projects with partners that improve environmental sustainability; for example, through academic input to the development of nature recovery networks and use their position to influence, educate and reach wider networks in Nottinghamshire including schools.”

Philip Keynes, Nottinghamshire County Council

Summary of the Universities for Nottingham consultation process

A number of core partners and other partners were engaged throughout the consultation process, including Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

+ Partners believe that there is a need for cooperation and collaboration between public and private sector organisations across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to meet collectively the ambitious targets to be carbon neutral – by 2028 in Nottingham and the national 2050 target.
Partners recognise that both universities are ranked within the Top 5 universities in the world for environmental sustainability – a unique asset for the local area.

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on public transport is yet to be seen by partners – but it could lead to a significant increase in car usage.

The role played by both universities as helping anchor and unlock major zero-carbon economic regeneration and investment stalled by the COVID-19 crisis was highlighted as an area of major importance by partners – with Toton and Ratcliffe-on-Soar opportunities highlighted in particular.

Partners identified the opportunity to create a cohesive, joined up sustainable behaviour change programme, piloted by the universities. This could include piloting initiatives around recycling and sustainable travel behaviours - with a focus initially on students, given the two universities account for 20% of the city population when students are in residence.

State of play – the universities and environmental sustainability

The role of Nottingham’s two universities in environmental sustainability can be summarised as follows:

+ **Leadership in environmental sustainability**
  + Both universities are ranked within the Top 5 universities in the world for environmental sustainability.
  + Both universities have prioritised achieving environmental sustainability in university strategies, including supporting Nottingham city’s ambition to be net zero by 2028.

+ **Providing the knowledge base for a local zero-carbon economy and transition**
  + Research and education is vital to achieving environmental sustainability as well as being integral to the post -COVID-19 economic recovery, with both universities specialising in areas including re-usable chemicals, electric-powered travel, sustainable food production and sustainable living.
  + Initiatives like Trent Basin and the proposed projects on zero-carbon futures and biodiversity at Ratcliffe-on-Soar and Toton respectively show that the universities are adept at making their research tangible to the lives and decisions of local people and businesses.

+ **Providing the region with a zero-carbon testbed and living laboratory for green technology and behaviour**
  + Numerous initiatives to trial green technology (including hydrogen and electric vehicles) have been trialled on university communities before being rolled out more widely.

+ **Underpinning investment in green energy, transport and buildings using capital investment, purchasing power and procurement**
  + Both universities have underpinned investment in green energy technology by using long-term energy contracts.
Local challenges highlighted by partners

1. **There is a need for area wide cooperation and collaboration** between public and private sector organisations across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to meet collectively the ambitious targets to be carbon neutral; by 2028 in Nottingham and the national 2050 target.

2. **Behavioural change is required to realise our ambitions to be carbon neutral.** Whilst there have been underlying positive changes in the way people live during the COVID-19 crisis, there is much more to do to embed sustainable behaviours and instil a deep sense of responsibility in citizens for personal and collective action. This is a particular challenge in relation to supply chains.

3. **The physical infrastructure across the city region is a major barrier to carbon neutrality.** The distribution network and wider infrastructure required to support the use of green technology as well as the production of green energy is not fit for purpose.

4. **There is a lack of funding from national government for local government to rapidly convert assets to low carbon alternatives,** as well as a lack of enforced statutory requirements (e.g. mandatory reporting measures) to achieve national targets on environmental sustainability.

5. **New sources of heat are required to meet future needs whilst meeting carbon neutrality ambitions.** Given most homes use domestic boilers, there is a challenge to find alternative heat sources for customers which are financially manageable. Fuel poverty also continues to be an issue in Nottingham. The latest data shows things have worsened and have been exacerbated by the financial challenges associated with the COVID-19 crisis.

Impact of the Covid-19 crisis

Environmental sustainability and resilience are crucial to economic recovery plans. The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated the importance of green space and it is becoming increasingly clear that cities must be resilient to future climate change. The Government has backed green growth and infrastructure investment, stating that the economic rebuilding efforts “means investing in industries and infrastructure that can turn the tide on climate change”. Environmental sustainability and clean growth can provide the potential for a different type of economic growth in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to be realised – one where new jobs, cleaner air, and improved health and wellbeing define our path to recovery. It is important that sustainability efforts are not lost in strategies for economic recovery, particularly given the financial constraints currently faced by the local authorities in light of the crisis.

Opportunities and ideas identified by partners

1. **Deliver the Nottingham City Carbon Neutral Action Plan.** The universities can play a key role in driving forward some of the core priorities, particularly around future energy and transport trends, leading best practice and influencing decision making. This includes providing expertise, examples of best practice (e.g. through demonstration projects, or testbeds) and access to funding opportunities that would not be available to local authority partners.

2. **Develop a city scale domestic and commercial retrofit programme.** This could be supported by a real-world retrofit testbed to drive and showcase innovation and monitor performance. Building on the success of the existing City Council retrofit programme, there
is an opportunity to enhance and accelerate a large scale retrofit programme and real-world, living testbed with technical support harnessed from the universities. This would seek to maximise job creation opportunities and stimulation of a joint supply chain.

3. **Build on the existing strong research collaborations between the universities, private and public sector to address challenges and show national leadership in cutting edge thinking.** There is a need to strengthen the universities’ intellectual contributions to the local policy making framework. There is also scope to broaden opportunities to partner on projects that champion environmental sustainability and make links between research and practice. Whilst there are already good examples of collaboration, including joint funding bids to bodies such as Innovate UK, efforts need to continue to evolve to address challenges at a local level, particularly future energy trends. This could also include building on the City Council’s recognition as national climate and energy champion to form a Nottingham Climate Commission, or similar, to channel expertise and promote Nottingham as a zero-carbon city.

4. **Support new models to deliver cutting edge R&D, innovation and demonstration of new sustainable energy technologies at a commercial scale through longer term ‘big bets’.** These ‘big bets’ include proposals for a National Centre for Integrated Zero Carbon Futures at Ratcliffe-on-Soar, an Innovation Campus at Toton and the Trent Basin development. Whilst the Toton and Ratcliffe-on-Soar initiatives are in the early stages of development, they bring together universities, industries and local authorities to accelerate development, and demonstrate and deploy zero carbon technologies and systems that can be replicated at a large scale both in the UK and overseas. It is also an opportunity for the universities to exercise their wealth of expertise outside of the technological aspects, including in terms of social science and behavioural matters in order to encourage the community to engage and utilise the developments. The universities also play an important role in supplying tailored, industry specific training to strengthen the supply of skilled employees available to deliver these ‘big bets’.

5. **Create a cohesive, joined up sustainable behaviours change programme, piloted by the universities.** The universities offer a large engagement platform which could be better utilised to support behavioural change. This could include piloting initiatives around recycling and sustainable travel behaviours, with a focus initially on students; given that the two universities account for 20% of the city population. This could build upon a number of existing initiatives including NTU’s tree planting initiative, and Green Rewards initiative as a way to capture and report on joint carbon reductions.

6. **Provide targeted support for local businesses in the drive towards carbon neutrality as part of a green re-boot of the economy.** To assist businesses to accord with minimum energy efficiency standards (including minimum EPC standards), there is an opportunity to work collaboratively, cross-sector with businesses about their plans to move towards carbon neutrality. With this, Nottingham has the potential to become a Centre of Excellence for Sustainability to unlock research, as well as good practice for SMEs.

7. **Participate in new public-private sector forums to platform and test innovative approaches to sustainability.** As a leading local authority for innovation around energy, Nottingham City Council is part of the Innovation Gateway Forum. This brings together businesses such as Tesco, Heathrow, RBS and Unite, which are all committed to corporate social responsibility. The Forum sources innovations to solve key challenges via a dynamic ‘pitching’ process. It provides a very good opportunity to test new ideas and thinking with
some influential private sector partners. It will be important for partners to clearly articulate Nottingham and Nottinghamshire’s distinct offer and unique selling points.

8. Establish a Nottinghamshire wide ‘blue and green space strategy’. To further enhance the provision of publicly available blue and green assets which have been so valued during the COVID-19 crisis, given their important environmental, health and wellbeing benefits. The strategy would also provide the opportunity to encourage more local growing.

External/ internal strategic and policy drivers

Key strategic and policy drivers in environmental sustainability include:

International

+ **Paris Agreement 2016** – committing governments to keeping the increase in global temperature to below 2°C, with efforts to meet a recommended target of 1.5 °C.

National

+ **The UK Government’s commitment** to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, an update to the Climate Change Act 2008.


+ **Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future** – establishes a long-term plan to create an economy that boosts productivity and earning power, and which aims for the resilience of infrastructure systems and the wider environments within which they operate.

Local

D2N2 LEP:

+ **Emerging D2N2 Local Industrial Strategy** – the strategy will set out how the region can achieve greater productivity and inclusive growth.

+ **D2N2 Energy Strategy** – establishes a suite of targets and actions, including for D2N2 to become a national pioneer in clean growth, and a testbed for world class energy systems innovation by 2030.

Nottinghamshire County Council:

+ **Nottinghamshire County Council’s Carbon Management Plan** – sets out the actions that the Council can adopt in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 60% from its own buildings and operations by the year 2050.

+ **Nottinghamshire County Council’s Corporate Environmental Policy** – outlines the Council’s commitment to protecting and enhancing the environment for today and for future generations.

+ **Nottinghamshire County Council’s Green Estates Development Strategy and Plan** – sets out aims and objectives, providing a framework to improve and protect green-spaces for the benefit of local communities and biodiversity.
**Nottingham City Council:**

- **Nottingham City Council 2028 Carbon Neutral Charter**
  - establishes a vision for sustainable carbon neutrality, which seeks to address environmental challenges, improve quality of life and accommodate clean growth through a green industrial revolution.

- **Nottingham City Council’s Carbon Neutral Nottingham 2020-2028 Action Plan**
  - establishes objectives to achieve a resilient and carbon neutral Nottingham by 2028, including in relation to carbon reduction measures, carbon removal, resilience and adaption, and ecology and biodiversity.

- **Nottingham City Council’s Energy Strategy (and associated Action Plan)**
  - establishes targets, technologies and programmes required to enable Nottingham to help meet the local and national targets associated with carbon reduction and low/zero carbon energy generation.

- **Nottingham City Council’s Nottingham Community Climate Change Strategy**
  - seeks to inspire and encourage behavioural change and increase the city’s resilience by preparing for the impacts of climate change and harnessing the associated opportunities.

- **Nottingham City Council’s A Waste-less Nottingham Waste Strategy**
  - outlines the aims for delivery of the waste management system, which include generating the lowest quantity of household waste per person of any core city in England and increasing the quantity of reuse/recycling.

**How to measure impact and success**

1. Carbon emissions
2. Air quality
3. Car/public transport usage (journeys)
4. The universities and core partners report annually on several environmental and energy measures, but the overarching shared metric currently is carbon emissions. NCC use a Scatter Tool to provide and measure data, although there is a time lag in collation of the data. NCC and Thesis manage the tool and are supporting local authorities in rolling it out. Businesses can also access the tool.
5. A recent NCC survey provided interesting qualitative data – understanding how people interpret different buzz words around environmental sustainability and carbon neutrality.

**Key partnerships, fora and collaborations**

There are several key partnerships and collaborations which drive environmental sustainability in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, some of which are listed below:

- One Nottingham Green Partnership - a city wide collaboration committed to 2028 including universities, businesses and community organisations.
- The Environmental Strategy Working Group (ESWG)
- Midlands Energy Hub
Key partners also include:

- Nottingham City Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Districts/Borough Councils
- D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership
- Private sector representations

These partners are already involved in developing several of the projects across the Civic Agreement and will be invited to join the Universities for Nottingham initiative as is relevant.

Case Studies

Real world testbeds – Concept House Village, Netherlands and Chalmers Five Star Campus, Sweden

Testbeds could be used in the city to support the net zero carbon agenda. An example of a smart city and built environment testbed is the Concept House Village in the Netherlands. The Concept House Village is a user-oriented testing environment for sustainable building practices, living and sustainable area development. Innovative houses, products and systems are tested with and by occupants, using the occupant to further design develop and use the house. The purpose of this was to develop sustainable living conditions.

Similarly, the Chalmers Five Star Campus in Sweden is a testbed for sustainable solutions focussed around energy technology, intelligent transport and smart housing technology. The Five Star Campus continuously seek to create challenge driven testbeds and demonstration projects in collaboration with the academic and industrial sector to strengthen the transition to sustainable systems. The testbed focusses on testing projects under the vision of “creating a sustainable future”. The types of product tested include Chalmers Power Central; Shared Shuttle Services; Positive footprint houses etc.

The concept house village testbed tests innovation for verification and proof-of-concept as well as addressing market failures or grand challenges, whilst the Chalmers campus testbed showcases the university’s innovative research and development as well as contributing to the overall transition to more sustainable systems. Developing testbeds in the city centre gives Nottingham the opportunity to attract national attention as leaders of the net zero carbon agenda and achieve their net zero by 2028 commitment.

Five Star Campus
© Chalmers
Utrecht – City branding and sustainability

Similar to Nottingham, Utrecht is located in the middle of the country, with many national connecting functions and roles. Utrecht has a strong social connection with many other local city regions, as Nottingham does, but struggled to achieve collaborative direction and broad support from businesses and partners. Previously, Utrecht lacked a single brand positioning which acted as a barrier to establishing a city identity. To tackle this, a city branding coalition of partners, the Utrecht Brand Team, was developed. These partners defined values and ‘promises’ that Utrecht was to seek to deliver and this resulted in an archetype model in which Utrecht was to be considered a ‘creator’ inspiring creation, innovation and connection. Alongside this, there was a focus strongly on strengthening the city’s strong economic areas which included ICT, healthcare and sustainability.

Utrecht defined ‘healthy urban living’ as the overarching strategic ambition and strategy brings focus to every project and every partner as well as offering a starting point for new and more projects. This ‘healthy urban living’ goal is shared between the city and its partners and provides clear and strategic direction to coordinate efforts towards a common purpose. Nottingham could benefit from a similar exercise to connect branding with city strategy, such as focussing on strengthening the city’s ambition to lead the way to net zero carbon. Any other city projects and goals would all contribute towards achieving the overall common goal. Creating a strong identity for Nottingham as a zero-carbon pioneer city would also act to attract inward investment of zero carbon technology investors.
Health and wellbeing
Health and wellbeing

Through the Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement, we will...

10. Develop a major new joint medical technology offer to business, with an ambition to make Nottingham and Nottinghamshire a leading destination in which to invest or establish new businesses in health and life sciences.

11. Explore the development of a joint programme of development, training and support that help meet clinical skills needs across the local healthcare system.

Our mission...

+ To take advantage and expand the role of universities and healthcare organisations as anchor institutions, providing communities with a social capital asset that increases economic prosperity and social wellbeing.

+ To attract the world’s most talented clinicians and health-care workers, training and retaining local talent to develop their careers in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

+ To increase years of healthy living in local populations.

+ To maximise the economic opportunities provided by the strong local health and life sciences sectors.

“There are opportunities to build on initiatives that have started during the pandemic, as people have been willing to try different approaches to partnership working.”

Tim Guyler, Director of Integration, Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

Summary of the Universities for Nottingham consultation process

A number of core partners and other partners were engaged in workshops. These partners included: Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, NUH NHS Trust, Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICS, Mid-Nottinghamshire ICP and Greater Nottinghamshire and Rushcliffe CCG’s.

+ Partners felt that one of the most powerful contributions made by the universities to our local area is the longstanding relationship we have with the hospital trusts, GP surgeries and health and social care practices of Nottingham. A more joined-up approach is key to coordinate asks.

+ The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on local health and wellbeing goes far beyond the immediate public health crisis, although challenges identified are common across a wider area.

+ Health inequalities have been exacerbated in the short-term and the economic crisis will cause a much longer-term health and wellbeing deficit. However, there are opportunities to support a healthier recovery, not least due to the exceptional partnership work undertaken locally during the crisis.

+ The fundamental problem facing the local healthcare system is that patient demand exceeds the available finance and resource. The cost of care giving is growing faster than the funding available. There is, therefore, a strong link between this theme and the economic prosperity theme.
Immediate priorities include working as local system to support the safe and secure return of students – ensuring Local Outbreak Control plans are effective and robust.

Partners identified evaluation and methodological assessment as an area where university research expertise could be beneficial.

Integrated workforce planning, talent-attraction and work to support the local areas as anchor institutions were also cited as areas for exploration by partners.

Partners repeatedly highlighted the importance of the universities convening role – but navigating the knowledge and expertise to deliver local economic requirements available was a challenge.

**State of play – the universities and health and wellbeing**

The role of Nottingham's two universities in health and wellbeing can be summarised as follows:

**Providing the local teaching hospital in partnership with NUH NHS Trust**

+ In 2020, it will have been 50 years since the University of Nottingham's Medical School was established, and 30 years since it opened the School of Nursing. The value to patients across the region of having this association to world-class research and pipeline of professional talent over half a century is incalculable.

**Attracting the world’s best clinicians, research funding and medical innovation**

+ Securing funding to invest in these facilities and cutting-edge equipment such as the next generation of MRI scanners hosted at the University of Nottingham directly benefits local patients.

+ More than 250 research projects worth £59m at the University of Nottingham have been developed to directly address challenges in the local healthcare system.

+ Nottingham Trent University is investing £24m, including almost £10m from the D2N2 LEP into a Medical Technologies Innovation Facility (MTIF).

+ The University of Nottingham has recently invested £23m to fund the final phase of the Biodiscovery Institute – creating a state-of-the-art national asset in the development of new drugs and tests, including into cancer.

**Training the future workforce**

+ Every year, the two universities train thousands of new clinical and social care staff

+ 916 doctors, nurses and other medical staff working in the local community trained at our universities in the last 3 years

+ The Universities provide training and development support to thousands of doctors, nurses, social workers and ambulance staff currently working across the region.

+ Many of the trainee medical and healthcare staff work in local hospitals and practices; making a vital contribution to their community even before they graduate.

+ 27,000 hours of medical placements undertaken locally by our students each year, putting cutting edge research into practice

**Local challenges highlighted by partners**
1. **How to facilitate pro-active care and maximise patient self-management and independence.** There is an aspiration to “support people to support themselves”, where possible. It will be important to provide appropriate support to fulfil the requirements of those continually shielding/self-isolating. A further challenge is the need to manage the flow of patients returning home from hospital.

2. The ‘window of need’ is growing. People are living longer but their later years are not necessarily healthy. The **length of time people are considered to be in ‘healthy life’ is significantly variable across the area.** Albeit, healthcare only contributes 20% to this, the remaining factors relate to health behaviours, the physical environment and socio-economics.

3. **Patient demand exceeds the available finance and resource.** The cost of care giving is growing faster than the funding available and retaining healthcare providers in Nottingham is a challenge. Further, prior to the COVID-19 crisis, emergency care was over capacity and being utilised for inappropriate illnesses. There is also a need to address the operational impacts emerging as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, including how to administer operations safely, accommodate social distancing and ensure the wellbeing of staff.

4. **Significant inequalities exist and these have been brought into sharp focus as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.** In the city there are around 5,000 people considered to be subject to ‘Severe Multiple Deprivation’. Further, BAME and socio-economically disadvantaged groups have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. It is anticipated that the crisis will also exacerbate the issues existing prior to the pandemic. These include mental health, obesity, smoking, alcohol use, and poor sexual health as well as reduced access to employment and social support/care.

**Impact of the Covid-19 crisis**

The COVID-19 crisis has brought the importance of health and wellbeing to the forefront of people’s minds, and enhanced awareness of the significance of the health and social care system. However, in light of the pandemic, the sector has needed to rapidly mobilise and redistribute resources to address the stark challenges. Priorities have shifted and, therefore, strategies are being refreshed to reflect the ‘COVID lens’ and to identify appropriate interventions to address a prolonged period of disruption. Health inequalities have been exacerbated in the short-term and the economic crisis will cause a much longer-term health and wellbeing deficit. However, there are opportunities to support a healthier recovery, not least based on the exceptional partnership work undertaken locally during the crisis.

**Opportunities and ideas identified by partners**

1. **Better utilise technology to streamline, future proof and enhance care.** As part of this, collaborate with the County’s Technology Enabled Care Team to explore opportunities, undertake research and test ideas. This could include the use of virtual assistants or mobile applications, to assist in patient self-management. The universities could adopt a ‘critical friend’ role to assess the effectiveness of the initiatives proposed by partners.
2. **Enhance communication and engagement methodologies to support vulnerable and hard to reach groups.** Social media and other digital tools can be better utilised to facilitate communications and engagement and, where appropriate, data can be harnessed to target hard to reach groups. Enhanced engagement with those experiencing inequalities will inform knowledge as to whether the infrastructure, provision and solutions are in place to support these groups and this can then be followed up and delivered.

3. **Harness the improved partnership working and streamlining which has resulted from the COVID-19 crisis.** This has included delivering virtual GP appointments and observing a notable reduction in the number of people attending A&E. Both approaches could be encouraged in the future. Further, Local Resilience Forums have demonstrated good integrated working between health and social care. It will be important to continue to move away from a focus on individual goals, towards a collective vision. This could be facilitated by the universities being represented within the Nottingham Integrated Care System and Integrated Care Partnership.

4. **Harness community potential and establish targeted volunteering.** Build on the positive work undertaken as part of the student/staff volunteering element of the COVID-19 response. Collaborate with partners to maximise and capture the value of volunteers and identify mutually beneficial opportunities for students to support communities, in ways which also benefit their studies/career development. This may include volunteering at wellbeing centres or engagement with sports clubs, charities etc. The universities could also establish opportunities for health and social care personnel to utilise their facilities for health and wellbeing purposes, including respite, leisure and learning.

5. **Promote and enhance the career opportunities associated with social care.** Social care and healthcare are critically linked and a more resilient system and approach are needed. There is an opportunity for partners to collaborate to promote the attractiveness of a career in social care and focus on training and development opportunities to facilitate the retention of staff. It will be essential for employees to have the required skills, and, therefore, the universities can support partners with their integrated workforce planning. There is also an opportunity for the universities to specifically coordinate the approach to nursing, building on the good work already undertaken with regards to social work. This approach aligns with Government strategies which seek to expand the number of trained healthcare workers and ‘level-up’ different regions of the economy and investment in science.

6. **Utilise the resource and expertise available at the universities to support health and wellbeing initiatives, policy making and recovery.** Draw upon the wealth of knowledge, ‘actional expertise’ and evaluation/assessment skills available across various disciplines within the universities (including medicine, social science and built environment specialists) to improve health and social care practice, access to healthcare assets and the improve the built environment. An integrated offer can be presented, to for example, link qualities of place with attraction to study (and therefore boosting retention). This includes sharing learning focussed on innovation and best practice, perhaps through a forum like that of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies. The universities could provide valuable support in making the case for funding arrangements and brokering investment discussions with large organisations. There is also scope to build on the joint working with core partners around mental health and young carers as well as collaboration between the universities in terms of the medical technologies sector in order to support the local economic recovery.
7. **Establish a tool/metrics to meaningfully track and measure outcomes associated with health and wellbeing.** Explore how data capture and utilisation can be approached in a more integrated and effective way to establish a robust baseline and monitoring framework. As demonstrated by organisations such as Amazon, data can be manipulated to provide valuable insights and streamline processes. For example, the universities could explore the evidence base behind the inequalities in the area, particularly in BAME communities.

8. **Better harness the impact and influence of anchor institutions to facilitate joint working.** It is recognised that given the size of their workforce, footprint and supply chain, anchor institutions (including the universities) have significant impacts and influence on their respective area. The universities can act as ‘contributors and convenors’. They also have the capacity to bring partners together. There is scope to form single functions across core partners including for HR, finance and procurement. This could help to provide the right foundations and governance, which are all important in securing success, as demonstrated by the approach taken by Northumbria Healthcare. Demand and supply can be mapped so as to promote areas for which the healthcare system can capitalise from the university’s alternative expertise, for example, behavioural psychology or business schools to navigate more functional leadership. A forum for matching up health sector requirements to academics is critical to facilitate large scale change.

9. **Leverage the many health assets that exist locally to bolster economic prosperity.** Alongside the universities and NHS health trusts, Nottingham’s strengths in MedTech research and the Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre could provide insights into transformational actions that enable people back to employability.

10. **Mission driven local partnerships between the universities and health institutions** could drive focused effort around specific health issues to better health outcomes in the City and region. The universities offer needs to be made clearer - development of tailored training programmes at the universities will help to tackle challenges facing the system. Mission driven partnerships for jointly tackling the challenges facing the system will result in a focussed, targeted approach.

**External/internal strategic and policy drivers**

The national strategy is set by the NHS Long Term Plan which offers little flexibility. However, the emerging NHS Bill seeks to remove some of the existing restrictions. On a local scale, there are further strategies (including the ICS Health and Wellbeing Strategy) as well as local political drivers. However, compared to other themes – there is significant alignment between internal organisational strategy and national policy.

**National**

- **The NHS Long Term Plan (a summary)**
  - details proposals of clinical priorities and measures to drive towards integrated care and population health.

- **The emerging NHS Bill**
  - seeks to remove some of the existing restrictions of the NHS Long Term Plan.
Local

D2N2 LEP:
+ D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership’s Vision 2030
  – seeks to collaborate with the universities to develop and implement productivity and
growth plans in the science and innovation sectors (including life sciences).

Nottinghamshire County Council:
+ Nottinghamshire County Council’s Adult Social Care and Public Health Departmental
  Strategy 2019-2021 – to promote and improve the health, wellbeing and independence of
  people in Nottinghamshire.
+ Nottinghamshire County Council’s Communities Strategy
  – sets out the County Council’s ambition to put local people at the heart of everything it
does, and to enable the growth of vibrant and supportive communities.
+ Nottinghamshire County Council’s Housing with Support Strategy - Adults 18-64 Years
  – sets out the County Council’s approach to the management of ‘Housing with Support’ to
  ensure it responds to future requirements.
+ Nottinghamshire County Council’s Employment and Health Strategy 2020-30
  – to enable more people to get into work where this is their goal and develop our workplaces
to be settings that facilitate good health and wellbeing.
+ Nottinghamshire County Council’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018 – 2022
  – sets out the priorities for the Health and Wellbeing Board for Nottinghamshire to improve
  the health and wellbeing of its residents.

Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System:
+ Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System’s 5 Year Plan
  (2019/20 – 2023/24) [Draft] – sets out an ambitious plan for service and system change
to improve the health and wellbeing of local people through high quality care delivered in a
  sustainable way.

How to measure impact and success
1. Years of healthy living,
2. Life expectancy,
3. Illness prevalence,
4. A&E/cancer/operation wait times, bed counts,
5. Access to mental health care
6. Levels of smoking and breastfeeding

Key data sources include the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and GP Repository for Clinical Care.
During the pandemic the three key metrics have been; how many people have the virus, how many people have been infected in the respective organisation, and how many people have died. Over the next 6-12 months there is an aspiration to identify patients who have come to harm indirectly as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

**Key partnerships, fora and collaborations**

- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System and the Integrated Care Partnerships
- Primary Care Networks and GPs
- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG
- Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, University Hospital of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust, Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust
- Local Resilience Forum - response and recovery groups and cells
- Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nottingham City Homes

These partners are already involved in developing several of the projects across the Civic Agreement and will be invited to join the Universities for Nottingham initiative as is relevant.
Case Studies

Galway Medtech Cluster

The Galway Medtech Cluster is one of Europe’s largest MedTech hotspots and, as a globally recognised centre of excellence, is home to 300+ companies, employing 32,000 people. Nine of the world’s top ten companies have operations here. Ireland also employs the highest number of MedTech personnel per capita in Europe. Galway has a vibrant ecosystem of medical technology start-ups, multinationals and research centres that in total accounts for approximately 31% of all medical device employment in Ireland. The National University of Ireland, Galway and the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology have important links with medical device companies operating in the region, providing research collaboration and skilled graduates ready to specialise in the medical device industry.

Establishment of the Medtech Cluster is in part a result of Government grants and tax incentives to attract large multinational companies in a drive to establish and grow the industry. The Medtech Cluster has continued to grow from the initial anchor institutions that established in Galway in the 1980’s and as government initiatives prompted the development of research centres such as the Regenerative Medicine Institute and the Galway Medical Devices Centre of Excellence. The higher education institutes adapted themselves to the growing importance of the medtech sector for the region and the need for specialised labour pool and recently, NUIG has launched initiatives, such as the BioInnovate, to boost the creation of start-ups and spin-offs from the university. The Medtech Cluster was significantly expanded by these spin-offs of which are founded in academia and result in a technology that is investor ready with a clear route to market, allowing early investment to focus on manufacturing setup and product builds. It was from this, the Galway Medtech Cluster became known not just for its manufacturing, but also for its research and development.
Unlocking the universities
Unlocking the universities

Through the Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement, we will...

12. Continue to invest time, resources and academic expertise; convening partners to shape collaborative local responses to the challenges and opportunities of the future. We will explore the establishment of a local SAGE group of experts to provide high-quality and evidence-based policy advice, and a “what works” approach.

13. Immediately refocus our respective student and graduate challenges and competitions next year to directly support local COVID-19 recovery and renewal across the above four themes, bringing the ingenuity and creativity of our students to bear on the challenges we all face.

14. Explore securing national funding for a Universities for Nottingham Doctoral Training Partnership, attracting talented PhD students to work between the universities and our partners on research projects that address local challenges.

Our mission...

+ To ensure that our local partners and the people they represent can more easily and effectively access the expertise and talent available across both universities.

+ To ensure that the assets of our institutions are also aligned to local challenges, as well as national and international issues.

+ To continue to invest in the convening role the universities play in bringing together ideas, people and partners in response to local challenges and opportunities.

+ To maintain the Universities for Nottingham initiative over the long-term, demonstrating our shared commitment to the approach.

Summary of the Universities for Nottingham consultation process

A number of core partners and other partners were engaged in workshops where the cross-cutting theme of Unlocking the Universities arose. These partners included: Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, Nottingham Integrated Care Partnership, the Nova Education Trust, the Archway Learning Trust and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, NUH NHS Trust, Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICS, Mid-Nottinghamshire ICP and Greater Nottinghamshire and Rushcliffe CCG’s.

+ Partners felt the joint response to Covid-19 had created a good foundation of the universities working collaboratively together and now is an apt time to strengthen the universities’ civic role;

+ Partners felt strongly that there is a role for the universities to support partners in the city and county to speak with one voice and undertake joint lobbying. They noted that the absence of a Mayoral Combined Authority in the region puts it at a disadvantage in terms of speaking and advocating in one voice, and believe the universities could help with this challenge;
Partners felt the universities’ intellectual contribution to the local policymaking framework is currently ad hoc and could go further if brought together more cohesively;

Partners recognise the breadth and depth of research and expertise undertaken by the universities but would appreciate clearer and more efficient access points within the organisations to obtain the research/ insights/ expertise they require;

Partners recognise the extent of the footprint of the universities’ campuses across the city, and believe further expansion across the City and County could have hugely significant and visible impacts. The potential opportunities arising through Toton and Ratcliffe-on-Soar were noted;

Partners recognised the substantial impacts felt by the contributions of local students, graduates and staff, but there are always ways to harness this talent further. Improving graduate retention, and making the most of talent that returns, were identified as priorities.

State of play – unlocking the universities
The role of Nottingham’s two universities in Unlocking the Universities can be summarised as follows:

+ Acting as anchor institutions for the communities and economies in which they are based
  + Both universities are already committed to the long-term success of the City, County and surrounding towns and undertake substantial activities with local schools, businesses and cultural organisations. These include staff and student volunteering programmes, SME support programmes, public arts programmes and other public events.
  + 5,257 students from both universities volunteered in the local community last year.

+ Helping policymakers think, convene and do
  + Both universities help local policymakers secure and deliver research and innovation funding from national government and the private sector.
  + Through initiatives such as the Nottingham Trent University Civic Exchange and University of Nottingham Institute for Policy and Engagement, the universities have invested in providing a more accessible gateway to help policymakers access the insight and expertise of their researchers.

+ Playing a powerful role in the reputation of Nottingham
  + Both universities act as informal ambassadors for Nottingham, promoting the City and region as a great place to study, live, work and invest.
  + The universities’ global connections add real value to the exchange of ideas, culture and business opportunities between Nottingham and the rest of the world.
Local challenges highlighted by partners

1. **It needs to be easier for local partners to access the talent and expertise of the two universities.** Currently, contributions to local partners policy- and decision-making feels ad hoc, and whilst some disciplines are very strong in terms of engagement, others are lacking.

2. **The region is at a disadvantage in terms of having a single unified voice to advocate on behalf of the City and Region,** not helped by the lack of a Mayoral Combined Authority. More collective lobbying and a single, dedicated fora would ensure the needs of the region are better met.

3. **More could be done to retain and harness graduate talent,** as well as take advantage of returning talent.

4. **The universities can feel inaccessible to many groups of people,** for varied reasons, including but not limited to socio-economic deprivation, inequality, limited resources and geography.

5. **There is a bias towards national and international engagement,** which is perceived as higher status, than local engagement.

Impact of the Covid-19 crisis

For the first time in their history, the COVID-19 crisis caused the universities to ‘close’ their doors, yet their work and contributions very much continued at pace and instead a new virtual open door has been created. The universities’ quick and combined response to the challenges of the crisis has created an invaluable foundation from which to ‘unlock’ them and their resources further.

Unlocking the universities’ expertise, research and talent is critical to economic recovery plans, as local policy makers and delivery partners will need to be informed by evidence and the latest thinking. Equally, the universities’ student populations have the potential to provide a significant number of volunteers to help those local organisations most in need.

More information on how the universities are responding to the COVID-19 crisis can be found here:

- https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/covid-19/
- https://www.ntu.ac.uk/coronavirus

Opportunities and ideas identified by partners

1. **Develop a Universities for Nottingham SAGE-type group to help local partners respond to local challenges** with the latest evidence and research. This could be vital for both economic recovery as well as dealing with the longer-term challenges the city and region faces. An expert advisory group comprising academics from both universities could drive mission driven partnerships, for example to inform decision-making around public health and the recovery more broadly based on a “What Works” approach to evaluation.

2. **Develop a ‘one stop shop’ or some kind of ‘matchmaking services between the universities and local partners/ businesses** to make the talent, expertise and research of
the universities more easily and openly accessible. For example, the local healthcare trusts feel they could learn a lot from the business schools to aid in their succession planning. This could also include information about facilities and spaces that could be accessed too.

3. **Develop a dedicated forum to bring together the sometime disparate voices of partners in the city and region.** A cohesive joint lobby is needed to enable the City and Region to better articulate its ‘asks’ with a single unified voice.

4. **Raise the profile of initiatives already undertaken** to demonstrate how the universities are benefitting local people and **further expand the pool of individuals and organisations** that the universities engage with.

5. **Build on the foundations created by the response to the COVID-19 crisis.** There are opportunities to learn from the adaptations made during the pandemic, such as increasing digital engagement, to improve the accessibility of the university, in addition to joined up working and communication.

6. **Explore ways to harness the talent of students and graduates more effectively.** For example, create a joint student volunteering directory to help local organisations find the volunteers they need more easily. Explore incentive schemes to retain local graduates.

7. **Refocus the annual innovation competition – Ingenuity – to tackle more local pressing issues,** such as recovery from COVID-19.

8. **Commit to the significant opportunity sites as Toton and Ratcliffe-on-Soar,** whether physically to extend the universities’ footprint across the city and region, or collaboratively in terms of supporting innovative industries and practices at these sites.

**External/ internal strategic and policy drivers**

Key strategic and policy drivers in relation to the idea of ‘unlocking the universities’ include:

+ UPP Foundation Report – “Truly Civic: Strengthening the connection between universities and their places”

+ Research England and various strategies, funding streams and activities

+ Various government strategies and policies – including government funding for research under the Research Excellence Framework, the Knowledge Exchange Framework, Innovate UK, Industrial Strategy, and the ‘levelling up’ agenda.

+ Emerging D2N2 Local Industrial Strategy – the strategy will set out how the region can achieve greater productivity and inclusive growth.

+ Both universities have civic strategies and knowledge exchange strategies

**How to measure impact and success**

1. An annual survey on research/ expertise/ students and staff members accessed by partner and other community organisations

2. Monitoring joint events between universities and other organisations

3. Monitoring spaces/ facilities utilised by partner and other community organisations across estates
4. Monitoring alignment of research to local challenges
5. Continuing to monitor volunteer hours
6. Continuing to monitor graduate pathways and retention

**Key partnerships, fora and collaborations**

There are several key partnerships and collaborations focused on ‘unlocking the universities’, some of which are listed below:

- Nottingham Citizens
- Russell Group
- Universities Policy Engagement Network

Key partners across this theme include:

- Nottingham City Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Districts/Borough Councils
- D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership
- NOVA Education Trust

**Case Studies**

**Interface – Scotland**

Interface was established in 2005 and works with businesses of all sizes, across all sectors, to match them to Scotland’s academic expertise.

The organisation is based regionally throughout Scotland and has connections into all Scottish universities, research institutes and colleges. It efficiently finds access to academic expertise, research, technologies, specialist facilities and funding. It also facilitates the clustering of businesses and academics working together to tackle industry sector challenges.

More than 3000 businesses have been introduced to academic partners across Scotland through the organisation, and it is calculated that this adds an additional £62.4m GVA/year into the Scottish economy, through either new services, processes or products, or due to efficiencies leading to cost savings. 95% of the companies supported by Interface are start-ups, micro or small companies.