

## **Appendix Four: Overview of Consultation Responses**

### **1. Analysis of Comments Contained Within the Climate Strategy Survey – Phase One**

The survey was conducted between 6 July and 28 August 2020. Two consultations were undertaken which had one concentrating on adult responses while the other was focused on children's responses. This document highlights the results from both surveys.

A further consultation was undertaken during this time which focused on the budget consultation for 2020 for West Lindsey District Council. This consultation included one question to support the development of the climate strategy. The results from this question are also noted in this report but further information can be found in the Budget Consultation Report for 2020.

The survey elicited 151 responses from a mixture of residents, businesses and Parish/Town Councils. The breakdown being:

- Residents – 144 (95.4%)
- Businesses – 4 (2.6%)
- Parish/Town Councils – 3 (2%)

Respondents were asked how important a topic climate change, the environment and sustainability is to them.

Number	%	Rating
2	1.4	1 – Not important
3	2.0	2
11	7.4	3 – Neither
51	34.5	4
81	54.7	5 – Extremely important

The age profile of respondents is worth noting and the age profile of the Council's Citizen's Panel is provided for comparison purposes.

Age Group	Number	%	Citizen's Panel % data
16-25	1	0.8	1.5
26-35	4	3.3	4.5
36-45	10	24	12.0
46-55	24	19.5	22.7
56-65	32	26	35.1
66-75	37	30.1	17.8
76 or over	12	9.8	5.6
Prefer not to say	3	2.4	0.7

Opportunity was provided for respondents to make any additional comments in respect of this subject matter. Sixty comments were made and the contents of these have been analysed to draw out the main messages that were conveyed. These have been collated thus:

1. Positivity – many comments were made highlighting that the moves the Council are making are welcomed and are a positive step
2. Urgency – there was a desire for the Council to act quickly and begin to address the climate related issues
3. Action – the need for the Council to take positive and sustained action was highlighted
4. Communication & Engagement - respondents stressed the need for on-going communications and engagement across communities to ensure that focus remains on this issue
5. Knowledge – the Council must take a lead on increasing the knowledge of residents in all climate related matters
6. Behaviour Change – this is a key requirement to ensure climate related targets are met
7. Recycling and Waste Minimisation – a number of contributors stressed this as a key action that should be encouraged
8. Renewables – this area was seen as one that would have a positive impact of reducing emissions across the District
9. Planning – a need for reforms to existing planning policies was expressed to ensure better build quality and greater protection for vulnerable communities
10. Transport – comments were made highlighting the need for improved, green public transport solutions

The Council also recently ran a budget engagement exercise and within this asked respondents to rank in order of importance, six climate related actions the Council could take. These findings have some synergy with the comments made within the climate survey:

Action	Result	Priority
Reduce waste through recycling and reuse initiatives	187 (26.9%)	1
Better use of land to mitigate climate change impact and nature loss	75 (10.8%)	5
Reduce emissions from transport and support more sustainable transport solutions	81 (11.6%)	4
Support the growth and use of renewable energy	160 (23%)	2

Ensure the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change e.g. flooding are protected	74 (10.6%)	6
Encourage energy efficiency in private-owned homes and new developments	119 (17.1%)	3

This brief analysis provides some key pointers for the Council as it progresses this agenda.

1. The Council must harness and use the current feeling of positivity
2. Leadership, communication and engagement must be evident and the Council should be seen as a provider of accurate information and knowledge to help residents and businesses make informed decisions
3. The Council must take a lead role in engineering behaviour change among residents and introduce and promote new recycling initiatives
4. Planning reform is regarded as necessary; hence the Council should lobby Government with other Councils
5. The promotion of renewable energy solutions should be supported by the Council
6. The age profile of respondents shows that significant attention needs to be paid to engage and communicate with younger age groups to elicit active participation

## **2. Analysis of Comments Contained Within the Climate Strategy Survey – Phase Two**

**Background:** Survey ran from 24th November to 31st December 2020. Direct notification of its existence was issued to Parish and Town Councils and the Council's Citizen's Panel and social media was used to promote it, a press release was issued, Cllr Coulson promoted it in a radio interview and the Council's website pointed residents towards it.

1. A total of 294 responses were received from a mixture of Citizen Panel members, residents, Parish and Town Councils/Councillors and businesses; the breakdown being:
  - Citizen Panel members: 237 (81.2%)
  - Residents: 72 (24.7%)
  - Parish/Town Councils: 16 (5.5%)
  - WLDC Councillor: 1 (0.3%)
  - Business: 1 (0.3%)

The age profile of participants was as follows (Citizen's Panel profile shown for comparison purposes):

Age	Numbers	Citizen's Panel data
Under 16	0 (0.0%)	-
16-25	3 (1.0%)	1.5%
26-35	10 (3.4%)	4.5%
36-45	26 (8.9%)	12.0%
46-55	25 (8.6%)	22.7%
56-65	72 (24.7%)	35.1%
66-75	111 (39%)	17.8%
76 or over	37 (12.7%)	5.6%
Prefer not to say	8 (2.7%)	0.7%

2. Respondents were asked whether they are concerned about the environment and the impact of climate change (table 2) and if so, what concerns them most (table 3).

Table 2: Are you concerned about the environment and the impact of climate change?		Table 3: What concerns you most?	
Yes a lot	207 (70.9%)	Environment destruction	92 (32.5%)
Yes a little	71 (24.3%)	Extreme weather	71 (25.1%)
Not really	13 (4.5%)	Flooding	42 (14.8%)
Not at all	1 (0.3%)	Species extinction	39 (13.8%)
Don't know	0	Rising temperatures	28 (9.9%)
		Refugees	5 (1.8%)
		Disease	4 (1.4%)
		Don't know	2 (0.7%)

3. The survey asked if it is achievable for the Council to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 (table 4) and whether this target was ambitious enough (table 5).

Table 4: Is it achievable for the Council to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2050?		Table 5: Is this target ambitious enough?	
Yes	171 (58.8%)	Too ambitious	63 (22.3%)
No	49 (16.8%)	About right	148 (52.3%)
Don't know	71 (24.4%)	Not ambitious enough	72 (25.4%)

While a majority of responses indicate that the target is achievable, a significant proportion do not know and almost 17% feel that the Council will not be able to achieve a net zero position by 2050. Supplementary comments related to the achievability of the Council meeting its 20250 target, grouped around **cost concerns** ("Although willing I believe monetary obstacles will happen"); **behaviour change**

(“You will not be able to control the behaviour of individuals and organisations in this regard”) and **external influences** (“Too much is outside of local control”).

4. Respondents were asked if it is achievable for the whole district of West Lindsey to be net zero carbon by 2050 (table 6) and whether this target was ambitious enough (table 7).

Table 6: Is it achievable for the whole district of West Lindsey to be net zero carbon by 2050?		Table 7: Is this target ambitious enough?	
Yes	149 (51.4%)	Too ambitious	73 (25.3%)
No	71 (24.5%)	About right	149 (51.6%)
Don't know	70 (24.1%)	Not ambitious enough	67 (23.2%)

Again, a majority of replies indicate that it is achievable for the District to achieve a net zero position by 2050, but just under half of all participants either do not know, or definitely feel that the target cannot be met. Supplementary comments focused on **finances** (“Unaffordable”); **behaviour/lifestyle change** (“Because net zero is quite complex and requires major lifestyle and business changes); the need for **collaboration** (“Will be difficult to bring industry/business on board without external policy levers or the threat of sanctions/fines”); **too many factors involved** (“Far too many objectives in the equation all which involves seismic shifts in how things are done now and how they will have to be done for zero carbon”); **current reliance on fossil fuels across the District**, (“West Lindsey is a very large area, it will be difficult to stop many of its inhabitants burning carbon carbon to heat homes. Homes in rural areas will still need to use carbon for heating and cooking. New laws would have to be introduced and modifications made to homes to stop carbon use, I don't see this happening.”) and **general apathy** (“Not everyone is on board.”).

5. In considering the draft Sustainability, Climate Change and the Environment Strategy, Table 8 shows that the main benefits that will accrue were deemed to be:

Slowing down climate change	208 (72.0%)
Improved mental health	62 (21.5%)
Improved low carbon transport options	186 (64.4%)
Reduced waste	204 (70.6%)
Improved physical health	93 (32.2%)
Saving money in the long run	92 (31.8%)
I don't think there are benefits	4 (1.4%)
Protection of natural habitats and species	188 (65.1%)
Help protect against flooding and extreme temperatures	204 (70.6%)

6. Attention was paid to actions contained in the draft strategy and those that households could or already have taken to reduce climate change. Table 8 illustrates the response:

Action	Greatest Impact	Already Done
Switching to renewable energy such as solar or wind power	197 (87.2%)	73 (32.3%)
Make sure your home has enough insulation	161 (60.3%)	190 (71.2%)
Limiting the amount of water you use	108 (54.0%)	145 (72.5%)
Driving less or driving an electric or low emissions car	166 (79.8%)	89 (42.8%)
Minimising single use plastic in packaging or products you buy	192 (76.8%)	115 (46.0%)
Recycling as much household waste as possible by taking part in all household recycling options available	161 (60.8%)	208 (78.5%)
Using public transport more often than you currently do	92 (81.4%)	35 (31.0%)
Reducing food miles by shopping local	110 (60.1%)	115 (62.8%)
Switch to an electric or hybrid family car	140 (91.5%)	29 (19.0%)
Growing your own food	89 (66.4%)	79 (59.0%)
Reduce Air Travel	135 (75.0%)	97 (53.9%)
Eating a more plant-based diet	80 (59.7%)	91 (67.9%)
Car sharing	72 (82.8%)	20 (23.0%)

These results show that a broad range of actions have been taken by residents already, with the most popular concerning energy/water related measures; recycling; lifestyle changes, such as reduced meat consumption; less driving; growing own produce and shopping locally. While this is encouraging, the questions to be asked are: how much further can households go? How to get more households/individuals on board? How to sell the co-benefits of lifestyle/behavioural changes?

7. To ensure that the Council's time and resources are focused on areas that will have the greatest impact as quickly as possible, the survey asked which of the potential actions in the draft strategy will have a big or small impact on reducing climate change and improving the environment in our district?

Table 9:

Action	Big Impact	Smallest Impact	Don't Know
West Lindsey District Council leading by example and becoming net zero carbon	156 (54.9%)	109 (38.4%)	19 (6.7%)
More local information on carbon emission figures etc to help influence peoples' daily behaviour	113 (40.1%)	149 (52.8%)	20 (7.1%)
Retrofitting homes to become more energy efficient and tackling fuel poverty	218 (76.2%)	56 (19.6%)	12 (4.2%)
Supporting and promoting the development of low carbon travel and low emission vehicles	186 (66.0%)	79 (28.0%)	17 (6.0%)

Seeking additional powers and resources from Government to help tackle climate change	162 (58.5%)	84 (30.3%)	31 (11.2%)
Reducing waste and increasing reuse and recycling	232 (80.6%)	55 (19.1%)	1 (0.3%)
Planting trees	164 (71.0%)	58 (25.1%)	9 (3.9%)

From these responses, it is clear that action is expected on the part of the Council across all areas detailed in the survey; with emphasis placed on initiatives to further reduce waste and promote recycling; tackle energy efficiency and fuel poverty and planting trees. As the strategy action plan is developed, these notions should be appropriately reflected.

8. Existing awareness of the Council's commitment to tackling climate change was investigated (table 10) and respondents were also asked to gauge their levels of satisfaction with the actions the Council was taking to be a Green District (table 11).

Table 10: Prior to completing this questionnaire, how aware were you that West Lindsey District Council were developing a Sustainability, Climate Change and the Environment Strategy and had set a target of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050?		Table 11. Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you that West Lindsey is working to be a Green District?	
Aware	82 (28.3%)	Very satisfied	64 (22.0%)
Somewhat aware	116 (40.0%)	Fairly satisfied	152 (52.2%)
Not aware at all	92 (31.7%)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	61 (21.0%)
		Fairly dissatisfied	11 (3.8%)
		Very dissatisfied	3 (1.0%)

Awareness of the Council's intentions was fairly high. Over 2/3rds of responses indicate that people are aware of the Council's work and the remaining 1/3 are now aware. Satisfaction levels are also high, with over 75% of respondents either very or fairly satisfied with the efforts the Council are making.

## 9. Summary

This latest survey complements an earlier survey undertaken during the summer of 2020. Between both, around 450 responses have been received. It is acknowledged that under different circumstances, more interactive engagement/awareness events would have been held. This will remain a focus once lockdown restrictions ease.

It is clear that the Council does have a mandate from residents and other stakeholders to take positive actions to address climate change. The size of the task however is also appreciated by those that have partaken in the surveys; resources; collaboration; behaviour change have all been cited as key enablers for success. The pace at which the Council is taking action is felt to be appropriate; however,

there is no room for complacency. The Council should act as quickly as possible and although this will present challenges, acting at a comfortable pace will not deliver the outcomes that are desired.

The issue of eliciting interest and participation among younger age groups remains a problem. This needs to be addressed in an effective manner going forward.