

Minutes



Formal Council Questions and Responses

Date: 14 February 2022

1 **Question to the Cabinet Member for Assets and Resources: 2022/01 - Newport Matters Newsletters**

Councillor R. Mogford asked:

Newport City recently declared an Environmental Emergency and reports it will be taking steps going forward to reduce its carbon footprint and general waste products.

'Newport Matters has a distribution of approximately 69,000 copies per edition' that's over a 400,000 printed newsletters per year. (69,000 x 6).

Putting aside the fact that many residents of Langstone ward do not receive Newport Matters, has the Cabinet Member recently reviewed the potential for cost savings and a reduction in environmental harm by stopping this paper newsletter, and just producing an on-line version?

Councillor Mayer (in consultation with Councillor Hughes) responded:

It is important that a public body, such as a council, communicates regularly with the people and communities it serves.

Many Newport residents do not have access or choose not to access the internet or digital news mediums. Around one third of adults in Wales were digitally excluded in 2010 and subsequent analysis estimated the proportion of adults who have never used the internet at 31 per cent.

Recent research for the council's Digital Strategy estimates a current rate of around 25 per cent in Newport.

Research shows that Newport Matters is still valued in printed form and is regularly cited as a key source of council information in resident surveys.

Ongoing efforts have been made to ensure minimal environmental impact of Newport Matters including printing on recycled paper and removal of all plastic packaging (previously used as part of deliveries).

The primary delivery method is via Royal Mail's door-to-door service which means copies are delivered alongside the normal daily post, therefore avoiding separate/specific deliveries and the impact that would have. Some residents may not receive Newport Matters because they have opted out of deliveries of unsolicited mail.

Alongside, the council's communication and marketing team are continuously striving to improve the channels used to communicate, particularly via digital means. For example, the expansion of the use of social media channels, development of a residents' eNews bulletin, website development and digital marketing campaigns.

This will stand the council in good stead when it is deemed appropriate to move further away from hard-copy communication formats.