



Corporate Plan Consultation & Engagement – Feedback Report

13 October – 28 November 2022

Introduction

During October and November, we carried out a series of online and in person events, alongside an online survey, to gather feedback on the draft Perth & Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2022-27, as well as our annual budget priorities consultation.

The online survey remains live for the questions relating to budget priorities, spend and income until 29 January 2023. This will allow residents and other interested parties to continue to share their views ahead of the Special Council Meeting to set the budget in March 2023. This briefing focusses on the survey responses and engagement feedback which specifically relate to the Corporate Plan. However, given the overlapping nature of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and the priorities for investment in the Council's budget, there will be some information reported here which will also be included in the feedback to Councillors on the budget elements of the engagement activity.

Over 1,000 people responded to the engagement activity, this includes 961 completed surveys and over 100 participants in virtual or in-person discussion sessions as at 28 November 2022.

Methodology

An online survey was created and hosted on the Council's Consultation Hub web pages. Fourteen in-person discussion sessions took place, either open to the public or held at the invitation of a community group.

This includes additional sessions which were added during the consultation period at the request of Councillors or community organisations, and virtual evening sessions added as a result of public feedback.

Open sessions were held in Perth (x2), Kinross, Pitlochry, Crieff, Blairgowrie, Auchterarder and Coupar Angus. Sessions on the Corporate Plan and budget were also held with Perthshire Chamber of Commerce (September 2022), at the 3rd Sector



Cost of Living Conference, with the Integration Joint Board, and with Perth & Kinross Council staff.

As with any exercise of this type, results cannot be considered fully representative of all Perth and Kinross residents but are indicative and influenced by the demographic of participants. Demographic information was not requested from in person attendees but was part of the online survey questions and is reflected in the survey sections below.

Promotion

To encourage participation the sessions and the online survey were promoted by:

- Direct emails to community councils, individuals and community groups and Chief Officers of PKAVS, Culture Perth and Kinross, Live Active Leisure, Horsecross Arts and Gannochy Trust.
- Email subscribers (over 83,000 emails sent, resulting in 371 click throughs to the event details and survey page)
- News coverage – launch release sent to 45 journalists (community and professional), published in Perthshire Advertiser, Blairgowrie Advertiser, Strathearn Herald and on the front page of the courier, with broadcast coverage, web and social media reminders on Heartland FM.
- Information on digital timetable signs at bus stops
- Campus digital screens
- Posters sent to community contacts for local display
- In responses to web chats and emails via customer service centre
- Internal staff communication channel

Social media

Information was shared across all the Council's channels using a combination of post types either focussing on the corporate plan priorities or emphasising the nature of the difficult budget decisions ahead. Replies to public comment about Council budget spend or priorities during this period also highlighted the survey.

Data below relates to content which appeared on the main corporate pages. Comparisons to previous figures relate to annual budget consultation only.

	Facebook		Twitter		Instagram		LinkedIn	
	21/22	22	21/22	22	21/22	22	21/22	22
No. of posts	10	41	6	38	-	34	-	3
Comments	48	115	5	22	-	2	-	0
Reactions	284	211	23	26	-	323	-	33
Shares	45	138	11	58	-	0	-	22
Link clicks	2,444	634	0	460	-	33	-	63



While there were fewer link clicks from Facebook posts this year compared to 2021/22, the fact that the number of survey responses has been higher this year suggests that the drop-off rate of clicks to survey completions has been lower. Throughout the consultation period regular reviews and adjustments to the tone and content of posts was undertaken to test the engagement levels. A fuller internal analysis of post content type and engagement rate will be used to inform the approach to campaigns of this type in future.

Themes from comments and poll responses to budget priorities across our social media channels will be reflected in the budget consultation feedback when this element of the activity is concluded.

Feedback

Discussion events

While numbers were small at the in-person events, discussions were quite in-depth. The table on page 6 gives an indication of the feedback on the corporate plan discussions. Feedback on the budget will be included in future reporting.

Vision and outcomes

When asked whether the vision and outcomes made sense, people were broadly supportive of them.

The majority of feedback received in sessions was supportive of the draft vision and outcomes, with some specific queries around the language. Some participants said they appreciated or were particularly pleased to see poverty and inequality explicitly included in the vision

Participants also said:

- A number asked how poverty was being defined. There were concerns that people could be missed by a narrow definition of benefit/entitlement claimants.
- The vision and outcomes should be more ambitious, aspirational and bold, that the draft outcomes are “what we want from our lives” and “stating the obvious
- Conversely, some participants felt that the vision was not achievable because it is outwith the Council’s control.
- The word ‘sustainable’ is “too woolly” – it is used twice in the outcomes and priorities, in a slightly different way each time



- Numbering of the outcomes in the presentation suggested an ordering, and if that was the case support for older people should be higher than children and young people given age demographic of the area
- How can we demonstrate delivery of the outcomes? How can we ensure that community members treat our children with respect, can we commit to this?
- Do people actually get access to quality care and support when they need it? Is this unrealistic with current challenges.

When asked what was missing from the vision and outcomes, participants suggested:

- Being clear about how the rural community gets spend/investment
- Specific mentions of:
 - Older people's services
 - Climate change
 - Affordable housing
 - Environment
- A commitment to running the Council efficiently
- The cultural change needed for the organisation to achieve this plan should be part of the vision

Priorities

Participants in almost every session questioned the use of the word sustainable and said that should be explained or an alternative used.

The majority of participants broadly agreed with the draft priorities and recognised their interdependencies but wished to see them presented in a different way rather than in a list.

At four different sessions participants suggested that there were too many priorities, with suggestions that this should be cut down to the three most important. Where this comment was made the most common main priority suggested to remain was supporting the growth of the local economy.

Participants also said:

- The Council is complex – need to streamline focus to be more efficient and flexible
- The language needs to be bolder – move beyond sustainable and inclusive economy to thriving
- Placing communities at the heart of how we work – sounds passive when other priorities are active
- A small number of people asked whether both priorities and outcomes are needed



Online survey

There were 961 responses to the Corporate Plan questions on the online survey.

About the respondents to 28 November 2022 (2021/22 figure in brackets for comparison):

- 94% live in Perth and Kinross (99%)
- 31% study or work locally (19%)
- 25% are current employees of Perth & Kinross Council (17%)
- 4% have been employed by the Council in the last 3 years (2%)
- Age range:
 - 16-24 1% (1%)
 - 25-34 9% (11%)
 - 35-49 34% (30%)
 - 50-59 25% (26%)
 - 60-74 25% (26%)
 - 75+ 4% (3%)
 - Prefer not to say 2%

Encouragingly, the age distribution of respondents is more balanced when compared to previous all-inclusive consultations such as this.

Results

Corporate Plan – Draft Vision and Strategic Outcomes

These questions asked respondents whether our draft vision and strategic outcomes make sense and whether they agree with our proposals.

78% of respondents said “yes” the **draft vision** makes sense, 4% answered that it does not make sense. 76% of respondents agree with the draft vision and 4% said they do not agree.

84% of respondents said “yes” the **draft strategic outcomes** make sense, 2% answered that they do not make sense. 78% of respondents agreed with the draft outcomes and 3% said they do not agree.

Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on what should be removed from our draft vision and outcomes and what should be added. Some common themes were apparent from scrutiny of all these comments. These are presented below with some examples of the comments from the responses received which are a broad representation of the nature of information submitted.

Responses to what “**what we should remove**” from our draft vision and outcomes were varied but common themes are apparent (160 responses yielding 229 comments).



72 general comments about removals from the draft **vision and outcomes** were received, whilst these did not highlight specific omissions, they indicated broad disagreement. The most common topics were around **clarity** on how we will achieve what we have stated (19 comments), **realism** as to what is possible (17 comments), the **scope/influence/responsibility** of the Council to deliver (8 comments) and the **language** we have used (8 comments).

What should be removed - vision

60 comments were received with specific reference to what should be from the **draft vision**. 38 comments were specific to everyone living free from **poverty and inequality**, 13 were general observations, and 9 commented on everyone **living life well**.

- No society in the world is free from inequality. Equality of opportunity is realistic but there will never be equality of outcomes.
- Vision is too woolly and really not very inspiring. Should be something around making P&K the best place to live
- Vision sounds negative
- What does 'live life well' mean, people will have their own definitions, how can this be assessed?

What should be removed – outcomes

- The word 'respected' in the children and young people outcome is unnecessary, everyone in our society and communities ought to be respectful as well as being respected
- 'inclusive and sustainable local economy' is very woolly, needs to be much more specific
- 'sustainable' is hackneyed, meaningless and usually an excuse for greenwashing
- Not sure there is much difference between these two (economy and sustainable places) especially when both are 'sustainable'
- Focus on creating an inclusive sustainable economy rather than on people and business which implies individual profit
- Council shouldn't be focussing on business, people and infrastructure should be top priority
- Where does responsibility sit for physical and mental health, surely largely NHS not Council
- What is meant by communities being 'resilient'
- Why does the council think it is responsible for ensuring people are digitally and socially connected? The council should focus on its core responsibilities



What is missing – outcomes

Responses to what “**what is missing**” from our draft vision and outcomes were varied but common themes are apparent (315 responses yielding 442 comments). Many of these are potentially cross-cutting across the vision and strategic outcomes and so the summary is by topic rather than vision/priority.

- 66 comments on environment and climate change
 - Insufficient focus on climate emergency
 - Although sustainability is mentioned, statements focus on people, with no clear mention of the environment or support for local wildlife
 - No mention of the natural environment, biodiversity or climate
- 31 comments asking for plain English
 - Too much repetition, sustainable for example
 - Sustainable can mean whatever you like and certainly has no direct link to climate change
 - Sustainable and safe could be spinned to many directions
- 29 comments on economy
 - There should be more emphasis on the economy
 - We need to have a vision for growth in the area
 - Something about being an attractive city for business and development
 - Support for charities and communities and self-employed people
- 27 comments about transport
 - Transport is one of the biggest issues P&K faces
 - This should include the practicalities of physically connected in terms of sustainable and reliable infrastructure
 - Infrastructure around Perth is reliant on busses with exceptionally poor links to railway
- 26 comments about culture/leisure
 - You could add that arts and culture should thrive here. Perth needs to be an exciting place where people want to live and spend time to leisure
 - The arts and culture – without these there is no joy in the community
 - There is no explicit mention of culture and heritage (including natural heritage and green spaces)
 - The right of all your residents to a healthy creative life
- 18 comments about maintenance and infrastructure
 - fix the basics (Perth town centre refurbishment, flood defences, fixing potholes, kerbside cleaning, gardening etc)
- 16 comments about safety/anti social behaviour
 - More community wardens would make places feel safer and issues dealt with quicker
- 16 comments about housing



- Ensure there is sufficient and affordable housing, especially in rural areas

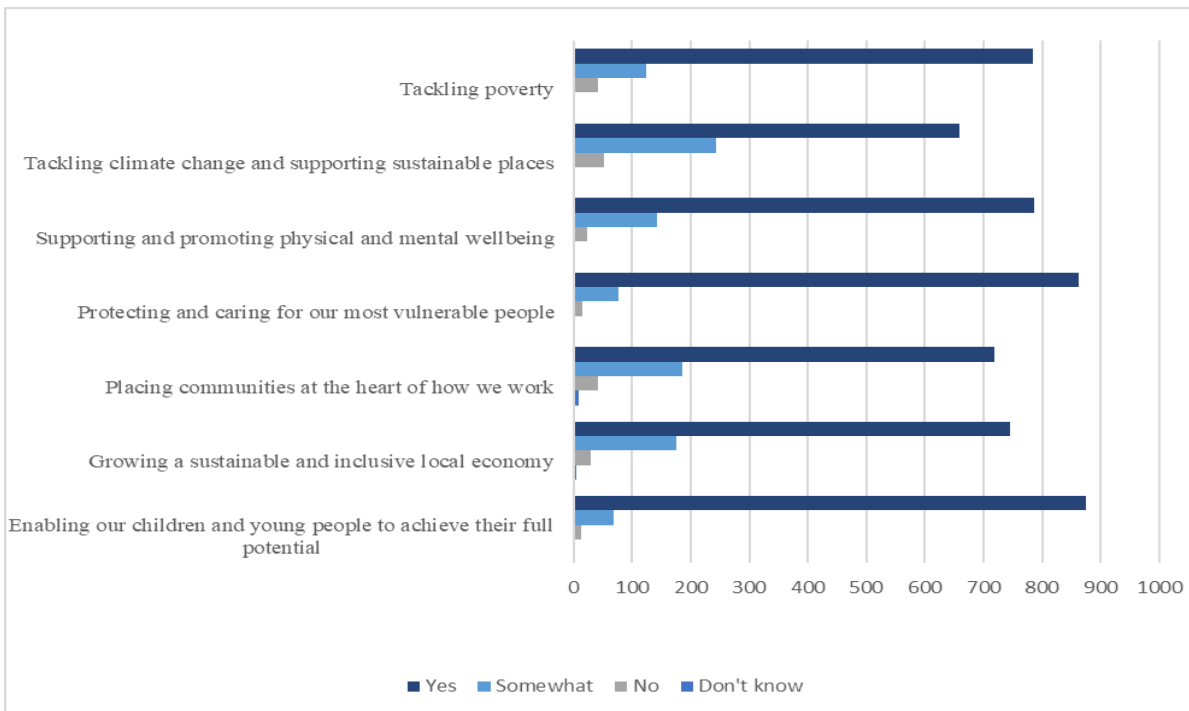
Corporate Plan - Draft Priority Areas

We asked for feedback on the seven priority areas in our draft Corporate Plan

We asked if they made sense and if these are areas we should focus investment on. These issues did not need to be ranked in order of importance but asked agreement (Yes, Somewhat, No, Don't Know) for each one.

Graphs 1 and 2 show a broad overall agreement with the draft priority areas. **Tackling climate change** and **supporting sustainable places and Placing Communities at the heart of how we work** were marginally less favoured in terms of sense and need for focussed investment. Some open text comments reflected that the respondent would have liked the opportunity to rank these areas in order of priority.

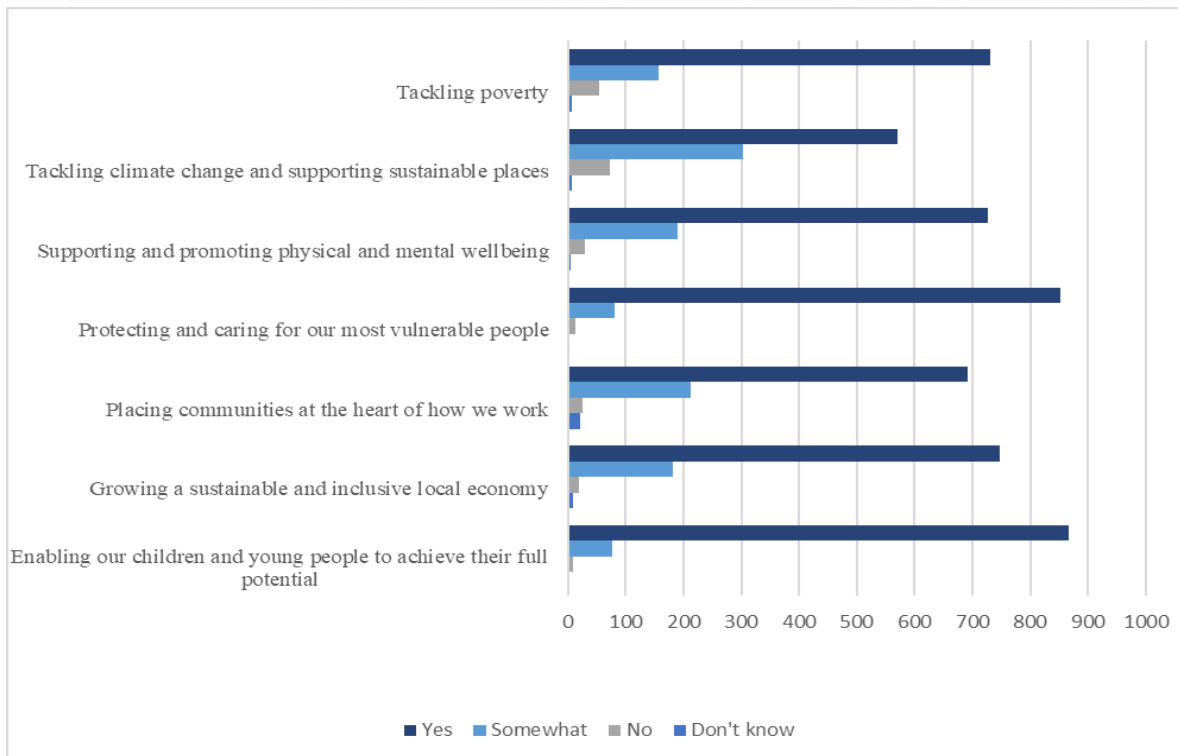
Graph 1. Respondents indicating the sense of individual draft priority areas for Perth & Kinross Council.



Graph 2. Respondents indicating the need to focus investment on individual draft priority areas for Perth & Kinross Council.



everyone The Perth & Kinross Offer
has something to offer



Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on what should be removed from our draft priorities and what should be added. Some common themes emerged from scrutiny of all these comments. These are presented below with some direct comments from the responses received which are a broad representation of the nature of information submitted.

Responses to what “**what we should remove**” from our draft priorities were varied but common themes are apparent (121 responses yielding 161 comments).

43 general comments about removals from the **draft priorities** were received, whilst these did not highlight specific omissions, they indicated broad disagreement. The most common topics were around **clarity** on how we will achieve what we have stated (17 comments), the **scope/influence/responsibility** of the Council to deliver (6 comments) and **our ethos/approach** we have used (6 comments).

What should be removed:

- 32 comments on tackling poverty
 - There was an overriding opinion within these comments that this priority is beyond Council scope/responsibility and should be addressed at a national level
 - Some comments also asked for more detail on how poverty is defined and how this can be measured



- 37 comments on tackling climate change. Some themes were apparent and arose with similar frequency in these comments
 - Issue is beyond Council scope/responsibility
 - More clarity needed on what this means
 - More specific targets rather than such an open-ended one
 - Some comments reflected a belief that climate change is of little importance, unproven or less of a priority than the economic challenges
- 10 comments on growing the local economy
 - Economic growth is not a good measure of prosperity – suggest fostering a sustainable and inclusive local economy
 - Growing a sustainable... might be better expressed by ‘encouraging or creating’. Growth is not necessarily a good thing.
 - What does a sustainable local economy look like for Perth and Kinross?
- 12 comments on children and young people
 - Replace ‘enable’ with facilitate or support
 - Emphasise the pro-social aspirations of potential
- 14 comments on physical and mental wellbeing
 - Wellbeing comes from tackling lack of jobs, accessibility, care in the community initiatives led by local people, enabling communities to deliver for themselves
 - People need to take responsibility for themselves.
 - Issue is beyond Council scope/responsibility
- 14 comments on placing communities at the heart of how we work
 - More clarity needed on what this means, abstract concept

What is missing

Responses to what “**what is missing**” from our draft priorities were varied but common themes are apparent (202 responses yielding 227 comments). As with our draft vision and strategic priorities many of these are potentially cross-cutting across and so the summary is by topic rather than priority.

- 22 comments on transport/travel
 - Vital part of making communities feel part of the whole
 - Support and promote more active travel
- 19 comments on climate/environment and biodiversity
 - Needs mentions of reduction of carbon, energy and waste
 - Supporting local wildlife and protecting green spaces
 - Be explicit about biodiversity crisis and decarbonisation
- 18 comments on culture/leisure
 - Actively focussing on culture will help achieve many of the other goals



- Culture and education not just at school level is an important part of life experience
- Need to maintain and promote our cultural offering
- 17 comments on community resilience
 - Focus on rehabilitating our communities making them safer and more inclusive places for people to live
 - Creating a sense of pride and community in the wards in Perth could go a long way to achieving important goals
 - Ensure that everyone has a meaningful role in the wellbeing and governance of their local communities
- 12 comments on safety/anti social behaviour
 - Reducing anti-social behaviour to improve quality of life and safety
- 11 comments on general Council services
 - Maximise efficiency and effectiveness of the quality and delivery of its core services
- 11 comments on rural communities
 - Need to recognise that Perth and Kinross is predominantly rural

Impact on Corporate Plan

A proportional approach was taken to incorporating feedback into the final draft of the Corporate Plan. Where issues were raised consistently across different groups this has been updated within the document, these instances primarily relate to language used. There were also issues raised by fewer people, but which were particularly relevant within the context and purpose of the document which have also been incorporated. There are a number of changes throughout the document, particularly updating and streamlining the performance indicators in light of further consideration by services.

A 'you said, we did' overview of the most significant changes is included below for ease of reference.

Feedback received	Change made
More clarity needed on what 'sustainability' means in multiple places	Outcomes and priorities updated to reduce usage of word. Retained only to mean environmentally sustainable in one context
Climate change/ environmental importance not clear in outcomes	Updated outcome to specifically reference mitigating the impact of climate and environmental change
Be bolder and more ambitious, particularly around business/ economy	Updated economy outcomes and priority



Ordering of priorities suggest some are more important than others and does not make interdependencies clear	Introduced graphical representation of priorities
Reduce Perth-centrism	Updated action under growing the economy priority to be clear about benefits to the whole area
More focus/reference needed to communities of interest as well as place and commitments to equality and diversity	Updated context language in several sections to reflect this
More clarity needed about how this will be delivered/assessed	Updated performance indicators to focus future reporting

Learning and future approach

During the past few months, we have used regular feedback from participants to adapt and improve as we progressed, building on each session and remaining flexible to their individual needs and requests. We also found that an informal and relaxed approach worked well with participants telling us they enjoyed the opportunity to ask questions about the Corporate Plan, Budget process and the Council in general. The following points are key lessons for future engagement activity:

- In terms of our face to face sessions, we would have liked to see more people attending. In future, we will go to places where people are already gathering for other events and meetings and encourage them to get involved. We will also contact local community groups to ask if we can speak to members at a time convenient to them rather than setting fixed times ourselves. We will be less reliant on people coming to our events and more proactive in reaching them where they already are.
- If we do invite people to sessions, we need to give thought to timings, venues and accessibility. We held most of these sessions during the day and it was commented on that people who are working full time would not have been able to attend. Although we did have virtual sessions in the evening, this will be taken into consideration in future and different opportunities explored.
- We will ensure that events are organised with enough lead in time for social media promotion and sending out invites. As we continue to build up our face-to-face engagements and identify opportunities to improve the Council's approach to community engagement through the transformation and change consolidation workstream, we hope that this will increase.
- We will continue to grow the corporate engagement activity that we have undertaken this year including monthly community sessions with our Extended Executive Leadership Team and other events.