

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	11 th June 2024
Report Subject	Employee Travel Survey 2023
Cabinet Member	Collective Responsibility
Report Author	Climate Change Project Officer (Climate Change Programme)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year the Council must calculate its carbon footprint and within this footprint are emissions sources from fleet, business mileage and employee commuting. The Employee Travel Survey questions were determined to improve our data and understanding of how staff travel and the levers we can utilise to help influence more sustainable travel behaviours.

The Employee Travel survey received a total of 628 responses during the period it was live (14/11/2023 – 22/12/2023).

The Council has a target within the Mobility and Transport theme of its Climate Change Strategy to reduce emissions by 80% by 2030.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Scrutiny Committee support salary sacrifice schemes which provide employees an affordable and accessible means to transition from petrol or diesel vehicles to zero and ultra-low emission vehicles that provide sufficient range per charge.
2	Scrutiny Committee support the review of the Council's Cycle to Work scheme and its promotion; highlighting the benefits and information on local infrastructure.
3	Scrutiny Committee note and support the investigation and suitability of existing car-sharing platforms that are employee-led and identify ways in which using such a platform can be incentivised.
4	Scrutiny Committee note and support the investigation by officers of how the barriers to using Active Travel (safer routes) and public transport (bus services) can be addressed despite current limitations.

5	Scrutiny Committee support the review and updating of the methodology used to calculate employee commute carbon emissions, improving accuracy by including employee commute distances and modes of transport highlighted in the survey.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE EMPLOYEE TRAVEL SURVEY 2023												
1.01	<p>Background</p> <p>The Council has an ambition to become Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and aims to reduce emissions from Mobility and Transport by 80% by 2030.</p> <p>Emissions from Mobility and Transport have been difficult to address with only a 17.9% reduction since the baseline year of 2018/19. Under this theme, employee commute has seen the least reduction of just 8.5%. These emissions have also been increasing year on year since 2020/21 when Covid-19 had the greatest impact.</p> <div data-bbox="320 860 1166 1431" data-label="Figure"> <table border="1"> <caption>Employee Commute Emissions (tCO2e)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Fiscal Year</th> <th>Employee Commuting (tCO2e)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2018/19</td> <td>2409</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019/20</td> <td>2367</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020/21</td> <td>2048</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>2156</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022/23</td> <td>2205</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>Figure 1 Flintshire County Council carbon emission from employee commute</p>	Fiscal Year	Employee Commuting (tCO2e)	2018/19	2409	2019/20	2367	2020/21	2048	2021/22	2156	2022/23	2205
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1.02	<p>Purpose</p> <p>The Employee Travel Survey looks to serve two key purposes: to increase the accuracy of employee commute methodology by better understanding employee travel methods, and to understand the barriers and opportunities to encourage employees to adopt more sustainable travel methods.</p>												
1.03	<p>Survey Demographic</p> <p>There were 628 responses to the survey, which is 10% of employees according to the headcount summary provided in May 2023. It should be noted that the respondents to this survey were primarily office based employees.</p> <p>In terms of demographics, 63.6% of respondents were female (347 employees) and 33% were male (180 employees). These accounted for</p>												

7.3% of females and 12% of males employed by the Council. 3.5% of respondents were employees who preferred not to say (19 employees). 56.8% of respondents were between the ages of 45-64.

Housing and Communities was the Portfolio that provided the most responses to the survey (25.8%). The Climate Change team visited Alltami Depot on two occasions to support employees who have limited or no access to equipment to complete the survey and work was undertaken with the internal Communications team to encourage engagement with community-based employees in both Housing and Streetscene. However, only 9% of Streetscene employees completed the survey demonstrating a shortfall in representation from community-based workers.

Q1. Your Portfolio

Skipped: 0

Answer Choice	Survey Share	Response Total	Proportion of Portfolio	Share of total FCC Staff
Chief Executives	4.6%	29	46%	1.0%
Education and Youth	8.8%	55	25%	4.6%
Governance	17.8%	112	59.9%	3.3%
Housing and Communities	25.8%	162	50.8%	5.3%
People and Resources	8.8%	55	26%	3.7%
Planning, Environment and Economy	14.3%	90	48.6%	3.2%
Schools	0%	0	0%	52.2%
Social Services	12.9%	81	8.3%	18.1%
Streetscene	7.0%	44	9.3%	8.6%

Table 1 share of respondents who are home/office based or work in the community.

1.04

Home Working and Energy

85.5% of respondents reported to work from the Office or Home at least one day per week. As described in the previous section, these figures reflect the cross section of respondents being primarily office based.

This data cannot be used as an apportionment of home workers across the whole organisation due to such a large a proportion of non-office based workers not being adequately represented. However, increased engagement with frontline workers, would provide a clearer understanding of the apportionment of office/home based employees and community based.

Q2. Please select the option below which best describes the nature of your work?

Skipped: 0

Answer Choice	Response Percent	
Office/home based	85.5%	
Community based e.g., Streetscene operative / tradesperson / home care worker	14.5%	
	Office/home Based	Community Based
Chief Executive	100%	
Education and Youth	72.7%	27.3%

Governance	98.2%	1.8%
Housing and Communities	77.7%	22.3%
People and Resources	100%	
Planning, Environment and Economy	95.5%	4.5%
Social Services	87.7%	12.3%
Streetscene	45.5%	54.5%

Table 2 share of respondents who are home/office based or work in the community.

122 (14.6%) employees reported to never work from home with 32.8% of those coming from Housing and Communities, the largest Portfolio with this response.

Of the respondents who reported to work at least one day per week from home, only 12.8% reported to have a green energy tariff, which is below the Great Britain figure of 33%, suggesting some respondents may not have a full understanding of the term 'green tariff'.

Gas is the main fuel used for home heating (79.6%) with oil being the second highest (9.8%).

1.05

Commuting Distance and Travel

Almost half (49.7%) of respondents live within 10 km from their place of work and a further 24.7% between 11 and 20 km.

The average travel distance from home to work for all respondents was 15.9km.

The results indicate that a large proportion of respondents are also Flintshire residents who, therefore, present an opportunity to influence others in their community.

Question 8 asked employees to state how many days per week they commuted by transport mode. This question was asked to better apportion the average number of days that employees use different transport modes so that this data can be utilised to determine employee commuting emissions.

A significant number of answers received for this question appear to provide erroneous data as some respondents claimed to use their car 5 days per week while also working from home 4 days per week (giving a total of 9 working days in a week), or some data was incomplete where the number of days selected for a mode of transport did not add up to the total number of days they work in a week.

Where data was found to be accurate, or minor adjustments made with confidence, it was found that 67.1% of working days involved commuting by private car alone, with home working the next highest response at 24.6%. This is based on a total of 249 responses out of 628.

Q8. Please specify the number of days in a week you typically use any of the following modes of transport?

Skipped: 48

Answer Choice

Response Total (%)

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Private Car (alone)</td> <td>67.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private electrical vehicle (alone)</td> <td>0.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private motorbike/moped</td> <td>0.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work vehicle (car or van)</td> <td>4.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Car share</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Taxi</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bus</td> <td>0.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Train</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cycle</td> <td>0.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Walk</td> <td>1.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work from home</td> <td>24.6%</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Several respondents stated they work from home, only travelling to a place of work on occasion for meetings. - Public transport is not available to arrive at the office at a suitable time - Respondent stated they would like to cycle to the Flint office more often but there is no where safe to lock the bike, nor are there showering facilities. 	Private Car (alone)	67.1%	Private electrical vehicle (alone)	0.5%	Private motorbike/moped	0.4%	Work vehicle (car or van)	4.4%	Car share	1.1%	Taxi	0%	Bus	0.5%	Train	0%	Cycle	0.3%	Walk	1.2%	Work from home	24.6%
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	<p>Table 4 frequency of when employees use a mode of transport.</p> <p>Petrol is the most used their fuel source for private vehicles at 52.2%, with 42.1% using diesel. Only 3.8% of responses stated their vehicles were electrified (hybrid/ plug-in hybrid or fully electric).</p> <p>Comments received for the fuel-type question stated electric and hybrid vehicles are too expensive, or that there is no charging infrastructure in work carparks.</p>																						
1.06	<p>Reasons for Current Travel</p> <p>Respondents were asked to provide the two main reasons why they use their current mode of transport (e.g., private vehicle, bus, etc.) with ‘convenience’ being the standout reason at 62.3%.</p> <p>The second most selected reason is because there is no alternative (35.3%) mode available for reasons outlined in the comments for ‘other’, such as vehicles were required for work, no alternatives are available and they have childcare commitments.</p>																						
1.07	<p>Walking and Cycling to Work</p> <p>Most respondents (59%) stated that there is no option that would encourage them to walk or cycle to work, with 31.9% selecting ‘other’ in which they provided comments stating that distances are too far, vehicles are required for their work, and bike safety is of concern.</p> <p>The third most popular response was the need for a safer route to the workplace (26.4%), which was reflected in respondent’s comments. This response suggests that using a private vehicle will continue to be the primary and/or only option for many employees in order to fit with both their work and personal commitments.</p>																						

Respondents working in Housing and Communities were the highest to comment they required a vehicle for work commitments.

1.08

Zero and Ultra-low Emission Salary Sacrifice

65.4% of respondents stated they would be interested in a salary sacrifice scheme for zero or ultra-low emission vehicle, with more than double of those interested opting for a hybrid vehicle (47.2%) over one that is fully electric (18.2%).

Q12. If there was an option for a salary sacrifice scheme for a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle, would you be interested in this?

Skipped: 45

Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes - electric	18.2%	106
Yes - hybrid	47.2%	275
No	34.6%	202

Table 5 employee interest in salary sacrifice scheme by vehicle type

With regards to levers to encourage the adoption of zero or low emission vehicles, the vast majority (69.5%) of respondents stated that an affordable scheme would encourage them to consider these vehicles, showing that high costs are a barrier.

The second most selected answer was the need for greater battery range and charging speeds at 27.3%.

A notable response was ‘improved charging infrastructure in the county’ with a 23% response, which would likely be influential in addressing concerns for greater battery range and charging speeds.

Q13. What would encourage you to consider a zero or ultra-low emission vehicle? Please select two options.

Skipped: 45

Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
An affordable scheme	69.5%	405
Greater battery range and charging speeds	27.3%	159
Reliability	15.4%	90
Better understanding of options available	16.0%	93
Improved charging infrastructure at home	13.9%	81
Improved charging infrastructure at work	15.1%	88
Improved charging infrastructure in the county	23.0%	134

Table 6 levers to increase use of zero or low-emission vehicles to commute to work.

1.09

Car Sharing

Employees were asked what two options would encourage them to car share more. There was an even split for the top two responses of ‘help to finding someone who does similar journeys’ and ‘other’ at 34.8% each, and currently only 5.7% of respondents stated they already car share to work.

Those who selected 'other' provided additional comments stating vehicles are required for work, childcare and convenience were barriers, with having someone doing the same shift would be helpful.

Q14. What would encourage you to car share? Please select two options.

Skipped: 45

Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
Information about car sharing	14.6%	85
Guaranteed ride home	24.9%	145
I already car share to work	5.7%	33
Incentives and rewards	27.4%	160
Help to find someone who does a similar journey	34.8%	203
Other (please specify):	34.8%	203

Table 7 levers to increase car sharing to commute to work.

1.10

Public Transport

With regards to the use of public transport, most responses (50.9%) stated that nothing would encourage their greater use of public transport.

More direct (31%) and frequent (26.9%) bus services were the second and third most selected options showing there are several employees who feel public transport could become a viable option with the right improvements.

Comments in this section stated that vehicles are required for work, public transport is too complex, and availability and reliability of public transport is poor.

Q15. What would encourage you to use public transport to travel to work? Please select three options

Skipped: 45

Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
I already use public transport for work	2.4%	14
Improved public transport waiting facilities	14.4%	84
More frequent rail services	2.6%	15
More direct rail services	5.7%	33
More frequent bus services	26.9%	157
More direct bus services	31.0%	181
Guidance on the safe use of public transport	1.2%	7
Discounted public transport ticket	22.6%	132
Information about public transport routes	5.8%	34
Nothing	50.9%	297
Other (please specify):	20.6%	120

Table 8 levers to increase public transport use to commute to work.

1.11

Next Steps

Despite issues with transport mode data (section 1.05), low use of car sharing (5.7%), cycling/walking (2.4%) and public transport (2.4%)

	<p>indicates that travel in privately-owned, petrol and diesel vehicles is by far the most used method for commuting to work.</p> <p>Responses highlighted many barriers that would prevent employees from moving away from privately-owned vehicles such as work duties, personal commitments, cost barriers and a lack of alternatives. It is likely that privately-owned vehicles will continue to be the primary and/or only option employees have to commute to work.</p> <p>With this in mind, and strong interest in a salary sacrifice scheme, methods should be investigated that support employees to transition away from private vehicles powered only by petrol and diesel, as well as using those vehicles more sustainably through car sharing.</p> <p>Transitioning to other modes of transport have additional challenges and less interest from respondents. However, these should not be discounted considering the number of employees who live a short distance from their workplace and the additional benefits that could be gained, such as mental and physical well-being.</p> <p>With many employees living within the County, there is also opportunity for them to become advocates of sustainable travel if they are informed and well-supported to make the transition.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Officer time will be required to investigate the recommendations.
2.02	Costs of salary sacrifice schemes (car/cycle to work) will likely be borne by the employee using the scheme. However, it is not certain whether the Council will also need to finance such a scheme and so this will be investigated further.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	It would be beneficial to establish an effective process to ensure those employees who do not have easy computer access, are provided with the opportunity to complete future iterations of this survey – thus allowing a more representative reflection of the quantity and frequency of employee commuting and home working within our employee base.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	There is a risk of low uptake of sustainable travel methods despite the Council adding resource to encourage employees, therefore the results of the survey should only be seen as indicative.

4.02	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact	
Long-term	<p>Positive: The survey helps to steer efforts to reduce employee commute emissions well into the future.</p> <p>The survey also helps to understand the limitations employees experience to adopting more sustainable travel.</p>	
Prevention	<p>Positive: Emissions from employee commuting can be reduced through the adoption of levers to increase more sustainable commute. Adoption of active travel through improved measures can also help improve employee well-being.</p>	
Integration	<p>Positive: By understanding how to reduce carbon emissions from employee commute, the following priorities under the Council Plan could be supported; Green Council, Ambitious Council and Supportive Council. It integrates with the public service board objectives in the Environment priority of the Wellbeing Plan. It also integrates with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and Welsh Government's decarbonisation of the public sector agenda.</p>	
Collaboration	<p>Positive: The recommendations will increase cross-departmental working (e.g., Streetscene, People and Resources, etc.) to identify the most suitable means of encouraging employee towards more sustainable travel</p>	
Involvement	<p>Positive: The survey takes into account the views, opportunities and limitations of employees across all portfolios.</p>	
4.03	Well-being Goals Impact	
Prosperous Wales	<p>Positive: Adoption of sustainable transport contributes to a lower carbon society. Increased demand for local charging infrastructure can</p>	

		support local installers and the development of related skills.
	Resilient Wales	Positive: Resilience can be increased through reduced reliance on fossil fuels which can be volatile in cost. Monitoring of changes to employee commute can help determine next steps to reduce emissions further. Additionally, reducing emissions from employee commute may also result in reduce emission from business mileage.
	Healthier Wales	Positive: Supporting more employees to adopt active travel can improve health through walking/cycling to work, and walking to use public transport. transport. The adoption of zero or ultra-low emission vehicles can also contribute to improved urban air quality and respiratory health.
	More equal Wales	Positive: Supporting more employees to adopt active travel away from private vehicles can make travel more affordable, allowing people to apply savings on their other needs.
	Cohesive Wales	Neutral: No impact identified.
	Vibrant Wales	Neutral: No impact identified
	Globally responsible Wales	Positive: Reducing emissions from employee commute reduces the council's contribution to global climate change.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Employee Travel Survey 2023 Report

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	OFFICER CONTACT DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Ben Turpin – Climate Change Project Officer Telephone: 01352 703393 E-mail: ben.turpin@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e): a unit of measurement that compares the emissions from greenhouse gases on the basis of their global warming potential (GWP).</p> <p>Erroneous Data: Erroneous data is data that is abnormal or falls outside of what is acceptable. This is should be rejected where found.</p> <p>Green Energy: Tariffs are labelled as green if some or all of the units of electricity are ‘matched’ by units generated from a verified renewable energy source. For example, a wind farm, solar array or hydroelectric power station.</p> <p>Net Zero Carbon: Emissions of greenhouse gases are balanced by the removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere such as by trees, peatland and carbon capture and storage technologies.</p>