# Flintshire County Council's Climate Change Strategy Review Public Engagement November 2024

# Contents

## Background

Flintshire's Climate Change Strategy was adopted in March 2022. This strategy is now being revised as we reach 2 years of programme delivery.

This engagement was carried out to help shape the revised strategy to ensure that the Council is meeting the needs of its stakeholders and that there is buy in from our stakeholders in driving the strategy forwards and reaching the Council's aims and ambitions, while providing the most impact and support for the wider county of Flintshire.

The online public survey was launched in August 2024 and a public event in September 2024 asking for members of the public's feedback on how the current strategy could be improved and ways the council can improve on delivering Net Zero by 2030. There was also initial feedback on increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change in Flintshire.

At the same time, the Council also launched a public survey on the 'Council Plan'. Elements of that survey were relevant to the climate change programme and therefore those results have been included in this survey report.

## Public Engagement Survey

A survey produced through Give My View was live between 22nd August and 4th October 2024, to gather feedback on the year 2 revised Climate Change Strategy. The survey was promoted through Flintshire's social pages and internal communications with staff through Workforce News.

Our Connect Centre's were informed of the survey launch, and computers were made available for anyone who wished to complete the survey.

The Climate Change team would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey and provided invaluable feedback. The results are outlined below.

# Summary of Results

| | |
|---|---|
| 201 people responded | 340 visits to the project |
| 701 written pieces of feedback | 99% of responses in English / 1% in Welsh |

**Question 1: Have you read our strategy or visited our climate change webpage?**

Responses to this question are outlined in the below table. Majority of respondents had not read the Climate Change Strategy or visited the webpage. Respondents were provided the link to the strategy webpages for information.

| Responses | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 78 | 39% |
| No | 123 | 61% |
| Total | 201 | |
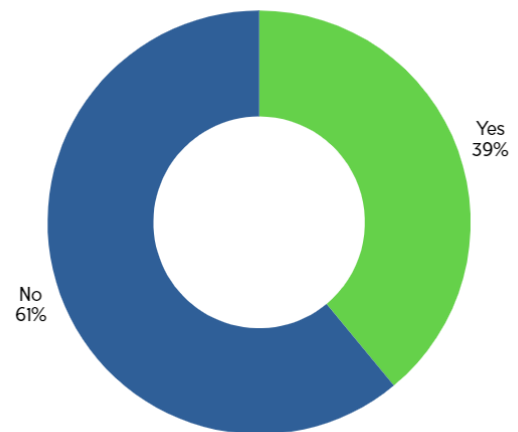


**Question 2: Should the council be acting on climate change?**

This question was added after the launch of the survey, resulting in some participants not having access to the question at the time of completion.

Responses to this question are outlined in the below table. Majority of respondents do believe the council should be acting on climate change.

| Responses | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 55 | 85% |
| No | 10 | 15% |
| Total | 78 viewed | |
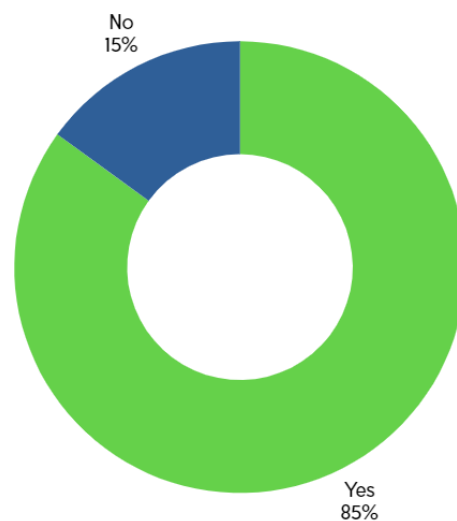
**Question 3: Choose the societal issues you want improved through climate action?**

Respondents were given the ability to pick their top three most important societal issues to them, Responses to this question are outlined in the below table. Majority of respondents stated that public transport, air quality and the cost of living are the areas that they would like to see improved through climate action.

49% PUBLIC TRANSPORT    47% AIR QUALITY    37% COST OF LIVING
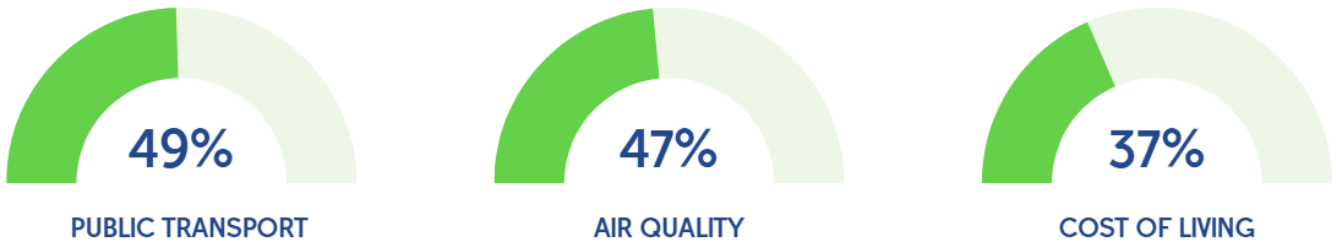
| Responses | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Public Transport | 85 | 49% |
| Air Quality | 82 | 47% |
| Cost of Living | 64 | 37% |
| Fuel Poverty | 61 | 35% |
| Housing | 48 | 27% |
| Health & Mental Wellbeing | 48 | 27% |
| Education | 35 | 20% |
| Inequality | 35 | 20% |
| Total | 175 | |

**Question 4: What do you like and/or dislike about our Climate Change Strategy?**

Respondents were given the ability to pick the top three aspects that were most important to them. Responses to this question are outlined in the below table. Majority of respondents stated that they haven't read it.

50% IVE NOT READ IT    19% TOO LONG    18% NOT EASY TO UNDERSTAND

| Responses | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| I've not read it | 78 | 50% |
| Too Long | 30 | 19% |
| Doesn't go far enough | 28 | 18% |
| Actions are clear | 26 | 17% |
| Informative & understandable | 25 | 16% |
| Not easy to understand | 24 | 15% |
| Not accessibility friendly | 19 | 12% |
| Engaging | 15 | 10% |
| Total | 155 | |

**Question 5: How should we reduce emissions from buildings and adapt for climate impacts?**

Respondents were given the ability to rank four actions by highest priority to lowest priority, responses to this question are outlined in the below table. Majority of respondents ranked 'adapt buildings for the future' as their highest priority.

**Highest Priority**

Adapt buildings for future

Renewable energy

Training on building use

Electrified heating
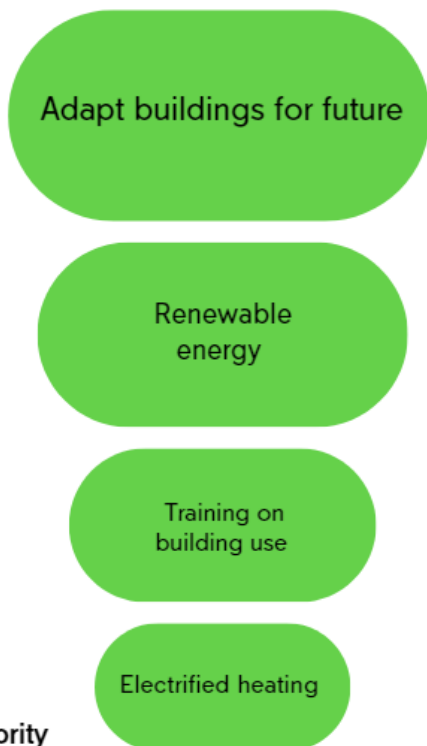
**Lowest Priority**

| Responses | Average position (1 being the highest) |
|---|---|
| Adapt buildings for future | 1.79 |
| Renewable energy | 1.95 |
| Training on building use | 3.06 |
| Electrified heating | 3.19 |

**Question 6: How should we reduce emissions from staff and public travel?**

Responses to this question were via an open comments box, with respondents given the option of three responses. A summary of key themes and contributions to this question analysed as follows:

- Better transport infrastructure.
- Continue working from home practises.
- Improve active travel infrastructure such as connecting and segregated pathways near train stations. As well as the cycle to work scheme and facilities for staff to use when cycling/walking to the offices such as secure storage, showers/changing facilities.
- Promote and encourage electric car use, through incentives such as salary sacrifice.
- Drop in regional workspaces as well as one central office.
- Improve travel links to the soon to be main office Ty Dewi Sant.
- Encourage and promote less car use through ensuring each town has the facilities is needs, recruiting locally and education/promotion on already existing services.
- Subsides public transport to make it more affordable for everyone to encourage the uptake of public transport. Staff incentives - discounted public travel, higher essential car use payment for greener vehicles.
- Electrify Public Transport Network
- Car sharing

**Question 7: How can we reduce emissions in the supply chain and adapt to climate impacts?**

Respondents were given the ability to rank four actions by highest priority to lowest priority, responses to this question are outlined in the below table. Majority of respondents ranked 'keep supplies local' as their highest priority.



| Responses | Average position (1 being the highest) |
|---|---|
| Keep supplies local | 1.92 |
| Sustainable suppliers | 2.35 |
| Training on sustainable buying | 2.85 |
| Policy Change | 2.87 |

**Question 8: How can land be used to address climate change and impacts of flooding and heat?**

Respondents were given one choice with a selection of four options, responses to this question are outlined in the below table. Majority of respondents would like to see the promotion of sustainable farming to address flooding/heating impacts.

| Responses | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Promote sustainable farming | 56 | 40% |
| Renewable energy | 34 | 24% |
| More green infrastructure | 29 | 21% |
| Expand reduce mow | 22 | 16% |
| Total | 141 | |
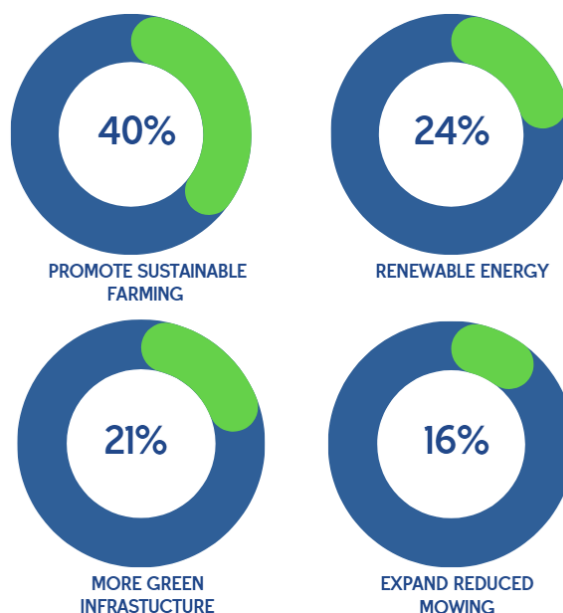
**Question 9: How can we encourage climate-friendly behaviours and decision-making?**

Responses to this question were through an open comments box, with respondents given the option of three responses. A summary of key themes and contributions to this question analysed as follows:

- Educate in schools, the workplace, clubs and local groups through campaigns, visits and training for workplaces such as Whitebelt CI training.
- Rolling out training for residents.
- Promote the actions FCC are taken and the action we need to take to reach net zero through different channels such as socials, newsletters, offices, emails or other forms outside of social media for people who don't access it.
- Promoting actions residents can take including hints and tips, promote local produce/markets, training for residents, repairs cafes etc.,
- Communicate what the strategy is in clearer formats using images, infographics etc.,
- Sources of information/actions that are location specific.
- The council shouldn't be taken action/wasting money on climate change.
- Make it easier for residents to act through simple language, accessible, value for money.
- Incentives climate friendly decisions by offering reduced council tax for recycling, lower tax on climate friendly products, early adopters, provide items which can build resilience to the cost-of-living crisis while reducing carbon impacts and reward behaviour change.
- Integrate climate initiatives across the various sectors that the Authority provides.
- Create a communication action plan.
- Encourage Community Councils to actively participate.
- Provide free water fill stations within the community. (MS- Could this be partnership work with locally business – Refill app)

**Question 10: Do you have any final thoughts on the council's approach to climate change?**

Responses to this question were through an open comments box. Key themes and contributions to this question analysed as follows:



| Neutral | Negative | Postive | Mixed |
|---------|----------|---------|-------|
| 61% | 21% | 9% | 9% |
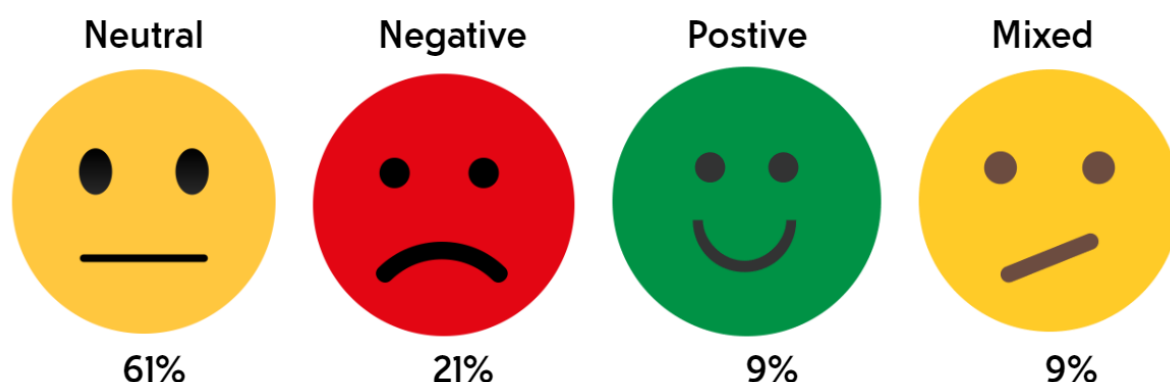
- A high number of feedback responses didn't want their council tax to rise any further due to the worry that acting on climate change will increase taxes much higher than they currently are. And they don't see or hear where any of their current tax is being spent on.
- The public want more education on the topic and for the climate change team to be out in the community engaging more with local residents.

- A number of responses believe that climate change doesn't exist and as a council should stop acting on the issue as it is a waste of time.
- There does not seem to be a mechanism for climate policy to override council decisions. This needs to change for real action.
- Find existing trails and seek participation, to reduce the cost of running a trail as a council e.g., electric recycling fleet.
- Climate change needs to be integrated into all council services and decision-making process for this to work effectively.
- Establish climate change champions for each service/team and use them as a communication/action network.
- Be ambitious and create clear timed roadmap.

# Council Plan Public Survey

## Environmental Questions Responses

The responses below were formed from the council plan public survey

**Question 1:**

The respondents were asked if the well-being objectives presented to them are correct and in the public interest. Majority of respondents stated that 'Supporting people to get a good education either at school, college or later in life' was the one the agreed the most with. Looking after the environment ranked third with 65% In support.

| Our Well-being Objectives cover the themes listed below.   Do you think we have got this right? | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Our Well-being Objectives cover the themes listed below. Do you think we have got this right? | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Response Total | Support % | No Support % |
| Supporting people to get a good education either at school, college or later in life | 113 | 157 | 60 | 24 | 354 | 76.27% | 23.73% |
| Providing safe and secure places for people to live | 96 | 151 | 82 | 22 | 351 | 70.37% | 29.63% |
| Looking after the environment | 90 | 140 | 85 | 39 | 354 | 64.97% | 35.03% |
| Protecting people from poverty | 84 | 142 | 96 | 29 | 351 | 64.39% | 35.61% |
| Helping our economy to grow | 101 | 120 | 96 | 35 | 352 | 62.78% | 37.22% |
| Supporting people to live the best lives they can | 84 | 122 | 107 | 38 | 351 | 58.69% | 41.31% |
| Managing the Council's money, people and assets responsibly, efficiently and effectively | 130 | 75 | 64 | 87 | 356 | 57.58% | 42.42% |

**Question 2:**

Respondents were asked if the council priorities were right, the majority ranked education and skills as the one they agree with the most. Green society and environment ranked fourth, with support from 63%.

| To make sure we can achieve our Well-being Objectives, we have created the Council Plan (2023-28) Priorities listed below. Do you think we've got this right? | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Response Total | Support % | No Support % |
| Education and skills | 117 | 157 | 56 | 23 | 353 | 77.62% | 22.38% |
| Poverty | 82 | 147 | 92 | 27 | 348 | 65.80% | 34.20% |
| Personal and community well-being | 84 | 141 | 82 | 46 | 353 | 63.74% | 36.26% |
| Green society and environment | 84 | 137 | 87 | 44 | 352 | 62.78% | 37.22% |
| Affordable and accessible housing | 85 | 130 | 89 | 45 | 349 | 61.60% | 38.40% |
| Economy | 99 | 116 | 87 | 50 | 352 | 61.08% | 38.92% |
| A well-managed council | 132 | 73 | 63 | 86 | 354 | 57.91% | 42.09% |
| *Answered* | | | | | 6 | | |
| *Skipped* | | | | | 357 | | |

**Question 3:**

Respondents were asked to rank the seven priorities below by how important they are to them. Majority of respondents ranked a well-manged council as what is most important to them. And green society and environment ranking last with 77% in support but the highest no support at 14%.

| How important are these Priorities to you? | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very important | Important | Neutral | Not Important | Not Important at all | Response Total | Support % | Neutral % | No Support % |
| A well-managed council | 281 | 63 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 357 | 96.36% | 3.08% | 0.56% |
| Economy | 189 | 135 | 25 | 3 | 3 | 355 | 91.27% | 7.04% | 1.69% |
| Personal and community well-being | 163 | 148 | 28 | 12 | 4 | 355 | 87.61% | 7.89% | 4.51% |
| Education and skills | 208 | 93 | 39 | 3 | 7 | 350 | 86.00% | 11.14% | 2.86% |
| Poverty | 137 | 139 | 51 | 15 | 12 | 354 | 77.97% | 14.41% | 7.63% |
| Affordable and accessible housing | 129 | 110 | 74 | 23 | 18 | 354 | 67.51% | 20.90% | 11.58% |
| Green society and environment | 126 | 112 | 66 | 27 | 23 | 354 | 67.23% | 18.64% | 14.12% |
| *Answered* | | | | | | 358 | | | |
| *Skipped* | | | | | | 5 | | | |

**Question 4:**

Respondents were asked to rank the actions within the 'Green society and environment' theme by importance. Majority of respondents ranked 'Efficient public transport networks' as what is most important to them at 90%, and 'Switching the council's fleet to electric' was the lowest with 40%.

| Thinking about the Priority - GREEN SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT and the sub priorities listed below, how important are they to you? | Response Total | Support % | Neutral % | No Support % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Efficient public transport networks | 354 | 90% | 7% | 3% |
| Protecting our rivers from phosphate pollution | 355 | 89% | 8% | 3% |
| Minimising the risk of flooding through planning applications | 354 | 86% | 10% | 4% |
| Protecting and improving green spaces | 354 | 85% | 12% | 3% |
| Identifying and supporting communities at risk of flooding | 356 | 83% | 13% | 4% |
| More opportunities to reduce, reuse, recycle waste | 355 | 76% | 17% | 7% |
| Planning for the future impacts of Climate Change | 353 | 66% | 21% | 13% |
| More opportunities to walk | 354 | 62% | 25% | 13% |
| More opportunities to cycle | 355 | 48% | 28% | 25% |
| Creating a Flintshire Forest | 354 | 47% | 30% | 23% |
| Supporting residents and communities to become net zero carbon by 2030 | 355 | 46% | 28% | 26% |
| The Council becoming net zero carbon by 2030 | 357 | 46% | 28% | 26% |
| Switching Council vehicles to electric | 354 | 29% | 31% | 40% |

**Question 5: Do you agree that planning for a minimum of five years is sufficient to meet the needs of our communities? An open text box was provided for this question.**

Below are comments which touched on the environment/climate change:

- 25 years, we have very limited time to tackle climate. We need to act now and fast.
- Do not agree with any planning we should focus more on green spaces and protecting agricultural land brown sites are fine to build on.
- Yes as change occurs you are able change the priorities if needed. other than the bigger picture of climate change.
- Planning should be done in a time tiered manner - resolving climate change cannot be achieved within five years by FCC, but supporting local education and public transport (for example) through better financing and budgeting can be done with immediate effect. No one size fits all. It is unrealistic to set a five year plan when in reality most of your tax paying inhabitants won't see the benefits of these initiatives.

**Question 6: Please use the box below if you would like to tell us more about what you think about our Council Plan priorities or if you think we've missed anything out? An open text box was provided for this question.**

Below are comments which touched on the environment, and these have been broken down into four categories: Biodiversity/land, Waste, Mobility and transport and Other.

## Biodiversity/Land

"Better maintenance on road/pavement regarding over growing of weeds/grass"

"Better maintenance of grass cutting/hedgerows"

"I support tree planting and wildflower areas"

"More must be done regarding list of flora/fauna that should be priorities and important habitats in the county when it comes to conservation efforts"

## Waste

"Changing the recycling bags to bins or increase the size "

"The new opening times at the recycling times are not convenient for working people"

"More education on what can and cannot be recycled and increase what can be recycled at kerbside e.g., soft plastics"

"Increased issues of fly tipping in the area either from the HRC's opening times or the local environment not being well maintained"

"Make it easier for people to increase their recycling and reduce their waste"

"Concerned over the change to three weekly bin collection, as I already recycling as much as I can"

# Mobility & Transport

"Need a regular bus services for rural areas"

"Need reliable public transport for commuting to and from work"

"Residents in rural areas have different priorities for active travel as services are not a short distance away"

"Increase frequency of public transport and reinstate railway line in urban towns in Flintshire and in other parts of North Wales"

"More emphasis on active travel and place more funding into transport and maintenance upgrades"

"Create separate cycles lances on key commuter and cycle to school routes"

# Other

"Concerns over council finances in regards to wasting money on Net Zero/biodiversity schemes"

"More funding allocated to front line services such as waste management - which affects every household"

"Financial support/benefit to private home owners for schemes such as renewables"

"Don't agree with costly changes/expensive schemes to try and influence people"

"Electric vehicles are nice to have but not urgent priorities"

"Priorities regarding flooding, and impact on children's education when unable to attend school"