Appendix 1

Climate Strategy Stakeholder Engagement Report

This report summarises the engagement that will help to inform the draft Wiltshire Climate Strategy, which will be subject to consultation in Autumn 2021. A wide variety of stakeholders have provided input, and this is being considered along with our own research to develop the strategy.

Since Wiltshire Council acknowledged the climate emergency in February 2019, engagement on this agenda has been carried out – first by the Wiltshire Council 'Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group' and more recently by the council's Climate Team. A summary of engagement activity is provided in Annex A.

The most recent targeted engagement activity during Spring 2021 was focussed on talking to key stakeholders. Annex B gives an overview of the groups of stakeholders that were involved at this stage.

During May 2021 a series of webinars were held, and input was also invited via e-mail. The 'Climate Strategy Discussion Document' was published in full, and as a summary, on the council's climate webpages. The engagement was based on this document and asked the questions:

> 1. What do you feel are the 3 priorities for Wiltshire (not just the council) in becoming carbon neutral by 2030?
>
> 2. Does the organisation you represent have carbon neutral targets? If so what are they?
>
> 3. In what way could you support the council's Climate strategy?

As a result of this targeted engagement exercise 181 people attended live webinars, and 105 written responses were received.

All of the engagement to date will inform the draft Climate Strategy, which will be the subject of full public consultation in Autumn 2020.

This initial engagement is seen as the beginning of strategy development and delivery which will necessarily encompass ongoing engagement and partnership working in different forms.
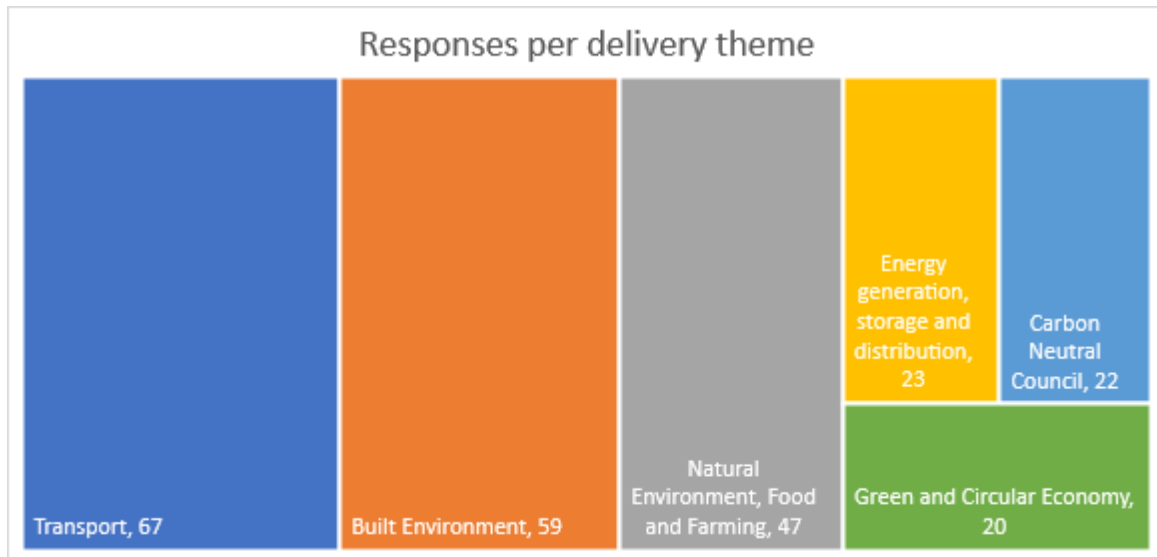
This was a targeted engagement programme, not aiming to provide a fully representative or statistically significant set of responses. The engagement was designed to give a steer in relation to:

- Feedback on the issues raised in the 'Climate Strategy Discussion Document'
- An indication of the themes that stakeholders felt should be prioritised in the Climate Strategy
- An indication of gaps in awareness or knowledge – where there are themes that we know are critical in achieving carbon neutrality, but these received few mentions during our engagement.
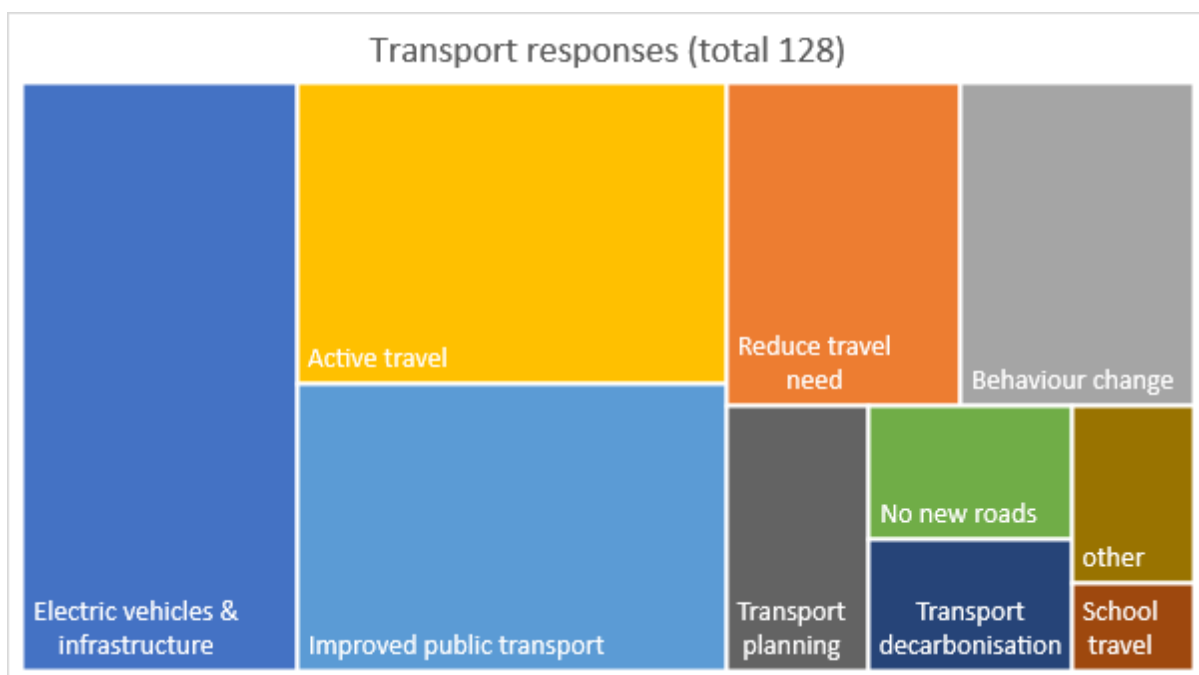
Summary of emerging themes

Q1: What do you feel are the 3 priorities for Wiltshire (not just the council) in becoming carbon neutral by 2030?

The following diagram shows the number of responses received in relation to each of the overarching Delivery Themes as set out in the Climate Strategy Discussion Document.

The following sections summarise the main messages that have been received through our engagement, in response to the priority areas for the Climate Strategy Question 1 above. Each section gives an overview diagram showing the strength of support for different topics and themes, as well as summarising the emerging themes that people felt the strategy should highlight.

Transport

Transport

- Transport was the theme that received the most comments and discussions in written responses as well as live events. Comments broadly followed the challenges and opportunities set out in the Discussion Document in relation to the 'Avoid, Shift, Improve' mode.

- While there were a lot of comments specifically on electric vehicle charging, the clear message was that the strategy should be centred on a strong, forward-thinking and strategic approach to low carbon mobility, affordable public transport and active travel.

- Many stakeholders pointed out that the council must give a clear and consistent message in relation to new road building and new housing developments, and how they align with the carbon neutrality aspiration, and in particular the zero carbon transport agenda.

Avoiding emissions
- Reduce the need / choice to travel by car – working from home, retain and improve local facilities, broadband, planning development
- No new road building

Shift the mode of travel
- Public transport – improve, and increase use
- Active Travel:
  - o Active travel needs to be front and centre of strategies – aligning with carbon hierarchy, and 'Avoid, Shift, Improve'. A strategic cycling and walking network for Wiltshire – incorporated within and extending existing Rights of Way network and integrated within existing or new green and blue infrastructure as much as possible.
  - o Improved walking and cycling infrastructure must be incorporated into new developments; strategic cycling network between settlements – particularly in and around the main towns / 'Principal Settlements';
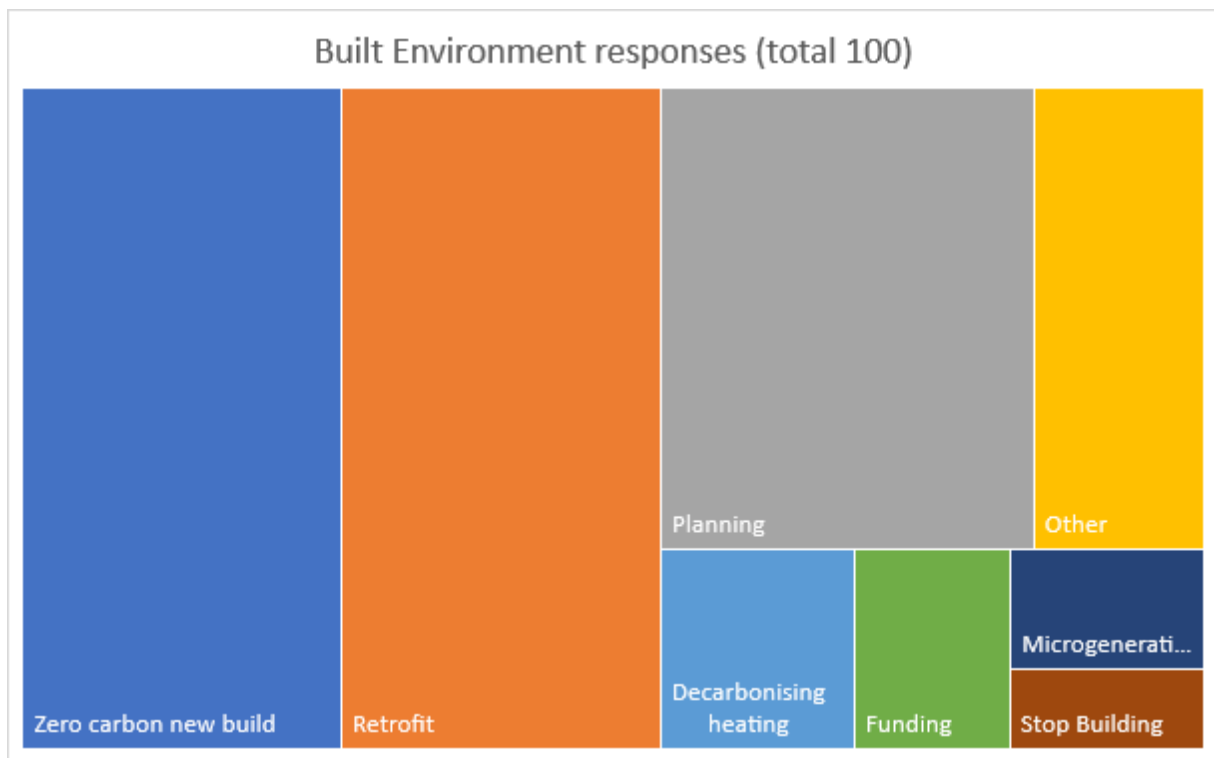 - o Improve rural road safety

Improve vehicle technology
- **Electric vehicle uptake:**
  - o improve EV charging infrastructure in Wiltshire
  - o EV car clubs
- Alternative fuels such as hydrogen and biomethane were not generally discussed

Overarching issues:
- Talk about 'Mobility' instead of 'Transport'
- Behaviour change – schools / work travel plans; increase use of public transport, active travel
- There wasn't a significant mention of 'transport poverty' or fairness and accessibility

Built environment

Built Environment responses (total 100)

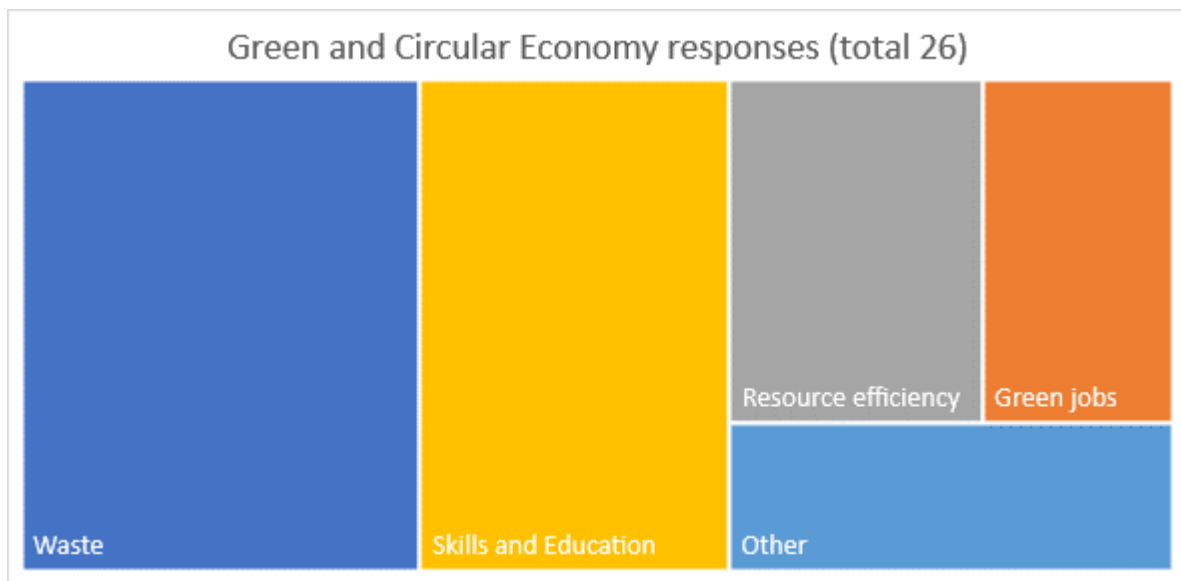| Zero carbon new build | Retrofit | Planning | | Other |
| | | Decarbonising heating | Funding | Microgenerati... |
| | | | | Stop Building |

Built environment

Three key topics were raised, net zero carbon new build, planning/settlement location and the retrofit of existing property.

- New building should be built to be zero carbon. This referred to both housing and general building.
- Many comments refer to the importance of planning in relation to the built environment. This refers both specifically to the local plan produced by the council, but also more generally to the spread of settlements, where these are located, and how transport relates to settlement patterns.
- The need to retrofit the existing built environment, and ensure it is energy efficient, was highlighted, in relation to housing primarily, but also to business and schools and the wider built environment. The difficulty of retrofitting historic buildings was mentioned by only a few.
- The need for support in undertaking retrofit was also raised. Understanding where to start with this and how to access grants was raised alongside funding.
- Fuel poverty is an important topic and significant government funding is being allocated to tackle it, but not a significant issue raised by the targeted engagement.
- Specific technical issues such as the need to decarbonise heating or microgeneration were mentioned but by a minority of respondents, these are also encompassed by wider topic of housing retrofit.
- There was little mention of the need to make sure the built environment is resilient to the impacts of climate change, e.g. designing and retrofitting for cooling, reduced water use.
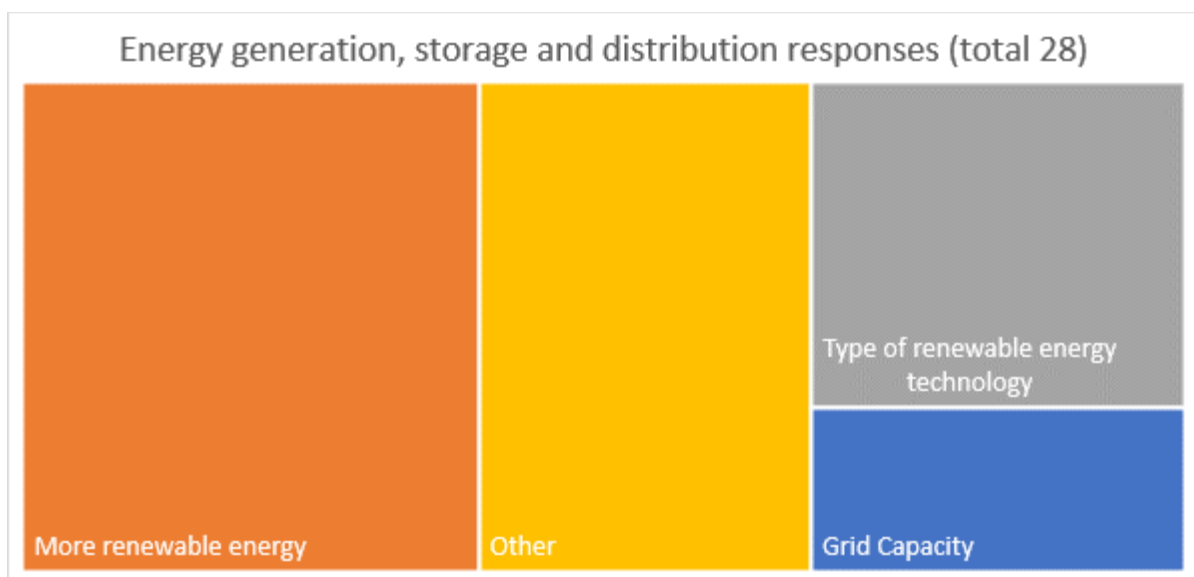
Green and circular economy

Green and Circular Economy responses (total 26)

| | | Resource efficiency | Green jobs |
| Waste | Skills and Education | Other | |

Green and Circular Economy

- Ensuring there are enough skilled people for local "green jobs", e.g. skills needed for retrofitting buildings / installing new heating technologies.
- Diversification of businesses into green sector.
- Waste was mentioned no doubt partly because it was not presented in detail in the Discussion Document. Specific comments included:
  - More recycling – including businesses.
  - Consumption by individuals needs to be tackled.
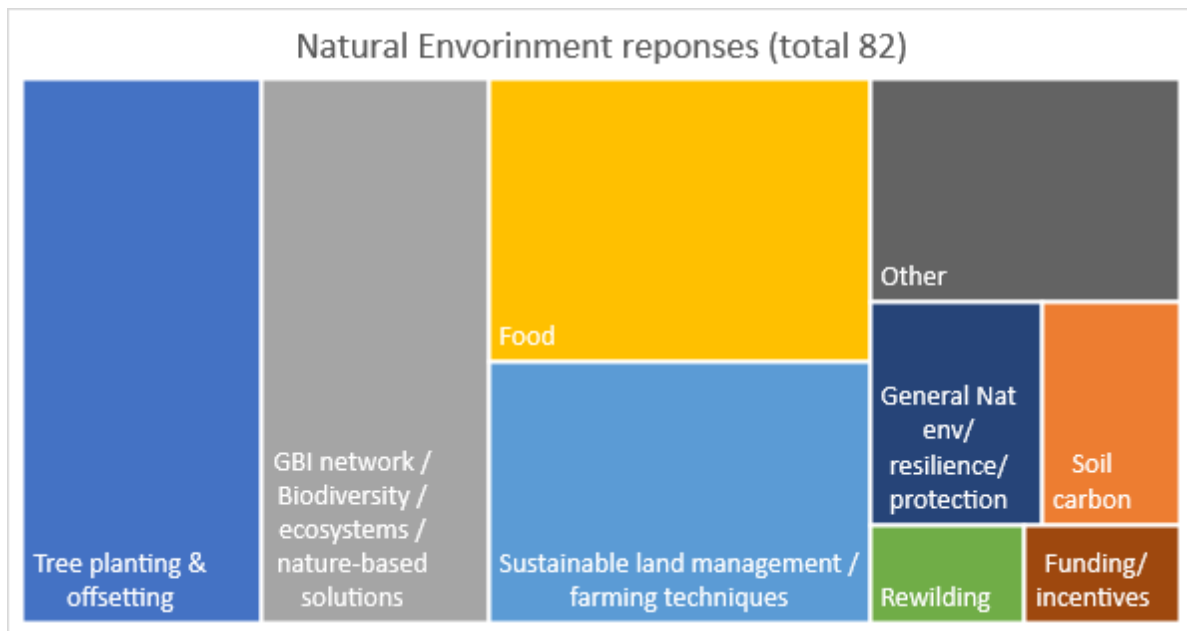 - Less waste = no new incinerators needed.

Energy generation, storage and distribution

Energy generation, storage and distribution responses (total 28)

| | | Type of renewable energy technology |
| More renewable energy | Other | Grid Capacity |

Energy generation, storage and distribution

- Using renewable energy, in particular solar but also wind, was the most commented on topic in energy. Other technologies were mentioned to a lesser degree.
- It was felt that the council should explore renewable energy generation on it property as much as possible.
- Generally energy was raised as a priority less than the other main topic areas, (it does however overlap with others such as net zero carbon built environment)
- Grid capacity was highlighted as a crucial issue by a couple of respondents.
- The smart grid specifically was not highlighted or the need to reduce energy as a starting point.

Natural environment

Natural Envoirnment reponses (total 82)

Natural Environment, Food and Farming

The main engagement event with natural environment stakeholders was held in conjunction with the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, so there was a significant proportion of specialist input and comments relating to improving the green and blue infrastructure network, improving biodiversity and ecosystems.
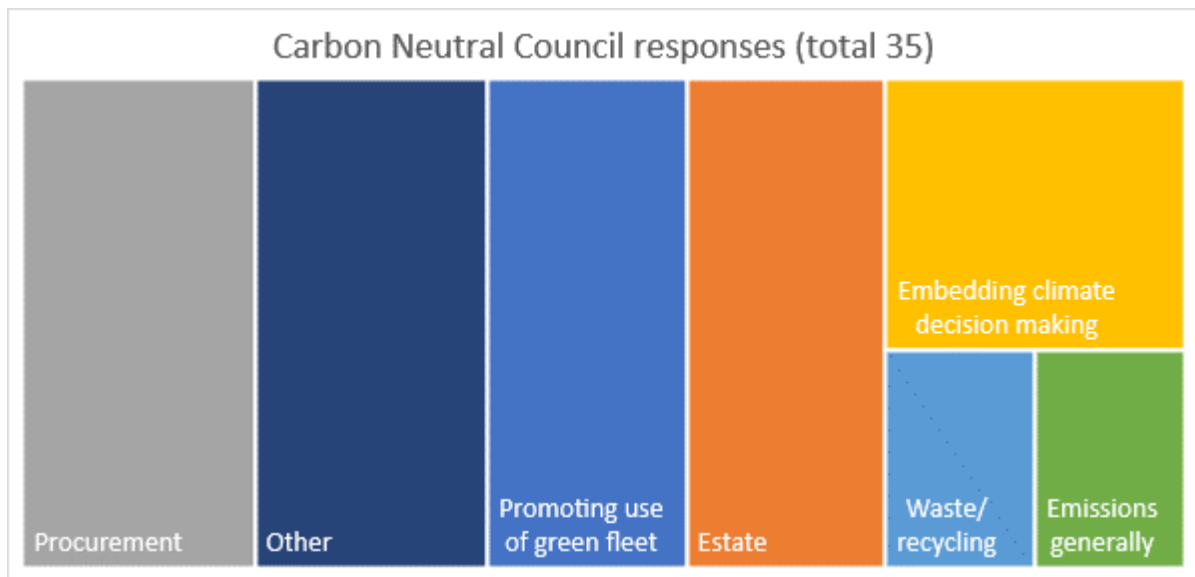
Outside of the natural environment stakeholder group, many other responses also called for the natural environment to be highlighted in the strategy.

Key areas are summarised as follows:

- Make best use of our natural environment to help offset emissions – through tree planting, but also through improved land use management, rewilding and improve biodiversity / ecosystems / soil to increase absorption carbon dioxide
- Food: supporting agriculture to produce locally and cut down on food miles, sustainable production methods, changing diets

- Apart from a great deal of interest in tree-planting, surprisingly little was specifically discussed in relation to offsetting, soil carbon and resilience
- The main comments in relation to resilience were to look after the natural environment so that it can help us be resilient to climate change – e.g. flooding
- Though not mentioned by many, it is important to highlight the comments in relation to efficient use of land or balancing land uses – e.g. in relation to potentially competing land uses, such as renewable energy, recreation, restoring biodiversity/habitats, offsetting, food production
- Some non-technical specialists commented that it was interesting that the council's presentation and documents set out the need to plan for a 2°C temperature rise, as until then respondents had focussed mainly on the need to avoid / mitigate carbon emissions, and not on the impacts / adaptation.

Carbon Neutral Council

Carbon Neutral Council responses (total 35)

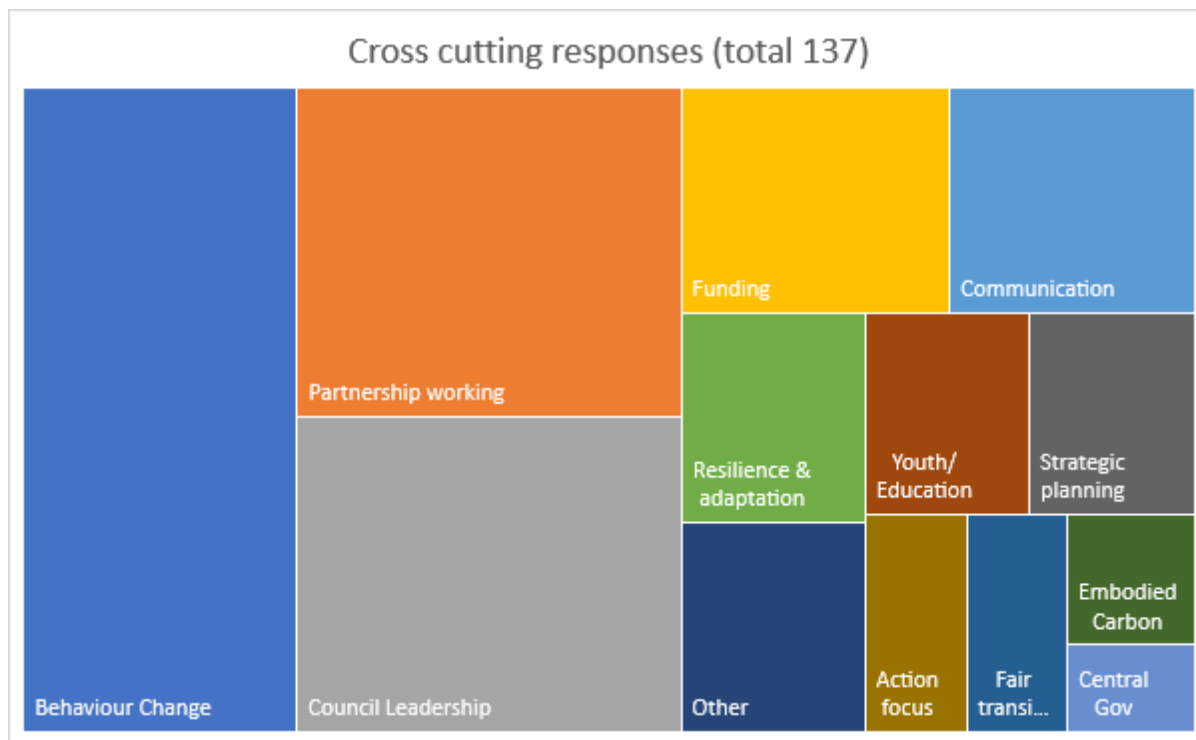| Procurement | Other | Promoting use of green fleet | Estate | Embedding climate decision making / Waste/recycling / Emissions generally |

Carbon Neutral Council

A wide variety of specific suggestions were raised in relation to the council's own operations and greenhouse gas emissions, including:
- Workplace EV charging
- Promoting use of green fleet
- Focus on reducing emissions from council estate and de-gas operational buildings
- Waste / recycling
- Tree planting / improving biodiversity and land management on own property
- Travel planning and parking charges

A few overarching areas stood out:
- the council needs to show **leadership and example** by becoming carbon neutral as a council.
- **procurement / indirect emissions** are not currently measured / reported and this was raised as an area that the council should be looking at
- embedding climate in **decision making** was also a key theme, including carbon assessment of key projects and decisions**.**
- the council's role in **engaging others.**

Principles, approach and other cross-cutting themes

Cross cutting responses (total 137)

| Behaviour Change | Partnership working / Council Leadership | Funding / Resilience & adaptation / Other | Youth/Education / Action focus | Communication / Strategic planning / Embodied Carbon / Central Gov / Fair transi... |

Principles, approach, cross-cutting themes

- Behaviour change – ensuring people understand carbon neutral / zero carbon and are equipped to take action. It came through very strongly that this needs to underpin the strategy and cross-cuts all the other themes.
- Defining carbon neutral / net zero. Define what 'carbon neutral by 2030' means and how it is measured. Provide a clear route map to carbon neutral by 2030.
- Explain / use clearly the different national and local targets
- Report scope 3 emissions. Use consumption-based emissions / embodied carbon, not just territorial. Include all GHGs, not just carbon dioxide and methane.
- Don't gloss over issues (e.g. no new roads) – council needs to lead. Be honest and open about the climate impact, and if a project is necessary explain the reason and how a decision was reached.
- Leadership / focus on actions that can make a difference. e.g. Town and Parish Councils are looking to Wiltshire Council for leadership on what they should be doing. They are wanting specific targets, actions, advice and support e.g. in relation to being a carbon neutral local council, or advice on how to work with the community.
- Green recovery – use the lessons from Covid in reacting to an emergency. Make sure the recovery does not take us backwards.
- A fair transition to net zero was only mentioned by a few, but a meaningful discussion was initiated.

Initiatives and targets to support implementation of the Climate Strategy

As well as asking stakeholders about the priorities that should be included in the Climate Strategy, the Discussion Document and engagement activities also asked whether stakeholders had carbon neutral targets and how their own work programmes would support the Climate Strategy:

> 2. Does the organisation you represent have carbon neutral targets? If so what are they?
> 3. In what way could you support the council's Climate strategy?

In general, where stakeholders had targets, these broadly aligned with the council's own commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030, or the government's 2050 target. It was encouraging how many respondents stated that they already had strategies and measures in place to help achieve carbon neutrality, and that they were keen to work in partnership with each other and with the council to achieve the common goal.

Conclusion

The engagement with stakeholders has provided useful input to the development of the Climate Strategy. The issues raised by stakeholders broadly align with the content of the Discussion Document. However, the results show that stakeholders wish to see certain aspects highlighted or brought out even more strongly, such as the scale and strategic or holistic nature of measures needed.

The responses generally call for clear leadership and a strong approach by the council in relation to the areas of the largest emissions: Transport and Built Environment. In addition, the Natural Environment was a key area, which, although it does not necessarily contribute the greatest proportion of Wiltshire's greenhouse gas emissions, it is perhaps the theme that represents interactions between all other themes and touches on everyone's lives, offering co-benefits alongside carbon neutrality.

Behaviour change and information came through very strongly as an area that underpins all of the delivery themes. It was felt that the Climate Strategy would not be delivered successfully without a significant change in mindset and action of all that live and work in Wiltshire.

Themes that did not receive a lot of attention indicate a lack of awareness of these issues or of certain specific technologies.

Most comments were based on carbon reduction, and there were relatively few mentions of adaptation and resilience, except by the natural environment stakeholders. In particular there seems to be a lack of discussion of the impacts of climate change and the cost to the economy and health.

Despite much discussion on carbon reduction, this tended to focus on looking at low-carbon technologies and solutions, rather than getting to grips with the need to reduce our energy use. This may be implied or taken as read, but we will need to ensure it is a clear priority.

It is interesting that the most popular comments and themes are not necessarily the most impactful in relation to mitigating or adapting to climate change. This will need to be explored through the development and delivery of the climate strategy.

Annex A: Summary of engagement activity and reports.

Engagement by the Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group, June 2019 - November 2020
Substantial research and engagement was carried out by Wiltshire Council's **Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group**. The Task Group met with a range of witnesses, including local authority officers, Executive members, professionals in relevant industries, interest/campaign groups, national bodies and other stakeholders. More details on who was engaged are available in the Task Group's first report (see item 64, paragraph 15) and second report (see items 11, paragraph 14).
Early engagement by Climate Team November 2020 – April 2021
Climate Team in place from Autumn 2020. Initial engagement in Nov 2020 with Wiltshire Council staff
Direct 1 to 1 engagement / meetings with external stakeholders • Businesses – a selection of large Wiltshire businesses, Inspire, Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership • Community and voluntary groups e.g. Salisbury Diocese, Wiltshire Racial Equality Council, Centre for Independent Living, Pound Arts Centre
Internal engagement with Wiltshire Council officers on Climate Strategy Discussion Document, January 2021
Wiltshire Climate Alliance Youth event, 22 February 2021
Regular discussion on emerging strategy via the following groups: Wiltshire Council: • Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group • Fleet strategy • Active Travel working group • Strategic Procurement: Social Value Working Group • Climate Programme Group – Wiltshire Council Directors • Heads of Service Forum Partnerships: • Public Sector Partners working group • Education, Employment and Skills Action Group (EESAG) • Social housing providers
Specific engagement events May 2021
• Sustainable Transport team meeting 4 May 2021 • Wiltshire Housing associations meeting 10 May 2021 • Wiltshire Councillors, as part of Councillor induction programme, 17 May 2021, 44 attended • Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations webinar, 17 May 2021, 12 attended • Town and Parish Councils webinar, 20 May 2021, 52 attended • Natural environment organisations: Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy & Climate Strategy webinar, 25 May 2021, 40 attended • Environment and community interest groups webinar, hosted by Wiltshire Climate Alliance, 26 May 2021, 22 groups, 33 attended
Additional engagement May 2021

Schools: Article in headteachers network and Governors network newsletters.

E-mails to all stakeholders inviting comments on Climate Strategy Discussion Document
- Businesses and Business networks, e.g. Inspire, Wiltshire 100, Business West; Public Sector Partners; Local Resilience Forum; Housing Associations; Community Energy Groups; Neighbourhood Planning Groups (via Town and Parish Councils); utilities companies; Wiltshire Council's large suppliers; Education, Employment and Skills Action Group; survey for all Heads of Service at Wiltshire Council

Key reports that complement our engagement

Recommendations by the **Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group** which were reported as follows:
- GWCE Task Group Report Part One on Energy, Transport and Air Quality, reported to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 29 September 2020
- GWCE Task Group Report Part One on Planning was reported to Environment Select Committee on 13 January 2021

The Executive Responses to the GWCE Task Group recommendations were presented to Environment Select Committee on 13 January 2021 and 3 March 2021.

Wiltshire Local Plan Review consultation 13 January – 9 March 2021 included a paper on 'Addressing Climate Change and Biodiversity Net Gain". The consultation attracted many comments that are relevant to climate change and they will form part of the evidence base for both the Local Plan and the Climate Strategy. A summary of the Local Plan Review consultation results was presented at the Cabinet meeting on 29 June 2021.

National Association of Local Councils (NALC) survey on climate change, which was launched in October 2020. The results for Wiltshire were kindly shared with us by NALC.

Annex B: Summary of stakeholders who engaged with the Climate Strategy development

Public sector
Public service partners Statutory agencies Town / Parish / City Councils Schools

Businesses and supply chain
A selection of Wiltshire businesses Business networks / associations (inc Swindon and Wiltshire Local Economic Partnership (SWLEP), Inspire) Wiltshire Council suppliers

Natural environment & agriculture (in conjunction with Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy)
Natural environment organisations including: Environment Agency, Natural England, Wessex Water, canal and river trusts and partnerships, NFU and representatives of farming networks, Historic England, National Trust, CPRE, AONBs.

Wiltshire Council
GWCE Task Group Councillors A cross section of managers and staff

Community and Voluntary Sector
Local environment groups, e.g. local transition / zero carbon groups (via Wiltshire Climate Alliance) Community Energy Groups Community & Voluntary sector organisations

Transport
Wiltshire Council Sustainable Transport Team, Passenger Transport Team *External transport partners will be engaged fully once the government transport decarbonisation strategy is published and provides a context for partnership working.*

Housing
Housing associations