SUSTAINABLE FUTURES STRATEGY

SURVEY ANALYSIS REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RESPONDENTS

- There were 221 responses to the online survey. Of these 82.8% were responding as members of the general public, 5% as Warwickshire County Council employees, 4.5% as representatives of a local community or voluntary sector organisation and 3.2% as an employee of another public sector organisation.

- A large proportion of respondents who were members of the general public or WCC employees lived in Warwick District (43.4%). Respondents who live in North Warwickshire Borough, Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough and Rugby Borough were under-represented when compared to the Warwickshire population.

- The majority of respondents (73.5%) who were members of the general public or WCC employees rated their knowledge and understanding of climate and sustainability as either 'excellent' or 'good'.

DELIVERY THEMES AND PRINCIPLES

- Of the six key delivery themes proposed in the strategy Energy (65.4%, n=138), Transport (60.7%, n=128) and 'Wildlife, our Natural Environment and Biodiversity' (57.8%, n=122) were the options most likely to feature in respondents' Top 3 priorities.

- The 'Sustainable Communities and Green Economy' theme was ranked in either 5th or 6th position as a priority out of the six themes by more than half of respondents (53.6%).
- The delivery principles selected as the most important by the highest number of respondents were 'address climate change and biodiversity justly and equitably', 'be innovative in our thinking and lead others on the journey' and 'not accept the status quo; we will challenge and inspire'. Each were selected by at least half of respondents. The delivery principle chosen by the least number of respondents as important was 'share our success and learnings'.

Wildlife, our Natural Environment and Biodiversity

- 'Improve the richness and diversity of Warwickshire's habitats, wildlife and landscapes' was the highest rated objective within this delivery theme (rated by 90.0% as very important or important).
- When asked about the main supporter for each of the objectives, district and borough councils were selected by the highest proportion of respondents for five of the seven objectives. For 'support district & borough councils to become leading local planning authorities in embedding habitat regeneration into decision-making', central government was selected the highest proportion of respondents, and for the objective 'support people to better understand the value of the natural environment', community and voluntary groups were selected as the main supporter by the highest proportion of respondents.
- When asked what else respondents would like to see WCC do in relation to natural capital and biodiversity the most frequently mentioned theme was around implementing /enforcing controls (e.g., house building planning policies) that ensure protection/development of the natural environment. Other common themes included supporting environmental education, learning, knowledge and opportunities; and specific examples of biodiversity/natural capital projects and ideas.
- When asked what would be likely to stop respondents from taking a number of listed actions relating to this delivery theme, in terms of 'make use of Warwickshire's country parks and green spaces' and 'switch from using products that contain chemicals that harm the natural environment', the results suggest that over 70% of respondents already do this. However, 38.5% respondents suggested that they have not had the opportunity to 'take part in conservation volunteering work'.
- When asked what would help or encourage respondents to take action to support and maintain natural capital and biodiversity the most frequently mentioned theme was the role taken by central/local government. Other common themes mentioned included: keeping people (better) informed – clear information/advice, public engagement etc.; and grants and funding availability.

- 'Provide low emission public transport options to serve Warwickshire's communities' was the highest rated objective within this delivery theme (rated by 86.4% as very important or important).
- When asked about the main supporter for each of the objectives, the most common answer for four of the objectives was community and voluntary groups, with district and borough being the most common suggestion for 'reduce carbon emissions from Council business travel' and 'reduce carbon emissions from Council fleet'. Central government was the most popular option for 'increase charging points across the County'.
- When asked what else respondents would like to see WCC do in relation to transport emissions, the most frequently mentioned theme was developing a sustainable (active) travel plan (walking, cycling, investing in the transport system). Other common themes mentioned included focus on improving air quality, and the role/impact of new housing developments on the transport network.
- When asked what would be likely to stop respondents from taking a number of listed actions relating to this delivery theme, in terms of 'walking to get around more' and 'reducing car use' the majority of respondents already do this. However, respondents were more likely to say opportunity would stop them using public transport' or 'switching to low or zero emissions vehicles (e.g. electric vehicles, e-cargo bikes, push bikes)'. For 'cycling to get around more' – capability, opportunity and motivation were all listed equally as barriers.
- When asked what would help or encourage respondents to take action to reduce transport emissions the most frequently mentioned theme was around investment in/improvement of public transport system. Other common themes mentioned included importance of electrification /'greener' methods and developing a sustainable (active) travel plan – walking/cycling, investment in public transport system.

Built environment

- 'Work in partnership with Warwickshire's district and boroughs to minimise carbon emissions in existing housing to make sure new housing has net zero emissions' was the highest rated objective within this delivery theme (rated by 85.5% as very important or important). This was closely followed by 'Minimise carbon emissions from any new Council buildings that we either build, acquire or lease' (83.7%).
- When asked about the main supporter for each of the objectives, respondents suggested that district & borough councils should be the main supporter for the implementation of six out of seven of the listed objectives. For 'support local private businesses to become net zero',

businesses were selected by the highest number of respondents followed by district and borough council. Almost a third of respondents also suggested property developers/industry should be the main supporters of 'Work in partnership with Warwickshire's district & boroughs to minimise carbon emissions in existing housing and make sure new housing has net zero emissions'

- When asked what else respondents would like to see WCC do in relation to the built environment, the most common theme was new homes/housing developments to meet environmental standards and regulations. Other frequently mentioned themes included schemes / grants to improve energy efficiency in current homes and buildings; and improving energy efficiency in public buildings/ spaces.

- When asked what would be likely to stop respondents from taking a number of listed actions relating to this delivery theme, across all seven actions, the results suggest that the majority of respondents have already taken action. For 'improve the energy efficiency in any building I'm responsible for through using energy responsibly' and 'improve the energy efficiency in my home through fitting more efficient heating systems', around a third of respondents stated the lack of opportunity has stopped them taking these actions.

- When asked what would help or encourage respondents to take action to reduce emissions from the built environment, the most frequently mentioned theme was (easy) access to grants/funding opportunities. Other common themes included advice/information/reputable installers for energy efficiency schemes (for home improvements), and specific interest in solar panel installation.

Energy

- 'Facilitate the take-up of low carbon energy solutions for residents and communities' was the highest rated objective within this delivery theme (rated by 80.1% as very important or important).

- When asked about the main supporter for each of the objectives, respondents most frequently suggested district and borough councils or the energy industry/organisations.

- When asked what else respondents would like to see WCC do in relation to energy, the most common theme was increasing energy efficiency in the built environment. Other common themes mentioned included specific green energy options / energy alternatives (e.g. solar panels, wind turbines, air source etc), and community based energy schemes/ hubs.

- When asked what would be likely to stop respondents from taking a number of listed actions relating to this delivery theme for the actions 'reducing the amount of energy you use', 'install additional insulation in your home or other buildings' and 'purchase energy from renewable sources' the most common response was this had already been actioned. Opportunity was the barrier mentioned most frequently with regards to installing technologies such as solar power

and installing a heat pump, opportunity was also the second most frequent option mentioned for purchasing energy from renewable sources and installing additional insulation.

- When asked what would help or encourage respondents to take action on energy efficiency and/or move to low carbon energy sources the most frequently mentioned theme was (government) grants/funding for energy related changes. Other common themes mentioned included advice/information/reputable installers for energy efficiency schemes (for home improvements), and responsibility of government to lead.

Resources, waste and circular economy

- Both 'reduce amount of waste per head going to landfill to near zero by 2050' and 'reduce waste from Council buildings' were the highest rated objectives within this delivery theme (rated by 82.8% % as very important or important).

- When asked about the main supporter for each of the objectives, respondents most frequently selected district & borough councils as being the main supporter for the implementation of five out of seven of the listed objectives. For 'support businesses to adopt circular economy principles', businesses were the most frequently selected option and for 'minimise emissions associated with building materials for any construction project', property developers/industry were the most frequently selected option.

- When asked what else respondents would like to see WCC do in relation to resources, waste and circular economy, the most frequently mentioned theme was emphasis on / support for recycling. Other common themes mentioned included issues regarding packaging / single-use plastics, and the role of businesses / commercial waste.

- When asked what would be likely to stop them from taking the listed actions relating to this delivery theme the majority of respondents said they had already taken action relating to reducing consumption, buying locally, reducing the use of single use plastic, reducing food waste and eating more seasonal/locally produced food.

- When asked what would help or encourage respondents to take action to minimise waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use for as long as possible, and support the regeneration and protection of natural resources, the most frequently mentioned theme was around reducing plastic/utilising plastic (packaging alternatives). Other common themes mentioned included support for repairing/reusing, and local/community-led action.

Sustainable communities and green economy

- 'Lead by example by procuring sustainably and supporting the development of a localised green economy' was the highest rated objective within this delivery theme (rated by 81.4% as very important or important).

- When asked about the main supporter for each of the objectives, respondents suggested that district & borough councils should be the main supporter for the implementation of three out of six of the listed objectives. For 'partner and collaborate with community, voluntary and other organisations to progress with our sustainability action plan and to deliver mutual benefits', community and voluntary groups were the most frequently selected option. For both the 'Encourage the business sector to support local development that has low carbon buildings and infrastructure' and 'Encourage an increase in sustainable food production to enable people greater access to local sustainable food sources' central government and businesses were suggested more frequently.

- When asked what else respondents would like to see WCC do in relation to sustainable communities and green economy, the most common theme was 'information/education/promotion'. Other common themes mentioned included comments relating to agriculture/food/farming; and grants/funds/subsidies.

- When asked what would be likely to stop them from taking the listed actions relating to this delivery theme the majority of respondents said they were already taking action. The largest barrier for not taking action was opportunity i.e., not having the resources to action or limited infrastructure to be able to action.

- When asked what would help or encourage respondents to take action to develop new green jobs and technology the most frequently mentioned theme was around government-related actions and policies; and more information and education. Other themes mentioned were support for the green industry and businesses locally, and accessible goods/resources

SIZE AND SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE FUTURES STRATEGY

- 47.6% of 208 respondents thought that the scope of the Sustainable Futures Strategy was 'about right', with just over a third (36.5%, n=76) saying that it was 'not ambitious enough' and a further 15.9% saying the strategy was too ambitious.

- 57.8% of 206 respondents felt that the number of objectives included in the strategy was 'about right', with just over a quarter (27.7%) saying there were too many objectives and a further 14.6% saying that there were 'not enough' objectives.

- When asked 'What else should we be doing?'. The most frequently mentioned theme was 'refocus efforts, be more specific'. Other common themes mentioned included support green infrastructures, buildings, and transport; protect biodiversity/ limit waste; and increase collaboration.

- When asked 'What should we stop doing or scale back?'. The most frequently mentioned theme was to shift focus on short-term goals and quick wins. Other themes mentioned included do not remove any objectives; and specific areas to focus on or not focus on.

CHANGING BEHAVIOURS

- Respondents were asked how they believe people might be persuaded to live in a more sustainable way. Providing honest information and advice was the main theme that emerged. This was followed by respondents stating that legislation and policy including fines and penalties could influence people to change their behaviour and suggesting that financial incentives could be effective.
- When asked to suggest ways to persuade individuals to operate in a more sustainable way the main theme was around introducing legislation and policies. This was followed by calls for more education and advice, and financial support and incentives.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- The most popular methods selected for keeping respondents up to date on progress with the delivery of the strategy was newsletters sent via email followed by updates via the Warwickshire County Council website.
- Fifty-four respondents suggested organisations to work in partnership to deliver the Sustainable Futures Strategy. The most common types of organisations mentioned were climate, environmental and sustainability-related organisations followed by wildlife and nature related organisations and energy-related organisations.
- Twenty-three respondents mentioned programmes, projects or actions related to the Sustainable Futures Strategy that they thought it would be useful to know about. These were commonly relating to Environmental/Sustainability/Climate-related organisations/programmes, or Wildlife and Nature related organisations or programmes but also energy, and food-related projects were referenced.

FUNDING

- Respondents were asked where the funding shortfall should come from in order to deliver on each of the six themes. The results show that, for all six themes, respondents felt that the shortfall in funding should come from central government. Businesses, Warwickshire County Council and district and borough councils was also frequently selected as a key funder.
- Respondents were asked if they would be interested in investing in sustainability in Warwickshire and, if so, through any of the listed methods. 12.7% of all respondents would be interested in investing via buying bonds and 12.2% would be interested in investing in community projects to offset carbon emissions produced elsewhere. Of those respondents who said they would be willing to invest via other methods, options mentioned included community investment and shared ownership schemes around green energy/net zero, and volunteering/time banking.