

Delivering Environmental Ambitions – Denbighshire County Council

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Summary report

Summary

What we reviewed and why

- 1 On 9 July 2019, the Council declared a climate change and ecological emergency. The Council committed to:
 - become net carbon zero by 2030 at the latest;
 - set up a task and finish group to draw up a clear plan within six months to achieve this aim, including ways to enhance biodiversity in Denbighshire;
 - call on the Welsh Government and UK Government to provide assistance and resources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance biodiversity; and
 - work with partners across the public, private and third sector to help solve the climate and ecological emergency.
- 2 We reviewed the Council's arrangements for achieving its goals to be net carbon zero and ecologically positive. The Council published its Climate and Ecological Strategy 2021-22 to 2029-30 in February 2021, and we recognise the Council is at the start of its journey to realise these plans. Our review covers how the Council plans to integrate, embed, measure, and communicate its environmental ambitions.
- 3 We undertook the review during the period December 2020 to June 2021. To inform our work we looked at a wide range of documents; met with key officers and councillors in interviews and focus groups; and issued an electronic survey to all Council employees. We sent the survey to 3,289 people across the Council and received 505 responses, which represents a response rate of 15%.

What we found

- 4 Our review sought to answer the question: **Is the Council making clear progress on delivering its environmental ambitions to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive Council by 2030?**
- 5 Overall, we found that the Council is making excellent progress in embedding its environmental ambitions. We reached this conclusion because:
 - The Council has moved quickly to embed its environmental ambitions in its strategic planning frameworks and has allocated significant resources, but the full cost of the ambition is not yet known.
 - The Council has communicated well with citizens, trying to inform, influence and change behaviours, and more comprehensive stakeholder mapping would further strengthen engagement.
 - The Council has worked hard to communicate and train both councillors and staff, and though understanding is developing well more detail is needed on

what 'ecologically positive' means to the Council and how the ambitions influence everyone's daily work.

- The Council has put baseline measures in place using an established performance framework, reporting over the next year will help the environmental ambitions to embed and the measures to evolve.

Recommendations

Exhibit 1: recommendations

The table below sets out the recommendations that we have identified following this review.

Recommendations	
Embed the ambition further – evaluate assigned resources	
R1	<p>Review the assigned resources for the delivery of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-22 to 2029-30:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amend the wording in the financial section of the Strategy to clarify the total estimated costs to 2030.• Review the identified funding requirements against the performance to indicate if sufficient money has been assigned to the Strategy.• Produce a workforce plan for the Climate and Ecological Change Programme to identify roles and areas of responsibility that may be under resourced.
Communication with citizens – formally analyse key stakeholders and partners	
R2	<p>Complete key analyses to identify key resources in the delivery of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-22 to 2029-30:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertake a formal analysis of existing and potential partners.• Undertake the stakeholder mapping exercise in the Communications Plan.
Communication with councillors and officers – further improve awareness of the environmental ambitions	
R3	<p>Review with service areas how they can clarify the impact of the environmental ambitions on their workforce's daily work.</p>

Recommendations

- R4 Review the findings from the employee survey and focus group work to understand how best to raise awareness of the environmental ambitions across the Council:
- Reinforce the ecologically positive goal alongside the net carbon zero goal.
 - Follow up on the service areas that reported low levels of awareness and not seeing guidance on the environmental ambitions.
 - Produce and communicate a plan to roll out training as wide as possible through the organisation on carbon literacy.
 - Produce and communicate a plan to develop training on the ecological literacy.

Detailed report

The Council is making excellent progress in embedding its environmental ambitions

The Council has moved quickly to embed its environmental ambitions in its strategic planning frameworks and has allocated significant resources, but the full cost of the ambition is not yet known

6 In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- Denbighshire County Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22 contained five corporate priorities, one of which focused on the environment. The aim of the priority was to ensure the environment was both attractive and protected, whilst supporting community wellbeing and economic prosperity. To achieve this aim, the Council was focused on reducing its carbon impact and increasing the use of renewables throughout the county. It also looked to increase the biodiversity value of the county by protecting vulnerable species and habitats for the benefit of wildlife and people who live in Denbighshire.
- the idea to declare the climate and ecological change emergency was originally a councillor initiative, and the subsequent work to create the strategy has been supported by a team of officers and was sponsored by the then Chief Executive.
- building upon, and considerably extending, its existing work on the environment, the Council has now produced a simple, clear vision to be net carbon zero and ecologically positive by 2030. The Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-22 to 2029-30 produced by the Council's Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Working Group explains these two goals very clearly.
- after explaining each goal, the Strategy defines the starting point; clarifies where the Council wants to get to; explains the required changes to Council processes and policies; and lists the actions the Council must take to reach the goal.
- for each goal, the Council has identified 2030 targets (Year 9), along with Year 3 and Year 6 milestones. The Council has also identified annual targets to help it report on and manage performance.
- the Council is proud that it has two main goals, rather than focussing solely on its carbon impact, reflecting the earlier focus the Council placed on the environment in its Corporate Plan 2017-22.
- the Strategy has clear and obvious links to the Well-being of Future Generations legislation. The protection and improvement of the well-being of generations now and in the future are at the very heart of the Strategy.

- the Council's initial plan was for its Corporate Plan Board to monitor progress of the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-22 to 2020-30, as this Board was already responsible for monitoring the priorities in the Corporate Plan 2017-22 via quarterly meetings. However, the Council has moved quickly to create a specific Programme Board for the Strategy which met for the first time in June 2021. This new Programme Board will meet six-weekly to monitor the progress of the individual projects within the Climate and Ecological Change Programme. Both boards will continue to run and monitor the Strategy until the Corporate Plan Board disbands at the end of March 2022. The Council needs to take care that having two boards does not lead to confusion over the short-term.
- the Council established its cross-party Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Working Group after declaring the climate and ecological emergency. The Working Group was supported by a team of officers. The group worked throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, engaging with officers and citizens, to produce the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-22 to 2029-30 which the Council adopted in February 2021. The original intention was for this group to disband once the Strategy had been adopted. The Council states this group will stay in place until the end of the current Council in May 2022 and act as an additional check on compliance and progress of the Strategy and action plan. Adding this third group to the two boards mentioned above further confuses accountability.
- a key recommendation from the working group was to amend the Council's Constitution to include the need to have 'regard to tackle climate and ecological change' in the Principles of Decision Making. The Council has now formally committed to consider climate and ecological change when making all Council decisions. The Council has further embedded this commitment by amending a number of key documents and templates so that officers must explicitly consider environmental impacts when writing reports:
 - the new templates require officers to confirm they have engaged with officers delivering the Climate and Ecological Change Programme and explain how they have considered the two goals in their proposals.
 - the Climate Change Manager intends to review a sample of completed reports to monitor how well authors are considering environmental impacts.
 - one piece of work the Council has not yet completed is to provide guidance for calculating whole-life costings in the Significant Investment Group Business Case template.
 - the Council's Asset Management Strategy expires in 2021. The Council recognises that it needs to align with the corporate ambition to become Net Carbon Zero and introduce a new Asset Disposal and Acquisition policy that supports the Council to retain and/or buy land for carbon absorption and ecological improvement purposes. A new

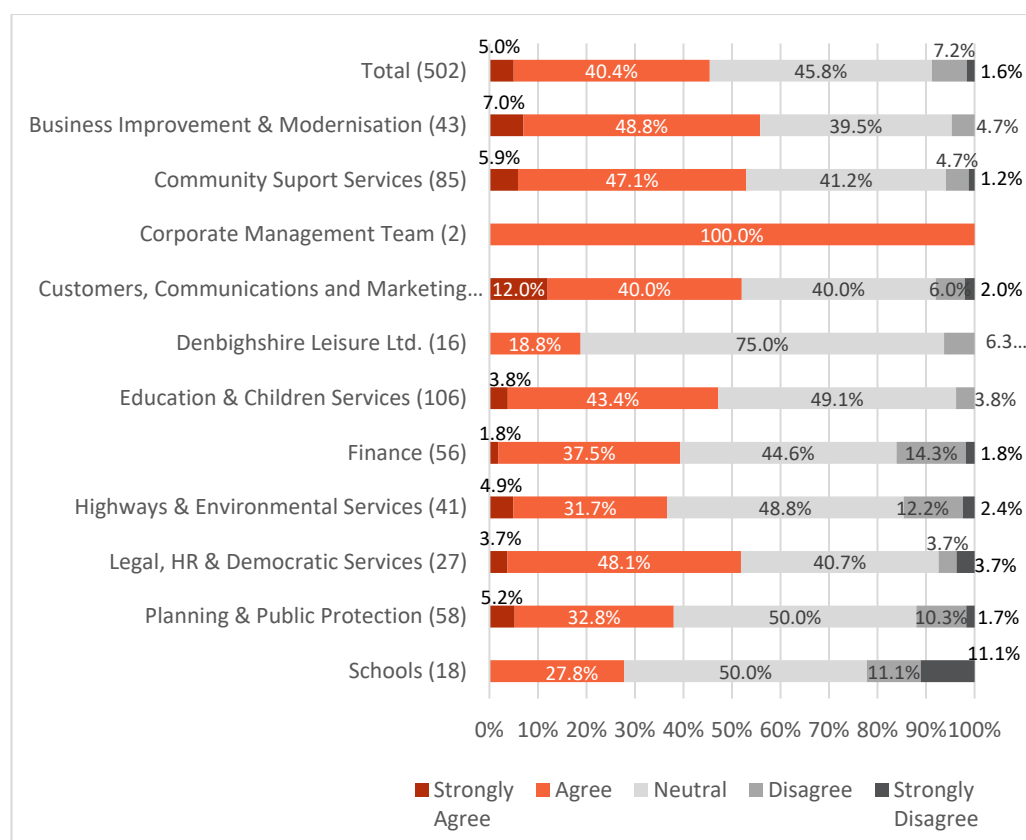
Asset Management Strategy is being drafted which reflects the Council's environmental ambitions.

- the Strategy is not supported by a detailed ten-year costed plan. However, the project team has identified an overall £18 million requirement for the duration of the Strategy. The Council has estimated the cost of the projects it wants to deliver for the next three years at £9 million. It has also estimated the cost for the projects for the remaining six years of the strategy at an additional £9 million.
- the Strategy is not supported by a detailed ten-year costed plan but does outline a total requirement to achieve its aims. It states, 'To deliver this strategy over the next 3 years we think it will cost in the region of £9 million pounds to deliver the projects needed to achieve all that we'd like. We suspect we will need to invest a similar figure in future years leading up to 2030.' We initially interpreted that statement as an overall cost requirement of £18 million (ie a £9 million cost for the projects the Council wants to deliver for the first three years, and an additional £9 million for the remaining six years of the life of the Strategy). However, the Council has told us the total requirement will be at least £27 million as it estimates a cost of at least £9 million for every three years of the ten-year Strategy. To avoid this ambiguity, the Council should make the Strategy as explicit as possible.
- the Council plans to take on prudential borrowing each year along with actively seeking external grant funding to provide the £9 million for the first three years of the Strategy. Whilst the funding for 2021-22 has been approved and provision noted in the MTFP for years 2 and 3 of the Strategy, Council funding for the Programme will be considered in future annual budget-setting discussions. Whilst an overall Programme budget is approved year on year, the individual projects to be delivered that year using the budget allocation are not approved until a business case has been considered via the Council's Significant Investment Group (SIG).
- the Council will need to review funding in relation to its identified performance measures to evaluate if the investment is achieving the intended goals. It has already identified affordability as a key risk in achieving the Strategy.
- officers told us that members of the Biodiversity Team are now in greater demand as more people approach them for advice and comments on reports. Whilst this is seen as a positive step by the Council, there is also a risk for future capacity in this team as demand grows. The team delivering the Climate and Ecological Change Programme is aware that it may be under-resourced with regards to technical expertise in certain areas and has stated it will monitor the situation closely going forwards. We were unable to obtain a workforce plan for delivery of the Climate and Ecological Change Programme which sets out the resources required now and, in the future, to deliver the Strategy.

- we held focus groups and surveyed staff as part of our review. The focus groups and survey told us there is a great deal of pride among councillors and employees in this work, and that creating and delivering this strategy is 'the right thing to do'.
- the focus groups and survey also highlighted varying levels of confidence in achieving the Council's ambitions for the environment.

Exhibit 2: survey response to the statement, 'I am confident the Council will achieve its ambitions for the environment.'

The chart below shows responses to our survey where we asked respondents to say how much they agreed with the statement, 'I am confident the Council will achieve its ambitions for the environment'. They were asked to choose from the following options: 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Neutral', 'Disagree' or 'Strongly disagree'.



Whilst over 45% of the respondents agreed with the statement, nearly 46% chose the 'neutral' option and we are unable to say if this group is confident or not.

The focus groups presented a similar picture when we asked the delegates to score their levels of confidence in the Council achieving its ambitions on a scale of one (not at all confident) to six (very confident). The average score across all focus groups was 3.89

and delegates told us they thought the goals were very ambitious, possibly too stretching; they thought it was difficult to know what would happen with technological developments making the future unclear; and it was too early in the Council's journey towards the 2030 goals to be completely confident. The main concern arising from the focus groups was uncertainly whether the Council had secured adequate resources to achieve the goals. Delegates were unclear if the required people and funding were in place to deliver the Strategy.

The Council has communicated well with citizens, trying to inform, influence and change behaviours, and more comprehensive stakeholder mapping would further strengthen engagement

7 In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- the Council has produced a clear and detailed communications plan to support its Climate and Ecological Change Strategy.
 - the plan contains a range of work, including core messages, 'keeping informed' communications, and 'behaviour change' activity.
 - the plan also contained a section on stakeholder mapping, but this had not been completed. The Council states it has completed informal analysis of who it needs to work with, but it has not completed a formal analysis of partners. Completing these two areas would help the Council understand how to strengthen future engagement.
- the Council has produced a detailed strategy that clearly explains its overall message, its two goals, and how it plans to achieve them.
 - the Strategy is available in different formats (full, youth, easy read) and is supported by a simple, engaging, and clear infographic.
 - the Strategy contains 'Postcards from the Future' which provide an interesting narrative to explain what good would look like if the Council meets its climate and ecological goals to reduce carbon emissions, increase carbon absorption, reduce supply chain carbon emissions, and achieve ecological positivity.
- the Council ran two episodes of public engagement to inform and shape its response to the declaration of the climate and ecological emergency. The second period took place during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - the first event was in January-February 2020 to collect feedback on the net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals, including a public engagement meeting in February 2020.
 - during the first period of engagement in January and February 2020, the Council asked for feedback on the net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals. The Council also asked for ideas on how it could achieve the goals by 2020. This period of consultation included a public engagement meeting in February 2020. The Council formed

an 'ideas bank' from the feedback it collected and prioritised them into the biggest and easiest wins on carbon reduction, increasing carbon sequestration, and improving biodiversity.

- the second period of engagement in November and December 2020 focused on collecting feedback on the draft Strategy. The Council held an online public meeting in November 2020 for people to learn more about the strategy and to provide verbal feedback and ask questions. Members of the public were able to complete an online survey at these sessions to give their feedback. This feedback was used to shape the final Strategy.
- the Council set up a sub-group of its 'Y Panel' consultation and engagement hub to focus on Climate Change. It collected e-mail addresses to compile a 'green mailing list' to keep all interested people informed about progress in delivering the two goals and the development of the Strategy.
- the Council is aware that raising awareness of certain schemes to help meet its environmental goals is difficult. For example, despite sending out communications regarding 'No Mow May' residents do not always understand why grass verges are now maintained in a different way. Consequently, residents complain to local councillors to get grass verges mown. The Council recognises that changing behaviour will take time and it will continue to address such issues through its communication activity.

The Council has worked hard to communicate and train both councillors and staff, and though understanding is developing well more detail is needed on what 'ecologically positive' means to the Council and how the ambitions influence everyone's daily work

8 In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- the Council has consulted with officers and councillors to gather ideas and seek feedback.
 - during the summer of 2020, the Council held virtual workshops with each service area to collect ideas for amending policies, projects, and processes to support the ambitions to become net carbon zero and ecologically positive. These workshops gave the Climate Change Manager the opportunity to share information with service teams about the work that she was overseeing. She gave a presentation at the start of each of these workshops which clearly explained the crisis and declaration of emergency, the two goals and their starting points, the timeline, and what the Council hoped to achieve. These workshops built on the ideas generated by the public during the January-February 2020 engagement events to help inform the draft strategy.

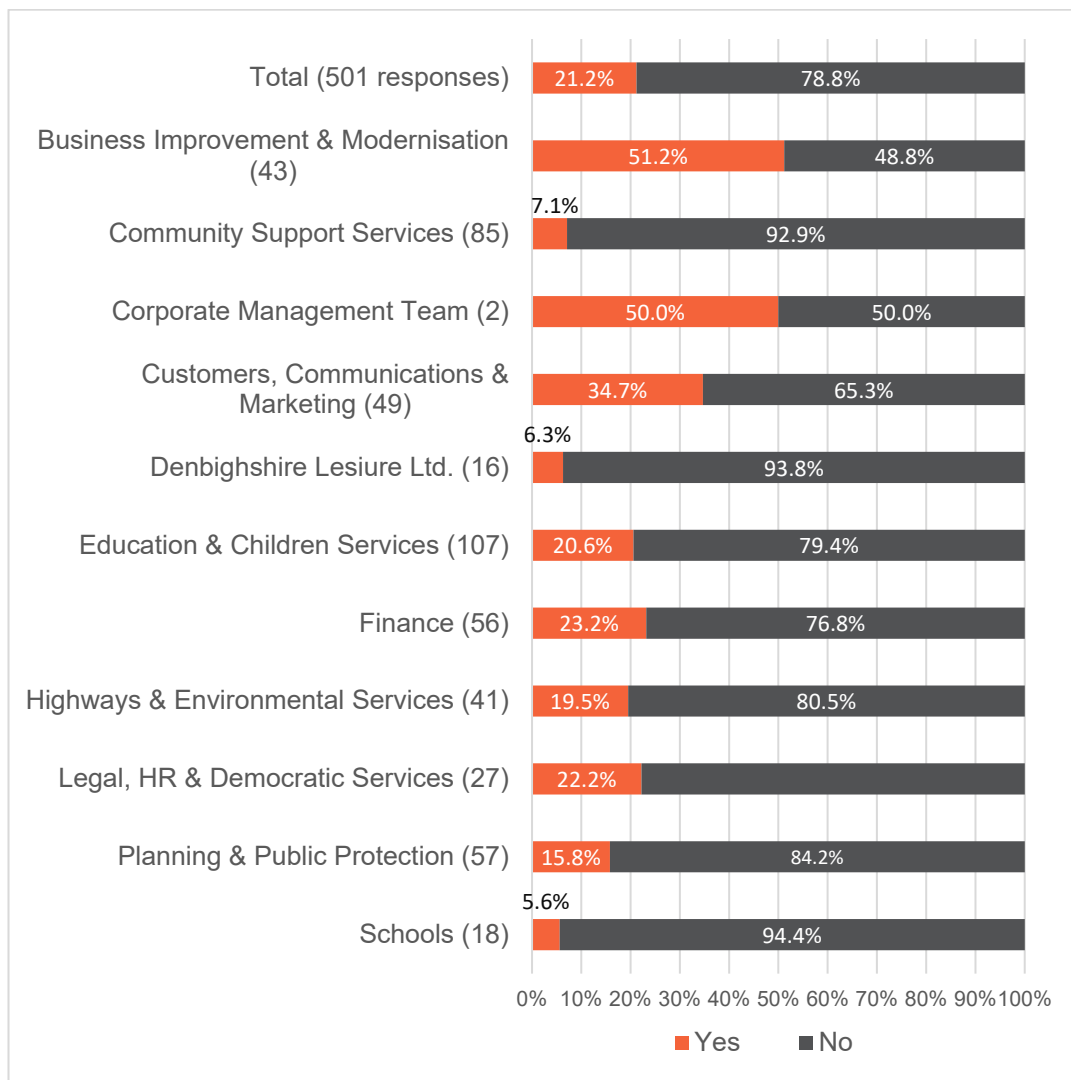
- all Council staff were invited to comment on the draft Strategy as part of the overall consultation exercise. The Climate Change Manager e-mailed all middle managers to encourage their teams to engage with the consultation.
- during September and October 2020, the Council collected ideas from councillors via discussions it held at each Member Area Group meeting.
- the Council has used a wide range of methods to communicate its ambitions.
 - the Council has created a series of Climate Change pages on its website, which it updates regularly. These pages provide access to the Strategy, clearly explain the issues of climate and ecological change, and describe in detail what the Council is doing to reduce the impacts.
 - the three main methods of communication quoted by employees in our survey were the ‘Denbighshire Today’ daily e-mails, the Linc New stories, and the Council website.
- the Council also plans to set up a Climate Advocacy Staff Group, but it has paused this work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council believes the group would only be effective when staff are working in offices to cascade key messages and complete follow-up activity. The Council will review the need for this group as it implements its ‘New Way of Working’ approach.
- the Council has provided detailed training on carbon literacy to approximately 200 people and is now looking at replicating this training to cover the ecologically positive goal. There are opportunities to expand training further throughout the organisation:
 - the Council has provided carbon literacy training through the Association for Public Sector Excellence (APSE) for councillors, directors, heads of service, senior managers, and specifically identified key officers (eg Chairs of Governors in schools). The training has been well attended and has received positive feedback.
 - the Climate Change Manager is currently investigating a similar training solution for ecological literacy.
 - the Council is currently creating an e-learning module for those employees who did not attend the APSE course on carbon literacy. However, the Council does not have any current plans to develop ‘toolbox talks’ to cascade training on the two goals down through the organisation.
 - our survey told us that only 21% of the respondents had received training on the Council’s ambitions for the environment. When asked what training they had received, the vast majority of respondents replied, ‘APSE Carbon Literacy Training’. A small number of

respondents also mentioned presentations by officers involved in the delivery of the Climate and Ecological Change Programme.

- our work with the focus groups painted a positive picture on the training provided by the Council. Sixty-seven percent of all the delegates across all focus groups agreed with the statement, 'I have been trained on how to embed the Council's environmental ambitions in my work.'

Exhibit 3: survey responses to the question, 'Have you received training on the Council's ambitions for the environment?'

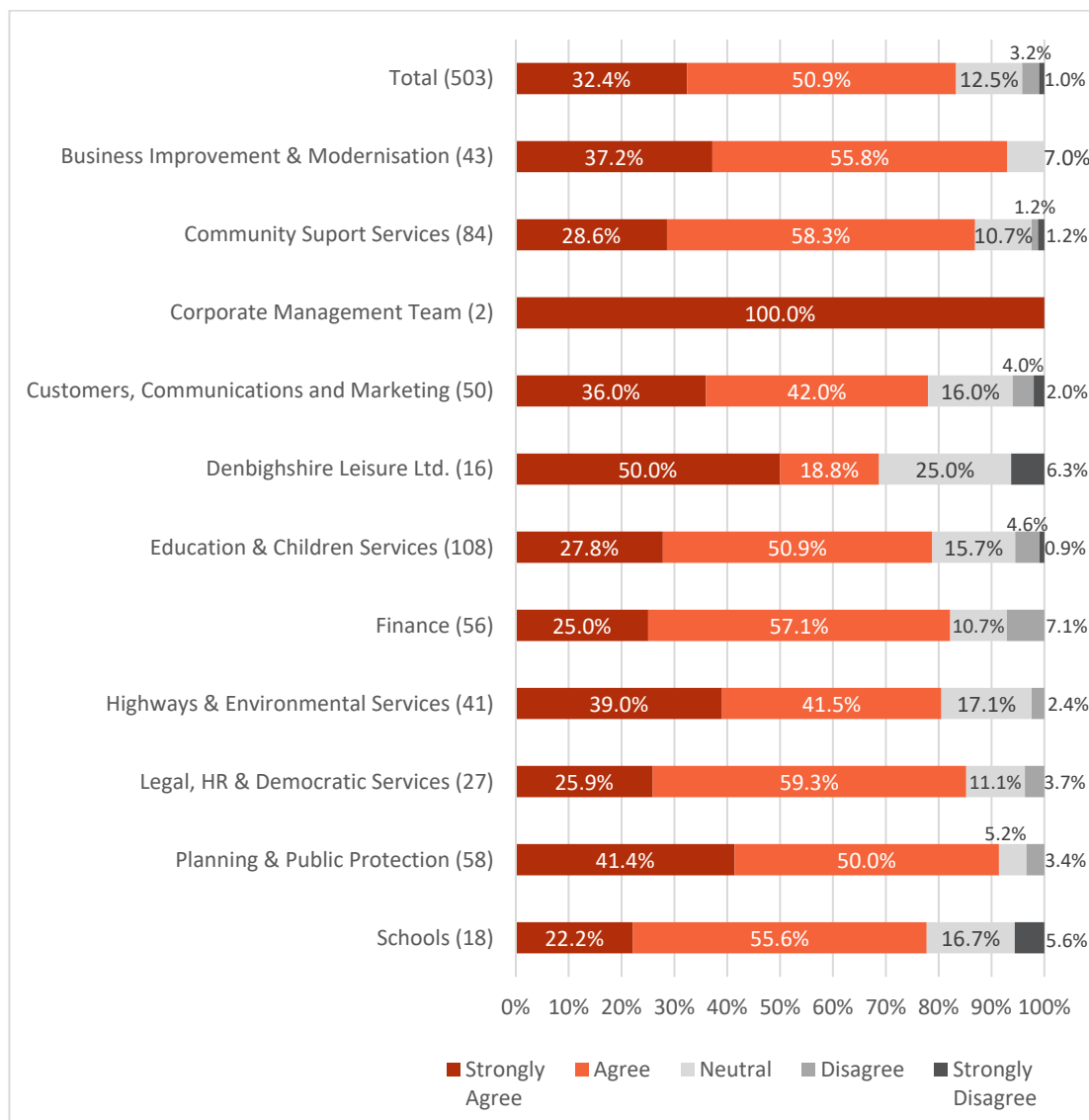
The chart below shows responses to our survey where we asked respondents to answer the question, 'Have you received training on the Council's ambitions for the environment?'. They were asked to choose from the following options: 'Yes' or 'No'.



- Our survey results showed low levels of training across all service areas.
- The Council has made people aware of its ambitions:
 - We asked survey respondents if they were aware of the Council's ambition to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive organisation. We found 84% of all respondents were aware of the ambition.

Exhibit 4: Survey responses to the statement, ‘I understand the Council’s ambition to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive organisation.’

The chart below shows responses to our survey where we asked respondents to say how much they agreed with the statement, ‘I understand the Council’s ambition to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive organisation’. They were asked to choose from the following options: ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Neutral’, ‘Disagree’ or ‘Strongly disagree’.



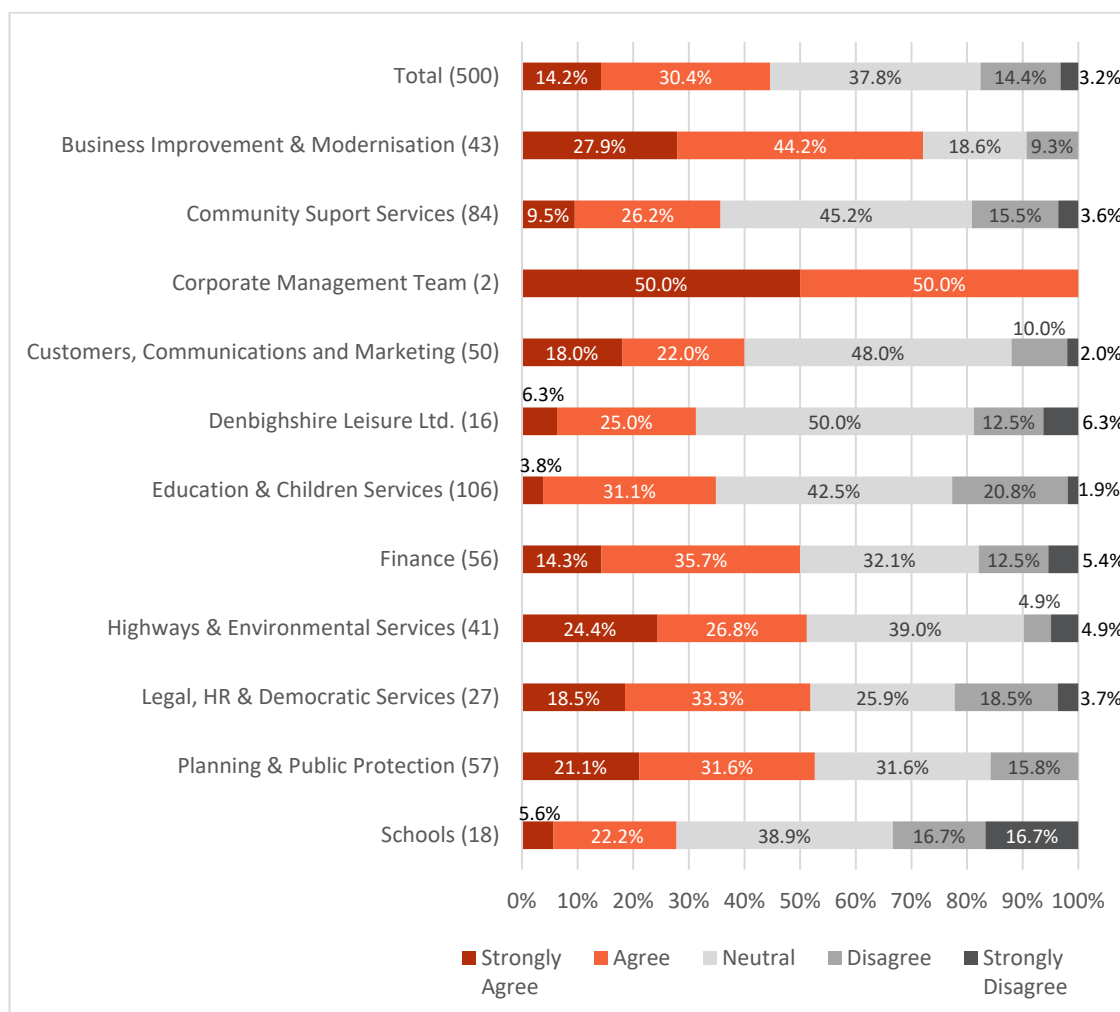
- Over 83% of all respondents agreed with the statement, ‘I understand the Council’s ambition to become a net carbon zero and ecologically positive organisation.’
- Our work with the focus groups told us that officers and councillors understood the Council’s ambitions. We asked the delegates in the focus groups to rate how well they understood the Council’s ambitions

for the environment on a scale of one (not at all) to six (very clearly). The average score across all of the focus groups was 4.55.

- However, whilst those who attended the focus groups were able to provide accurate definitions for the ‘net carbon zero goal’, they made very little reference to the ‘ecologically positive’ goal. This may reflect the earlier point that ‘ecologically positive’ (or biodiversity or species richness as defined by the Council) is a more difficult concept for people to understand. This may also be a result of the Council not yet providing training on this topic (it has provided training on carbon literacy). Being ecologically positive is also a newer concept within the Council than becoming net carbon zero.
- Despite being aware of and understanding the ambitions, there was a mixed picture regarding how clear people were on how the ambitions impact their daily work. The Council has recognised this issue and agrees there is further work to do in making this connection for the wider employee base.

Exhibit 5: Survey responses to the statement, 'I am clear how the Council's ambitions for the environment impact my work.'

The chart below shows responses to our survey where we asked respondents to say how much they agreed with the statement, 'I am clear how the Council's ambitions for the environment impact my work'. They were asked to choose from the following options: 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Neutral', 'Disagree' or 'Strongly disagree'.

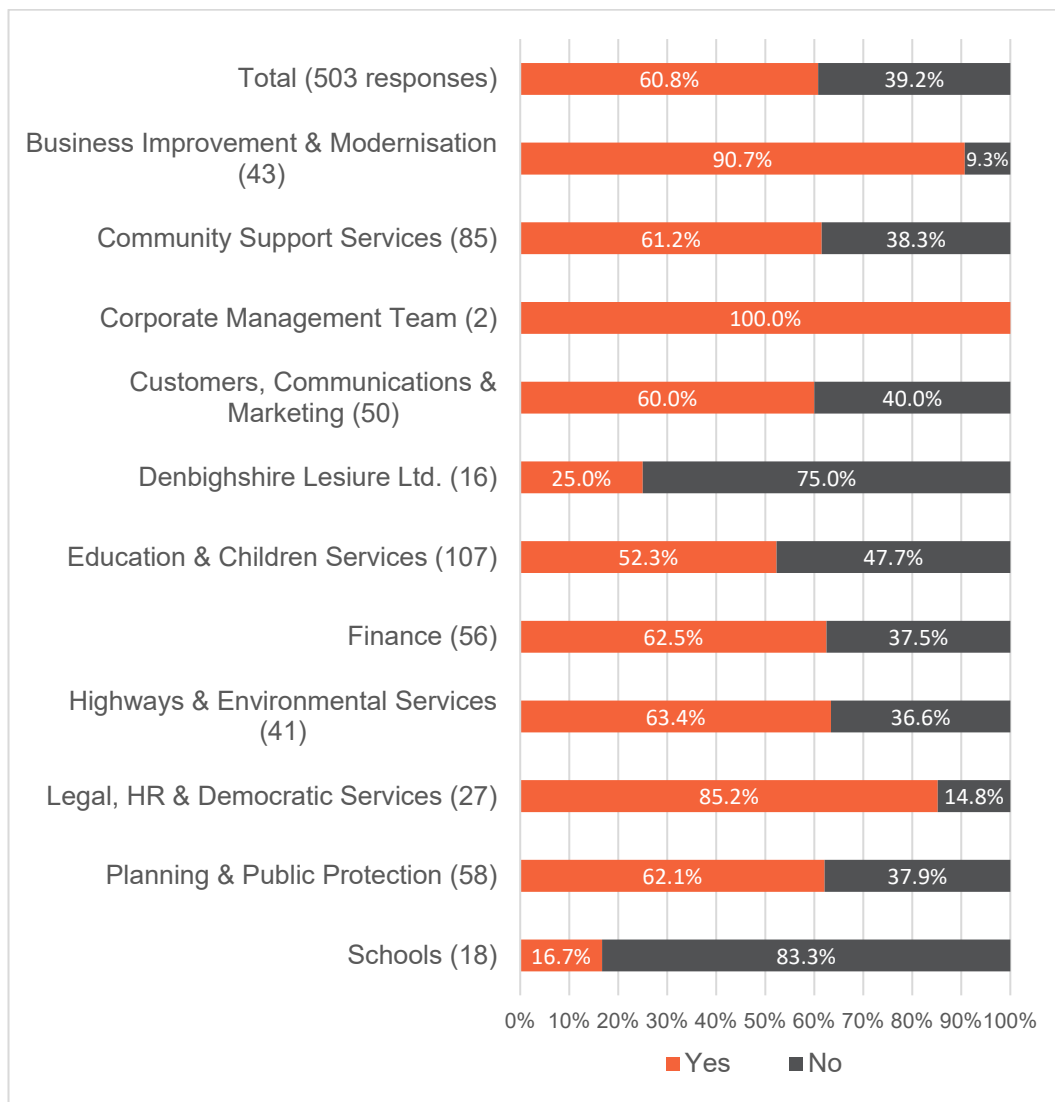


- Approximately 44% of all respondents agreed with the statement, 'I am clear on how the Council's ambitions for the environment impacts/affects my work.'
- In contrast to this, the focus groups told us they understood how the ambitions would impact their work. We asked the delegates to rate how well they understood how the Council's ambitions would impact their work on a scale of one (not at all) to six (very clearly). The average score across all of the focus groups was 4.68.

- The focus groups also spoke positively about guidance to help individuals understand how the ambitions would impact their work. Over 70% of the delegates across all focus groups agreed with the statement, 'There is clear guidance available to help me understand how the Council's environmental ambitions impact my work.'
- Our survey told us that approximately 61% of the respondents had seen or received information on the Council's ambitions for the environment.

Exhibit 6: survey responses to the question, 'Have you seen or received any information on the Council's ambitions for the environment?'

The chart below shows responses to our survey where we asked respondents to answer the question, 'Have you seen or received any information on the Council's ambitions for the environment?'. They were asked to choose from the following options: 'Yes' or 'No'.



- There were specific service areas who stated they had not seen or received any information. In particular, the following service areas reported lower levels of information provision – Schools; Denbighshire Leisure Limited; Education and Children Services; and Customers, Communications and Marketing.
- Our work with the focus groups told us that the majority of delegates thought the Council had communicated the ambition clearly. Over 85% of the delegates across all focus groups agreed with the statement, ‘There has been clear communication on the Council’s environmental ambition which explained everything I need to know.’

The Council has put baseline measures in place using an established performance framework, reporting over the next year will help the environmental ambitions to embed and the measures to evolve

9 In reaching this conclusion we found that:

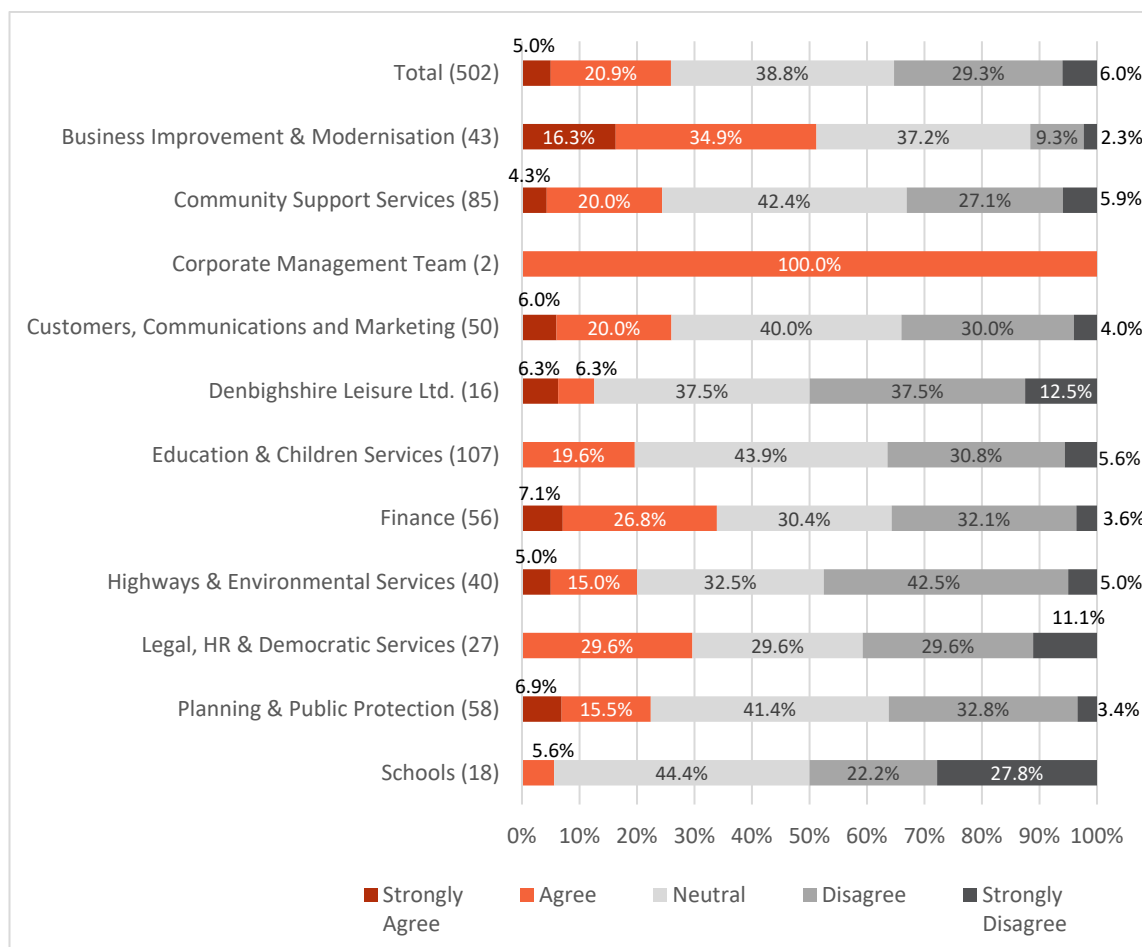
- in its Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-22 to 2029-30, the Council clearly sets out the baseline data it has established for its net carbon zero and ecologically positive goals. The Strategy provides 2019-20 data as a baseline as this is the year of information available before the first year of strategy delivery in 2021-22.
- the Strategy clearly explains each goal and its starting point. It goes on to provide targets for Year 3, Year 6, and Year 9. The Council’s performance management report also contains annual figures to allow it to monitor progress.
- the Council has committed to completing a formal review of its Strategy every three years up to 2030. It has also stated it will review the targets in the Strategy as new technology comes along.
- the Council is using the established Welsh Government method for calculating and reporting on its carbon impact but had to create its own method for its ecologically positive goal. There was no common method to measure its ecology, but as the Council had assigned equal importance to its two climate change goals it has created its own methodology for measuring biodiversity (species richness).
- being ‘ecologically positive’ is a potentially difficult concept for people to understand, so the Council has focused on biodiversity, or species richness, and provided clear explanations of what this means in practice. Managers told us that other councils have been in contact with them to learn more about its innovative approach.
- every Service Business Plan for 2021-22 contains two performance measures on carbon emissions – carbon tonnage emitted by the service through business travel and carbon tonnage emitted through staff

commuting. The Council had initially included a third measure on the carbon tonnage emitted by the service through its supply chain, but experienced difficulties in obtaining this data at the service level. As a result, the performance measure for supply chain emissions will only be reported at a Council-wide level. The first year of reporting on these measures will be 2021-22 and the report is due by June each year.

- the Strategy explicitly outlines how the Council will monitor the progress of the goals.
 - the Corporate Plan Board will continue to meet quarterly and have oversight of the progress of the Strategy, until it disbands at the end of the Corporate Plan on 31 March 2022.
 - as the original work was a Council member initiative, the Council did not set up a Programme Board at the very start. It created a cross-party task and finish group supported by Council officers to finalise the goals and draft the Strategy.
 - the Council has since established a Programme Board for Climate and Ecological Change which first met on 14 June 2021. This Board will meet every six weeks to oversee the performance and delivery of the programme and its projects.
 - the Programme Board produces a quarterly highlight report for the Corporate Plan Board.
 - the Programme Board receives and reviews a highlight report from the Climate Change Manager on the performance of each workstream (financial standing, RAG-rated performance indicators, expected activity, and risks and issues).
 - in its first meeting in June 2021, the Programme Board identified workstream leads for all the projects and tasked them with keeping a track of progress and highlighting any projects that will not meet deadlines and/or targets.
- to monitor performance, the Council has uploaded all of the actions from the Strategy onto its performance management system. The Climate Change Manager will review progress against the actions when the Council produces the Quarter 1 2021-22 performance report for the first time in August 2021.
- our survey told us there was a mixed understanding of how the Council would monitor progress.

Exhibit 7: survey responses to the statement, 'I am clear on how the Council will measure performance in achieving its ambitions for the environment.'

The chart below shows responses to our survey where we asked respondents to say how much they agreed with the statement, 'I am clear on how the Council will measure performance in achieving its ambitions for the environment'. They were asked to choose from the following options: 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Neutral', 'Disagree' or 'Strongly disagree'.



- Approximately 26% of respondents agreed with the statement. Over 35% of respondents disagreed with the statement.
- The focus groups also told us the majority of delegates thought the Council had created a reporting framework with performance targets in place. However, the same work told us there was a mixed understanding of how progress would be measured and monitored:
 - 64% of the delegates across all of our focus groups agreed with the statement, 'There are clear performance measures in place to show how the Council's ambitions for the environment are progressing'. 18% disagreed with the statement and a further 18% selected the 'Don't Know' option.

- 59% of the delegates across all of our focus groups agreed with the statement, ‘There is a clear reporting framework in place for the Council’s environmental ambitions and its actions.’ 17% disagreed and 24% selected the ‘Don’t Know’ option.
- The lack of awareness may be due to lack of communication about how performance will be monitored or may be because the first round of results for Quarter 1 2021-22 has not been published yet. The Climate Change Manager told us she plans to closely review the Quarter 1 results as soon as they become available in August-September 2021.
- In addition to its net carbon zero goal, the Council has a further target to reduce the total carbon emitted from its supply chain by 35% (from its 2019-20 baseline) by 31 March 2030. The aim is to reduce the carbon emitted from the supply chain by supporting local suppliers to be low carbon, whilst maximising local community benefits. To deliver this, the officers leading on the Climate and Ecological Change Programme are working with the Council’s Procurement Team to develop a new Procurement Strategy which considers climate change and helps get suppliers in a position to reduce their carbon footprints. Further work includes amending the tender evaluation process; providing guidance, workshops, and case study examples to suppliers; reviewing the Council’s purchasing rules; and training procurement officers.
- The Council is aware of limitations with the current data collection method but believes it is more important to have a measure in place and take action, than to spend time perfecting the approach. For example:
 - There is no agreed methodology for monitoring carbon sequestration on a tree-by-tree level. The Welsh Government methodology works on a habitat-by-habitat basis where one large tree on an estate would not be counted.
 - The Council manages several specific habitats to support and conserve rare species. These habitats are managed in a focused way to support the rare species. These habitats may support a lower species diversity than other more common habitats, but the plant and animal communities which they do support are often rare and specialised and can be found nowhere else in Denbighshire.



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