



# Corporate Strategy 2022-27 Consultation Feedback Report



September 2022



## 35

Responses received  
(As at 23 September)



## 74%

**Agree or strongly agree** with the Boosting the Economy objective  
(8% disagree or strongly disagree)

## 74%

**Agree or strongly agree** with the Creating Caring and Healthy Communities objective  
(9% disagree or strongly disagree)



## 69%

**Agree or strongly agree** with the Providing the Best Start in Life objective  
(6% disagree or strongly disagree)

## 66%

**Agree or strongly agree** with the Creating Sustainable, Greener and Well-connected Communities objective  
(3% disagree or strongly disagree)



## 29

Comments received in relation to the impact on the Welsh language. The main theme was the need for a **greater emphasis on promoting Welsh**

### Key themes from the written comments:

**SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES, SME's AND NEW START-UPS**

**DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY FOR ALL, NOT JUST A PERCENTAGE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT FROM DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**LEISURE FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNGER PEOPLE**

**ACTIVE TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES PARTICULARLY WALKING AND CYCLING**

**CHALLENGES FACING PROVISION OF SOCIAL CARE**

**RURAL DEPRIVATION AND FUNDED CHILDCARE**

**LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE**

**CONNECTING COMMUNITIES VIA ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES**

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS AND HIGH COSTS**



**Consultation undertaken between 24<sup>th</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

The survey was available online via the Council's website and advertised through social media

A total of 35 responses were received

The full results and the equalities monitoring information are contained on the following pages

## Background

Between 24<sup>th</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022, Ceredigion County Council consulted with residents on its Draft Corporate Strategy 2022-27.

Following the Local Elections in May, a new Corporate Strategy was needed to set out the priorities of the Council for the next five years. The Corporate Strategy sets out the Council’s priorities called Corporate Well-Being Objectives, along with its ambitions and the steps to achieve these over the next five years. The Strategy informs everything the Council does and is based on a wide-ranging review of evidence and needs-assessments. Residents’ views were sought to help guide future opportunities to improve outcomes for all residents and communities in Ceredigion.

The survey was made available online via the Council’s website and advertised through social media. Printed copies and easy read versions were available on request.

## Response Rate

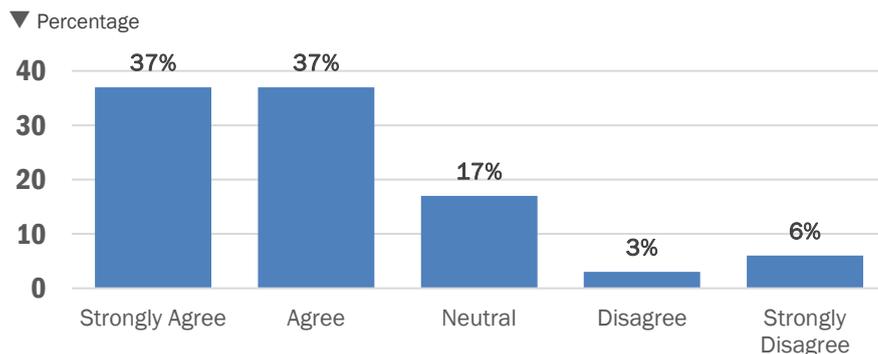
As at 23<sup>rd</sup> September, there were a total of 35 responses to the Consultation and 145 written comments. Consultation responses on Council Strategies and Policies tend to be fewer but more detailed. On average respondents took 14mins 30 seconds to complete the survey. The pages that follow provide a summary of the findings.

## Main Findings

**Q1: Do you agree or disagree with the ambitions and steps for the “Boosting the economy, supporting businesses and enabling employment” objective?**

Overall, the majority of respondents (74%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the ambitions and steps for the Boosting the Economy objective. There were also a further 17% or 6 responses that neither agreed nor disagreed. A further 9% or 3 respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the objective, although the reasons for this were very varied – one was due to the need for more affordable housing, another was due to the need to support the tourism industry and the remaining respondent felt strongly that protecting the natural environment should feature strongly within the Boosting the Economy objective.

### **Q1. Do you agree or disagree with the ambitions and steps for the “Boosting the economy, supporting businesses and enabling employment” objective?**



## Q2: Can you suggest any gaps or improvements?

There were a variety of ideas presented as to how this objective could be strengthened. The most prevalent of these was support for local and small businesses. Although this does feature in the draft Corporate Strategy, there were eight comments highlighting its importance. Some suggested lower business rates and some pointed to specifically supporting the tourism industry by reducing parking charges and super-boosting market towns. Others stressed the importance of helping new start-ups in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic which had hit some local businesses hard, while others felt that SMEs (Small and Medium Sized Enterprises) should be supported and promoted as they are what helps to give the County and its towns its unique feel and characteristic.

Other identified improvements were for the environment to feature in the objective, i.e. for businesses and developers to consider the impact on the natural environment and to prioritise low carbon aims and sustainability. There was one comment in relation to the commitments to improve digital connectivity in the County, which stressed that achieving decent broadband should apply to *all* households and businesses and not be satisfied with a proportion of properties achieving this standard. They drew on their own experience trying to run a business but struggling to get connected. A sample of these comments are shown in the table below.

Sample Comments	
"SMEs should be supported and promoted - they give Ceredigion's unique feel and characteristic."	"Help for early start-up companies. Mine was decimated due to covid and I have not been able to start again due to lack of funding help to get up and running again."
"Base on low carbon aims and sustainability - put the cohesiveness of local communities first."	"Decent broadband for ALL!!! Not a percentage. We live 150 yards from a cabinet but cannot get connected as there are not enough takers in the area. It would cost hundreds of pounds to do privately!! Yet we run a small business and need decent internet."

## Q3: Are there any that you disagree with, and if so why?

There were three respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the ambitions and steps for this objective. Of these three, there were very different reasons provided as to why they disagreed and what should be amended in the draft Corporate Strategy. One highlighted the urgent need for affordable housing for working people, and another focused on tourism and the impact of the 182 day rule for the qualification of business rates, fearing that this will have a negative impact on the industry and businesses in this sector. The third respondent focused on the environmental impact of boosting the economy and that it does not feature strongly enough in this Objective. Their view is that the natural environment should play a much greater role in this objective and that developers and businesses consider the effects on our environment. These views are shown in the table overleaf.

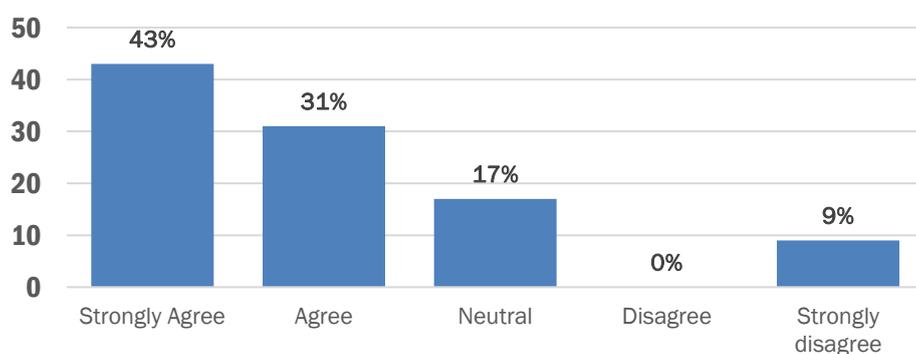
Sample Comments	
"Affordable housing for working people, with supportive housing department who actually listen and carry out home or face to face visits."	"Yet again the natural environment is apparently not of any importance. Move it to a position that will force entrepreneurs and economists to consider the effects on our environment. All of them. Pollution and development should not be allowed to run roughshod over the environment."
"The 182-day rule is ridiculous as not many people want to travel in the winter for holidays. With the cost of fuel escalating we cannot charge more as this will be out of everybody's budget."	

#### Q4: Do you agree or disagree with the ambitions and steps for the "Creating caring and healthy communities" objective?

The Creating Caring and Healthy Communities objective received the strongest support from respondents with 43% strongly agreeing and a further 31% agreeing with the ambitions and steps to deliver the objective, which is 74% supportive overall. Like the Boosting the economy objective there were 17% or 6 responses that were neither supportive nor against. However, there were also 3 responses that strongly disagreed with this objective, citing lack of facilities for younger people, the need to create opportunities in food production (not meat and dairy), water quality and green energy for younger people, and the vacancies in the carers paid workforce as the reasons for this.

#### Q4. Do you agree or disagree with the ambitions and steps for the "Creating caring and healthy communities" objective?

▼ Percentage



#### Q5: Can you suggest any gaps or improvements?

There were a variety of different views expressed as to how this objective could be improved. Some respondents argued strongly for better provision of active travel routes and infrastructure throughout the County to help create healthy communities, while others highlighted the challenges in the provision of social care, such as the number of vacancies in the sector both locally and nationally. One highlighted the need for greater support for people living with dementia, while another focused on local democracy and suggested that greater opportunities to influence decisions in their local area was needed. (Please note that increasing the opportunities for active travel is a key part of the Council's ambitions in the draft Strategy on page 33). A sample of these comments are listed in the table overleaf.

Sample Comments	
"Healthy communities refers to all ages yet sporting provision and opportunities for all are being taken away from our younger generation, for example a 3G pitch for football as opposed to multi surface. A multi surface is inclusive and support an array of sports, 3G is football only therefore not promoting healthy communities only healthy football players."	"Put communities and the wellbeing of residents first - residents should be able to walk and cycle directly from A to B - not currently possible as villages and towns are not joined up. Invest in a post and apply Netherlands cycle planning to Ceredigion - make it a green and sustainable destination - to genuinely make it a caring and healthy community".
	"There is so little support available for the elderly those living with dementia - and what is it not joined up and promoted effectively."

### Q6: Are there any that you disagree with, and if so why?

There were three respondents who strongly disagreed with this objective, and as in the previous Boosting the economy objective there were three very different reasons provided. The first concerned the lack of leisure facilities particularly for younger people, explaining that they felt sporting facilities were actually being reduced and that facilities should be available for *all* sports and activities. The second highlighted the value of small but close communities and the opportunity for younger people to enter into careers in food production (but not meat and dairy), water quality and green energy production. They suggested that this should feature prominently in the education of Ceredigion's pupils.

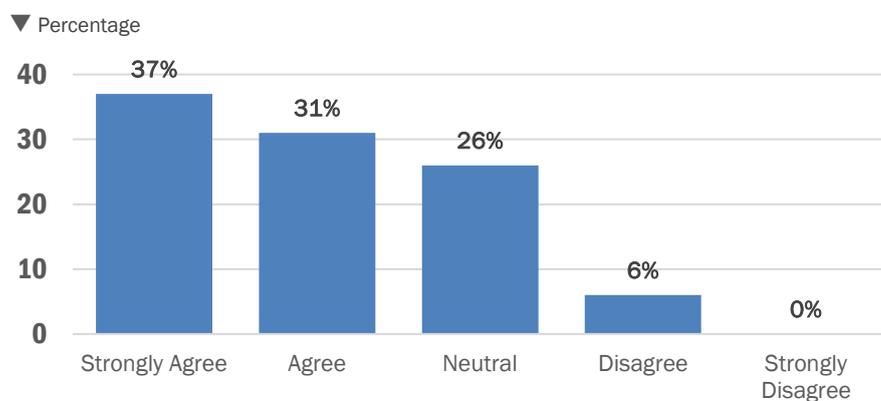
The third respondent highlighted one of the key challenges in the provision of social care – the number of vacancies in the sector and questioned the Council's approach, arguing that looking to families and volunteers to provide care is a flawed approach given there are many vacancies. Another respondent who actually agreed overall with the ambitions and steps for this objective raised the issue of homelessness and that more needs to be done to help them. They highlighted that Council policies might be the place to start to help them qualify for housing. A sample of these comments are shown in the table below.

Sample Comments	
"Healthy communities refers to all ages yet sporting provision and opportunities for all are being taken away from our younger generation, for example a 3G pitch for football as opposed to multi surface. A multi surface is inclusive and support an array of sports, 3G is football only therefore not promoting healthy communities only healthy football players."	"Go back to small, local schools where the value of small scale communities can be inculcated. Careers in food production (not meat and dairy), water quality and green energy production should be prominent in the education of our youngest pupils".
"Looking towards family and volunteers to provide care when there are so many vacancies in the carers paid workforce highlights a flawed ideology. This is leaving people and families already vulnerable in dangerous and damaging circumstances. It actively goes against prudent health care."	"I would challenge that we are talking about creating caring and healthy communities and yet we have so many homeless on the prom who aren't being helped because [council] policies put too high a demand on them just to qualify for housing. They are vulnerable and at risk adults who can't handle these things and need to be eased into it."

### Q7. Do you agree or disagree with the ambitions and steps for the “Providing the best start in life and enabling learning at all ages” objective?

The majority of respondents (24 respondents or 69%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the ‘Providing the best start in life and enabling learning at all ages’ well-being objective and the steps to deliver it. However, over a quarter of respondents (9 respondents or 26%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the Corporate Well-being Objective. Analysing the responses further, highlighted that half of those that selected “neither agree not disagree” did not have an opinion on the matter (i.e., the hidden “don’t know”), whilst the other half had a neutral opinion (i.e., the respondent was between agreeing and disagreeing). A very small percentage of respondents (2 respondents or 6%) disagreed, whilst none of the respondents strongly disagreed with the ambitions and steps that were set out in the third Corporate Well-being Objective.

#### Q7. Do you agree or disagree with the ambitions and steps for the “Providing the best start in life and enabling learning at all ages” objective?



### Q8. Can you suggest any gaps or improvements?

Sixteen respondents (46%) highlighted gaps and/or suggested improvements to the third Corporate Well-being Objective. However, the responses were varied, with no clear trends. Suggestions on improvements and gaps ranged from providing learning opportunities for older people that are not tailored towards employment, to ensuring that all children have access to three healthy meals per day. A number of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed with the initial question used this as an opportunity to qualify their decision, for example, through expressing their support for the ambition to ensure purposeful and resilient school infrastructure. A selection of the comments is contained in the table below.

Sample Comments	
<p>"I strongly agree with the efforts to obtain funding for a new build at Ysgol Penglais. In my opinion this is imperative for future pupils to achieve their educational potential. Penglais is without a doubt an aging building that requires a replacement to keep up with modern education. The school does it's upmost to provide all pupils with facilities to carry out their studies however, the property is becoming unfit for purpose."</p>	<p>"Ensure all ages have provision and opportunities. Promote health and wellbeing across the County, rather than reduce services. Wellbeing hubs could offer specific clubs e.g., netball in a County where there is only 1 junior club."</p>

"I know that Ceredigion supports education really well. Please continue to do so."

"What about adults who wish to learn Welsh? If you want more Welsh speakers there needs to be FREE classes provided, or schemes set up in community centres / pubs / or cafes etc to encourage social interaction alongside conversation in Welsh with native speakers."

### Q9: Are there any that you disagree with, and if so why?

Overall, three survey participants provided an answer to question nine: whether they disagreed with the steps and ambitions set out in the Corporate Well-being Objective - Providing the best start in life and enabling learning at all ages. One respondent agreed with the Corporate Well-being Objective but felt that the ambitions and steps were unachievable in practice, particularly in relation to understanding rural deprivation and funded childcare. The remaining two respondents disagreed with specific ambitions and steps, however, they did so for different reasons. One respondent was concerned about the emphasis placed on the Welsh language, which they felt disincentivises non-bilingual schoolteachers from applying for teaching jobs, whilst the other respondent expressed concerns about the delivery of the net zero emissions target. A selection of comments is outlined in the table below.

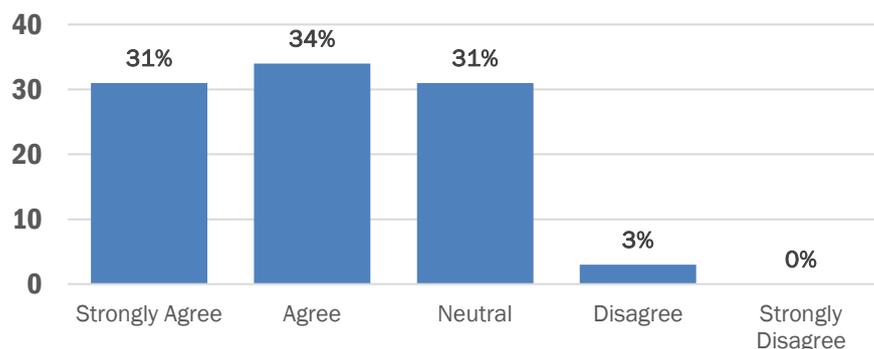
Sample Comments	
"I agree with it but I'm not sure we do it well in practice. For example...I know people who have left university and are unable to find work but their partner works. They're busy looking for a job but have one or more children to care for. Because they're not working, they are not eligible for free educational childcare. They struggle to balance raising and teaching their child while trying to find work which is a huge challenge and are essentially penalised for it. Meanwhile people who are very wealthy benefit off the free childcare scheme when they could afford it without any trouble or change to their quality of life."	"My second example is seeing the local primary school where I am considering moving...the schools in the rural villages clearly haven't had work on them (save the addition of cabins to provide more classrooms) in decades. Meanwhile, if you live in a town like Aberystwyth, you're spoilt for choice on great schools... I agree with the sentiment of this but feel in practice this aim has never rung true as if you live rural or just one parent (or worse a single parent) is unable to find work, your child is not going to receive the best start in life from this LA [Local Authority]."
"Net zero is unattainable and will cost hundreds of millions which will be seen to be a waste of money by Ceredigion residents. The new curriculum needs further scrutiny, as RSE [Relationships and Sex Education] lessons in the way proposed for primary aged children would be inappropriate."	"Stop insisting teachers must have Welsh you are not getting a high grade of graduates because they are put off by this."

### Q10: Do you agree or disagree with the ambitions and steps for the "Creating sustainable, greener and well-connected communities" objective?

Most respondents either agreed (31%) or strongly agreed (34%) with the ambitions and steps for the Corporate Well-being Objective of "Creating sustainable, greener and well-connected communities", a total of 65% of all respondents. Just over 30% (31%) of respondents selected 'Neutral' when answering this question. 0% of respondents strongly disagreed with the ambitions and steps for this Corporate Well-being Objective.

**Q10. Do you agree or disagree with the ambitions and steps for the “Creating sustainable, greener and well-connected communities” objective?**

▼ Percentage



**Q11: Can you suggest any gaps or improvements?**

There were 17 written answers to this question, which is just under half of all respondents (48%). The majority of written comments related to the need to improve cycling routes and better connecting communities in Ceredigion. It is clear that these respondents do not think that there are enough adequate, safe and suitable cycling routes around the County. Additionally, they noted that public transport is lacking, which results in people having to use their car to travel. Improving walking and cycling links between communities was identified as the solution to this issue.

Sample Comments	
<p>“You really need to get our isolated communities connected better. There is some public transport available, however please please please start to consider getting cycle lanes or designated cycle lanes/routes so that we can get from A to B safely and in a green and sustainable manner using bicycles.”</p>	<p>“Sustainably connected. With an emphasis on green transport. Safe cycling routes between communities in Ceredigion are lacking.”</p>
<p>“Proper on road cycle routes are needed or green ways linking all towns and villages.”</p>	<p>“Walking and cycling paths need to be placed along EVERY road on Ceredigion to ensure people can safely walk or cycle wherever they need to go.”</p>
<p>“Make a planning post to have a vision of Netherlands style cycle routes linking up Ceredigion - how infrastructure could be if proper standards were put in place to join communities up. Aim for a green and connected Ceredigion. Make all villages and towns 20mph zones and have adequate Netherlands style direct cycle routes between all towns and villages. Make Ceredigion the green sustainable county. Actually have public transport provision which works - 6am to 12 pm, affordable and reliable...”</p>	

## Q12: Are there any that you disagree with, and if so why?

The written responses to this question included a variety of opinions around sustainable transport and protection of the environment. Some respondents took the opportunity to emphasize the importance of opportunities for active travel, particularly walking and cycling, and creating active travel routes to link up the Counties towns and villages. However, some respondents also questioned the approach to protecting the environment, explaining that the cost of achieving a net zero Council will be prohibitive and another that the climate emergency does not exist. Instead, they explained that the Council should focus on supporting and engaging with local farmers in the production of high-quality local produce.

Another respondent linked the Council's decarbonisation ambitions to the Experimental Traffic Orders in four of Ceredigion's Towns which retains selected parking and traffic flow elements installed temporarily in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their view is that these arrangements have increased traffic congestion and therefore resulted in increased carbon emissions. A sample of some of these comments are shown below.

Sample Comments	
"Net zero is unattainable and will cost hundreds of millions which will be seen to be a waste of money by Ceredigion residents. Teifi Valley flooding is a result of poor land & forestry management."	"Be more specific. Offer green sustainable initiatives actually supported by a planning department which is not stuck in the past."
"There is no Climate Emergency. The Council needs to stop spending money on this nonsense. Focus on reducing pollution, support our farmers in their role, producing excellent quality food. Do not become side tracked by minority pressure groups. Vitally, engage with farmers to maintain our beautiful county."	"I think that CCC need to think about their lower carbon emissions plan again. The ETRO's and safe zone road closures and changes have just escalated the problems to other areas. Traffic queues making matters worse. Then we had the Rali in the town centre? The changes and cuts to refuse collection in the name of carbon reduction have had very damaging effects on the town centre and housing estates with litter and rats escalating."

## Q13: We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposed Corporate Strategy would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

There were 29 comments received on the impact that the Corporate Strategy would have on the Welsh language. The most prevalent comment was that the promotion of the Welsh language needed to be strengthened considerably to reflect its importance to the County, its communities and as a priority of the Council. There were, for example, a number of strong views expressed that the Welsh language should be prioritised over the use of English and greater opportunities should be provided for people to learn and use it in everyday life. The provision of Welsh lessons was raised not only in response to this question, but also in the responses to the Providing the best start in life objective as one way of promoting the Welsh language, encouraging people to learn or develop their Welsh further and in creating opportunities for the use of Welsh in all settings. A sample of these comments are shown in the table below.

Sample Comments	
"The Welsh language is our first language and needs to be given priority."	"Put Welsh first (I'm monolingual English) - street signs for e.g. should be Welsh only."
"Free courses for Ceredigion school Staff and council staff for Welsh and sign language."	"If you had more Welsh lessons more people might use it."
"I agree that it is good to promote the ideals of Welsh language and culture, by persuasion rather than by law preferably! Make it easier for people to understand the local culture and adapt to their new life in Ceredigion, whilst also recognising we are part of the UK, and everyone has the right to be understood and appreciated, whatever their heritage and native language."	"This wasn't mentioned at all. Not at all in the Corporate Strategy and the Corporate Strategy was in English and not bi-lingual. That has favoured English over Welsh. I am a Welsh learner but it wasn't until I began to work here that I had access to free Welsh lessons as I couldn't afford them. Welsh shouldn't be equal to English."

**Q14: Please also explain how you believe the proposed Corporate Strategy could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. Also how the Corporate Strategy could be formulated or changed so that there are no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.**

The follow-on question asked what changes could be made to increase the positive impact on the Welsh language and avoid negative impacts. There were two main themes in response to this question. Firstly, there were some comments reflecting the sentiment expressed in Q13, i.e. stating simply that Welsh should be prioritised over English. Secondly, some responses went one step further and expressed ideas as to how Welsh could be promoted, such as through the provision of additional lessons for learners. One response highlighted the need to focus on opportunities for employment, housing and levels of pay as one way of encouraging local people to stay and live in their local area and thus retain their language skills in their community. A sample of these comments are shown in the table below.

Sample Comments	
"Every school in Ceredigion should be all Welsh first"	"Welsh first"
"Ensure that employment, housing and opportunities are of a good standard with acceptable rates of pay to encourage local people to stay local"	"Welsh should be prioritised as we're meant to be aiming for a fully Welsh speaking Wales. Free Welsh education should be available and encouraged through various schemes for business or just to the general public so the language does not die."

**Q15: Do you have any other comments about the draft Corporate Strategy?**

This question was open-ended and provided respondents with the opportunity to raise any issues or ideas not covered in the rest of the survey. Fifteen respondents took the opportunity to either raise further issues or emphasize points already made in the previous questions. There were specific mentions of the need to include voluntary organisations and the role of volunteering in the County,

explaining that their role is vital in supporting people in a multitude of ways, for example, in training and jobs, in education and in health initiatives.

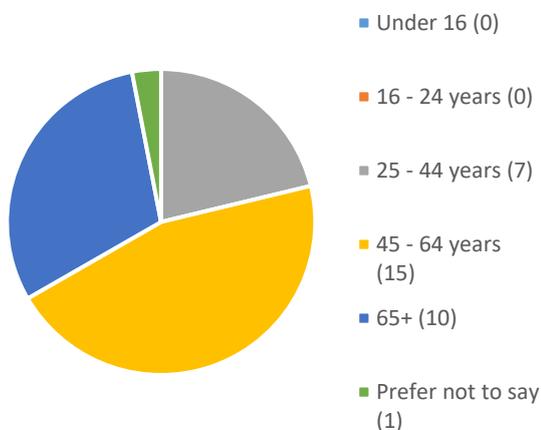
There were some further comments regarding transport in the County, highlighting the cost and frequency of bus services, the need for cycling infrastructure and reductions to speed limits through the County's towns and villages. Environmental issues were also further emphasized, as was the importance of developing the local economy, improving education and tackling poverty. Of note, was the importance of communicating that Ceredigion is 'open for business' and creating a positive narrative around the economy to help attract entrepreneurs, businesses and jobs. Finally, some respondents questioned whether the Council would actually be able to achieve these ambitions. A sample of these comments are contained in the table below.

Sample Comments	
<p>"I must admit to having skimmed it rather than reading in detail, but I didn't find any specific mention of voluntary organisations/volunteering. This is vital, especially in the present circumstances, and applicable to more than one of the objectives. It can help people into training for jobs/careers; it can play a role in education/play; it can support health initiatives - I could go on."</p>	<p>"Buses too expensive, not reliable and don't give enough coverage - need proper cycle routes linking all communities towns and villages up. The future is cycling using e bikes for both residents and visitors- Ceredigion should try to promote itself as a green county- this would support development and wellbeing the most. Safety on the main roads - A487 for e.g. would be most served by implementing 20mph through all towns and villages from 2023 - without this the affected villages are not communities but dormitory settlements without any thought being given to residents health or wellbeing."</p>
<p>"There is an environmental crisis, brought about by human littering &amp; fly-tipping. There is NOT an overall climate crisis. Tackle the environmental issue &amp; see how things quickly improve."</p>	<p>"The plan must say, Ceredigion is open for business, all are welcomed. Let's move on, reduce poverty, improve educational outcomes (including science) and reduce unemployment."</p>
<p>"I believe the Council need to seek out the things affecting their residents and really listen to what people need. A dramatically improved bus service and toilet facilities will bring elderly people out of their homes, get them moving and enable them to remain independent for many more years than the current situation is allowing. Access to walking paths and cycle lanes will allow people to use their cars less, allow children to move around safely and give everyone the chance to stay fit and healthy for the future."</p>	<p>"Please do more than produce a strategy, get on with demonstrating progress and then the Council would face less criticism".</p>

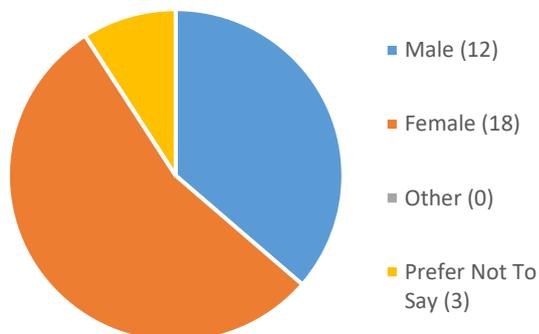
# Equalities Monitoring Questions

The Council's standard demographic and equalities monitoring questions were asked as part of the survey.

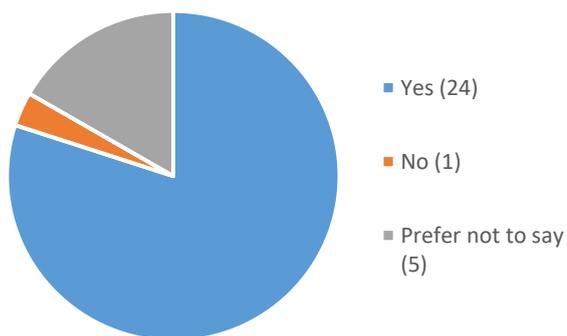
16. Age - What is your age group?



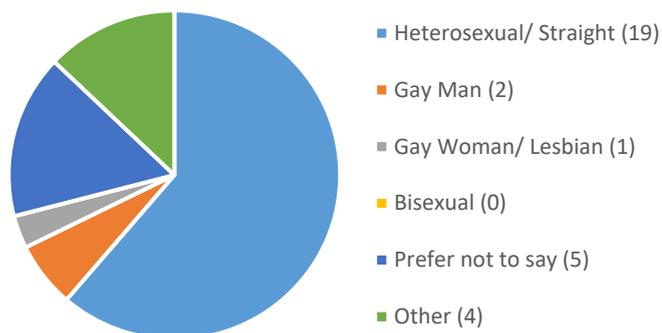
17. Gender - What is your gender?



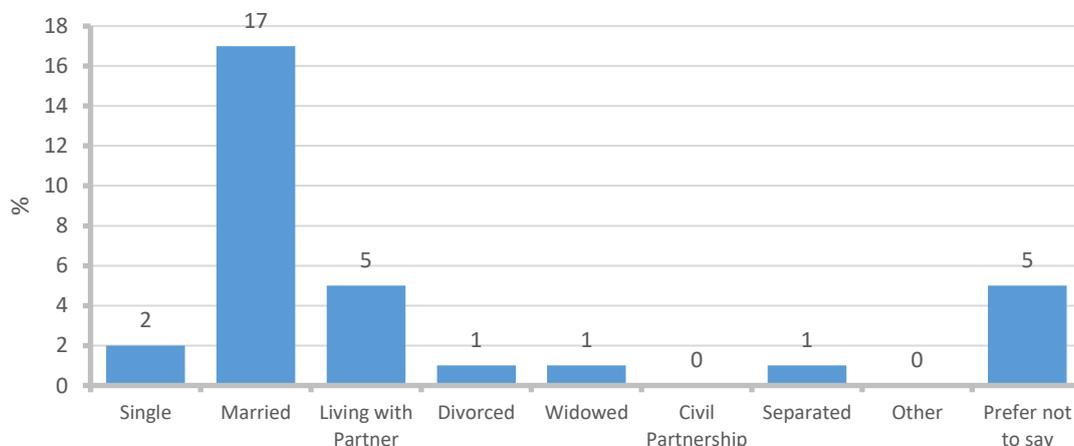
18. Transgender - is your gender the same as when it was assigned at birth?



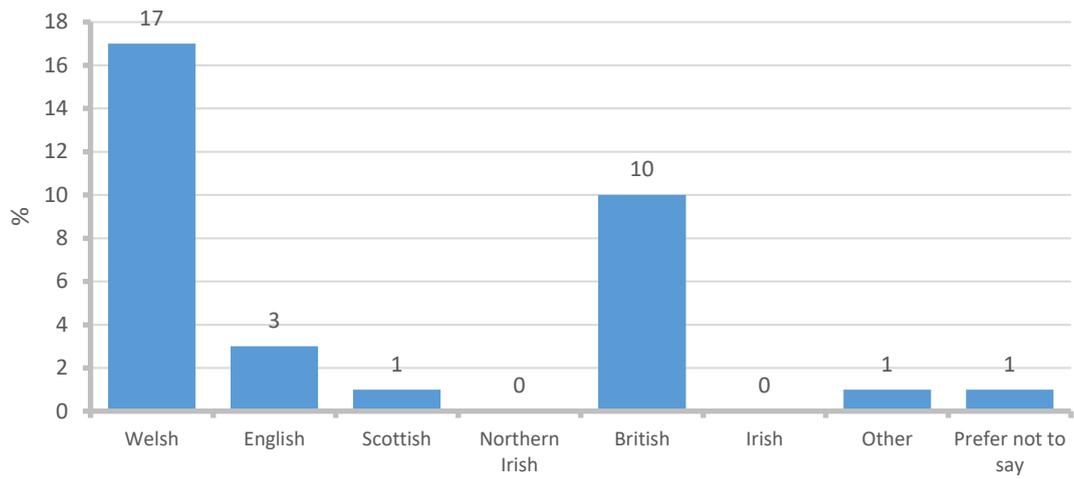
19. Sexual Orientation - Which one of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?



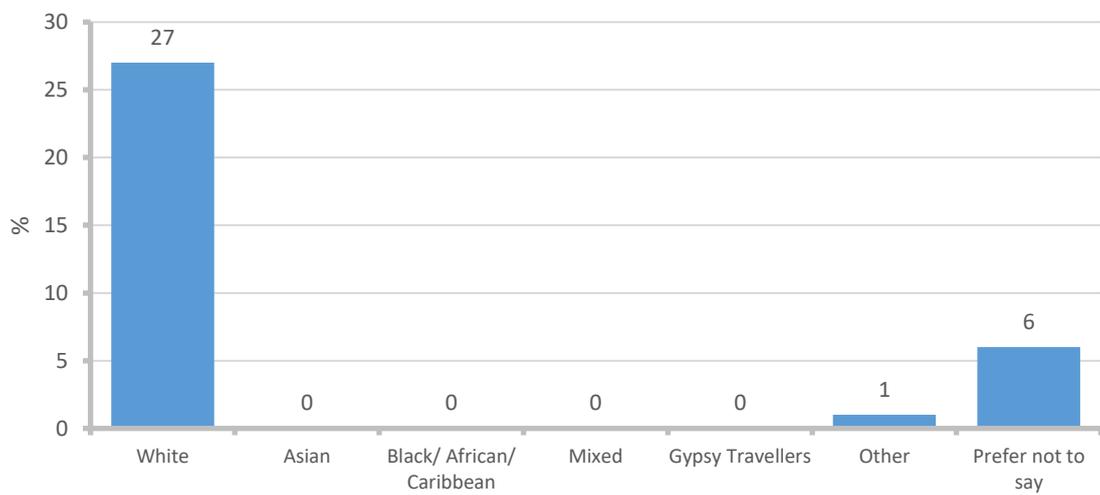
20. Partnership - Which of the following options describes your partnership status?



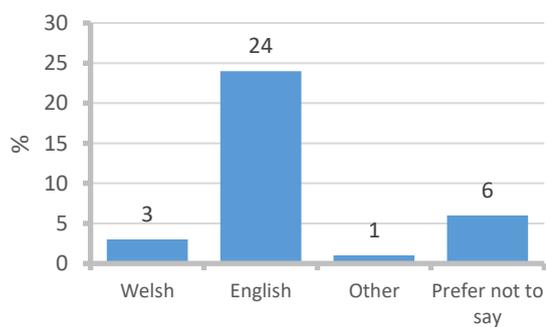
**21. National identity - How would you describe your national identity?**



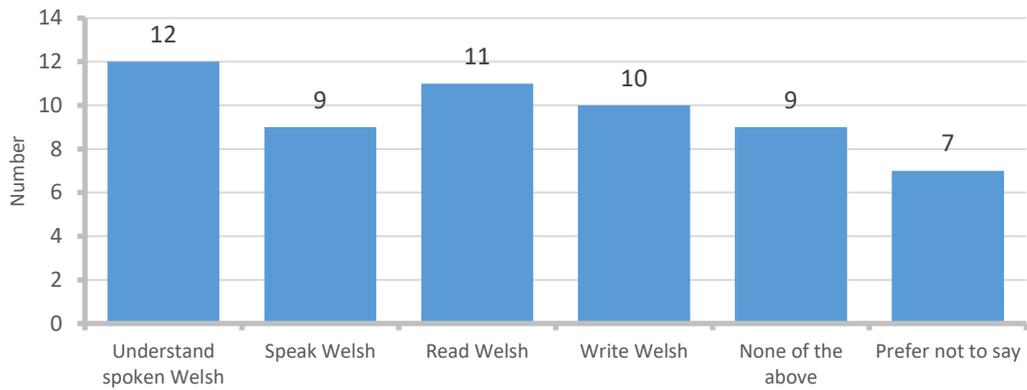
**22. Race - What is your ethnic group? Choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background.**



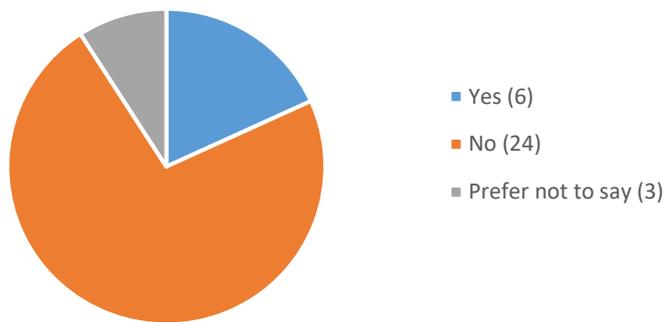
**23. Language - What is your preferred language?**



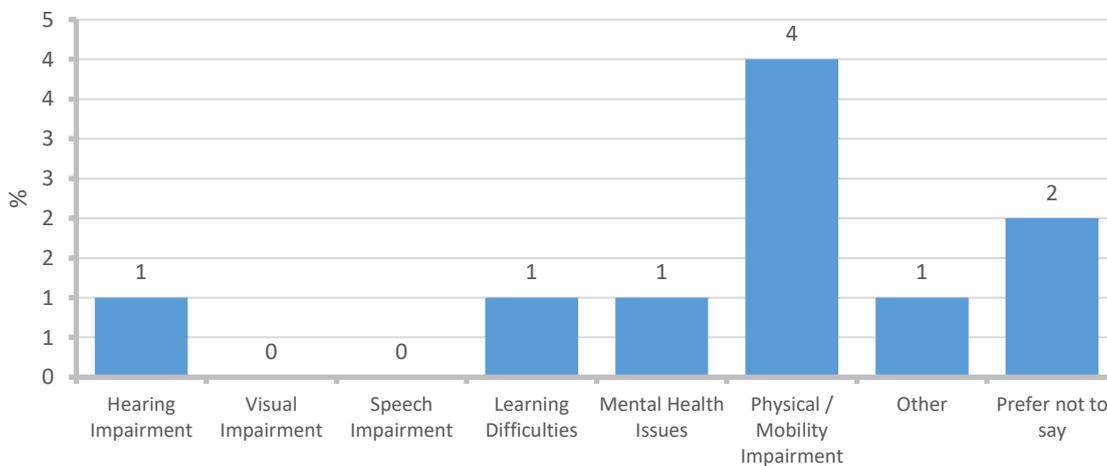
**24. Language - Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?**



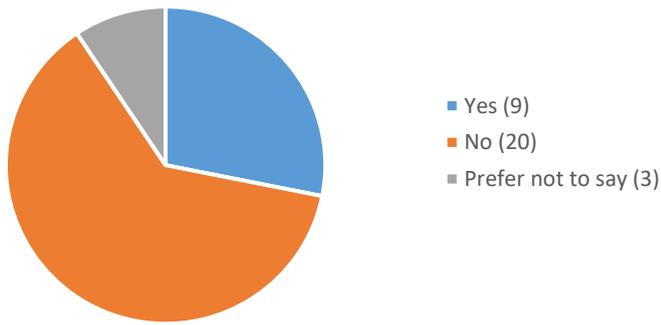
**25. Disability - Do you have a long term physical or mental health condition or illness that reduces your ability to carry out day to day activities?**



**26. Disability - If you answered 'Yes' to question 25, please indicate which applies to you?**



**27. Caring Responsibilities - Do you look after or give help or support to family members, friends, neighbours, or others because of either: long term physical or mental ill-health / disability; or problems related to old age?**



**28. Religion or Belief - What is your religion?**

