

Consultation on Public Participation Strategy

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Under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, local authorities in Wales must publish a Participation Strategy that sets out the ways in which local people are encouraged to participate in decision-making by the council.

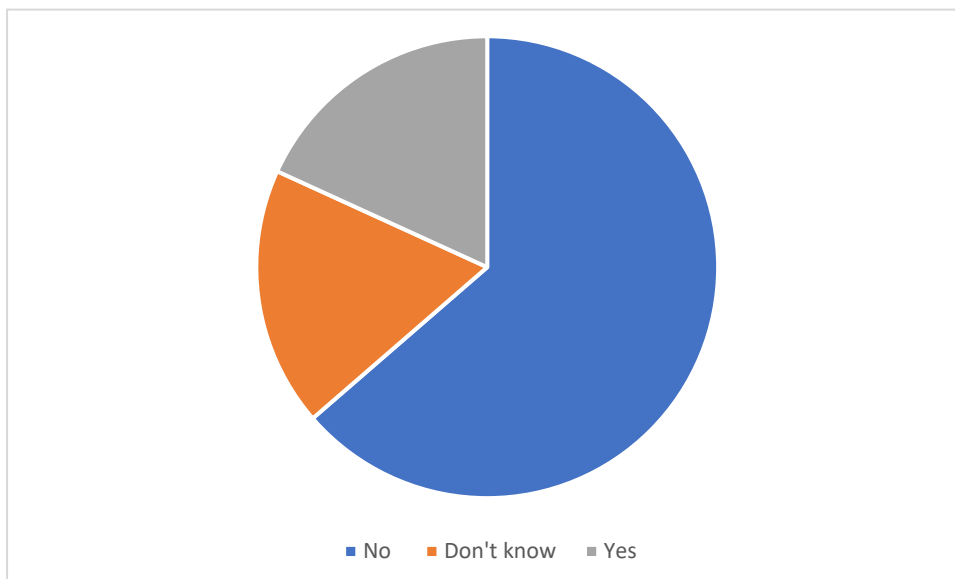
This strategic plan outlines Newport City Council's priorities for encouraging participation in decision making. Public participation plays a key role in providing better outcomes for both the Council and stakeholders.

The Council's stakeholders include citizens, businesses, visitors and others. The Council wants to take steps to ensure all voices are heard, particularly those from seldom-heard groups and young people are also given the opportunity to participate.

The draft Participation Strategy outlines the Council's current position and details the actions that will be undertaken by the Council to encourage and facilitate all stakeholders to take part in the decision-making process.

<Link to Draft Public Participation Strategy>

Question 1: Are you confident that you could find out how and why the Council had taken a decision that you felt affected you?



If no - why not?

Nothing is ever clearcut and straightforward.

To many layers of beauracracy within NCC. No accountability when challenge just a standard response of send an email that is never responded too.

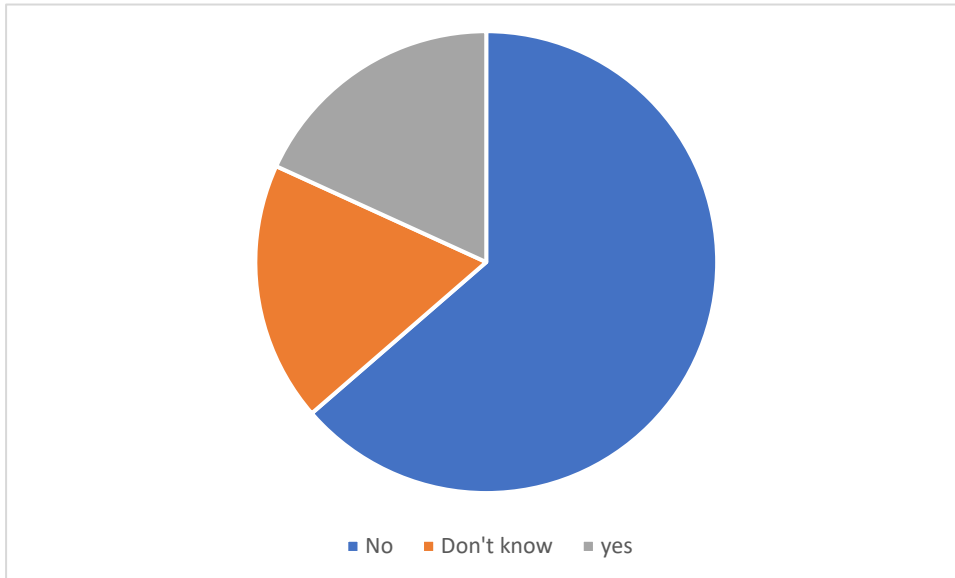
I struggle to find reports and documents on the website using the search facilities

As the council will continue to ignore the feedback from the consultation. Their argument will be there was limited engagement.

It's all very opaque. The website is not easily navigable and councillors don't appear to be there.

I find it difficult to contact anyone

Question 2: Are you confident that you would be able to influence a decision being made by the Council that you felt affected you?



If no - why not?

Decisions are often made and agreed but not always followed through. I understand circumstances change but that shouldn't mean "goal posts" are moved.

NCC does only what it wants. It is not interested in public opinion. If it did it would not overturn planning permissions in its favour and would not let the roads of Newport be in the condition they are in.

They don't listen to people's views

As the council will continue to ignore the feedback from the consultation. Their argument will be there was limited engagement.

Planning applications -the net is not cast wide enough. Eg, I live above Batchelor Road and there is an HMO application pending. I am not told about this when say, 5 cars will have a knock on effect on my road.

I feel that often, lip service is provided to residents rather than a genuine effort to listen.

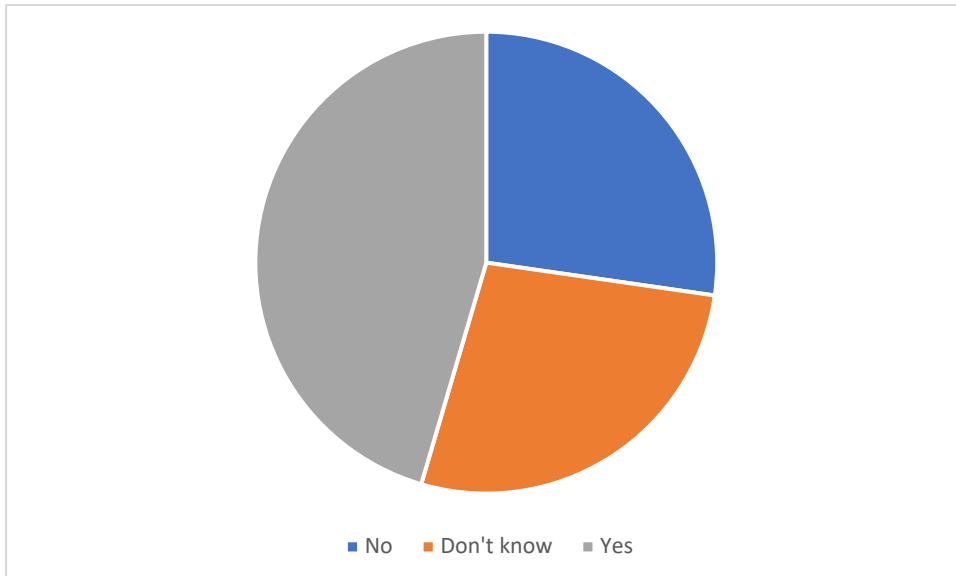
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We want to be open and transparent about how we make decisions and help residents understand and fulfil their role in the decision-making process

Action 1: Publishing a Guide to the Democratic Process

Action 2: Improving the Council website so that it is easier to access information

- Action 3: Ensuring that the council’s forward plan supports public engagement by being accessible, timely and user friendly
- Action 4: Adopt more participative approaches to engagement which empower citizens and place decision making in the hands of communities and individuals e.g. participatory budgeting exercises.
- Action 5: Using technology to increase the reach of engagement activity, for example, using public wi-fi to promote surveys.
- Question 3: Do you feel these actions will make it easier for you to influence decisions being taken by the Council?



If no - why not?

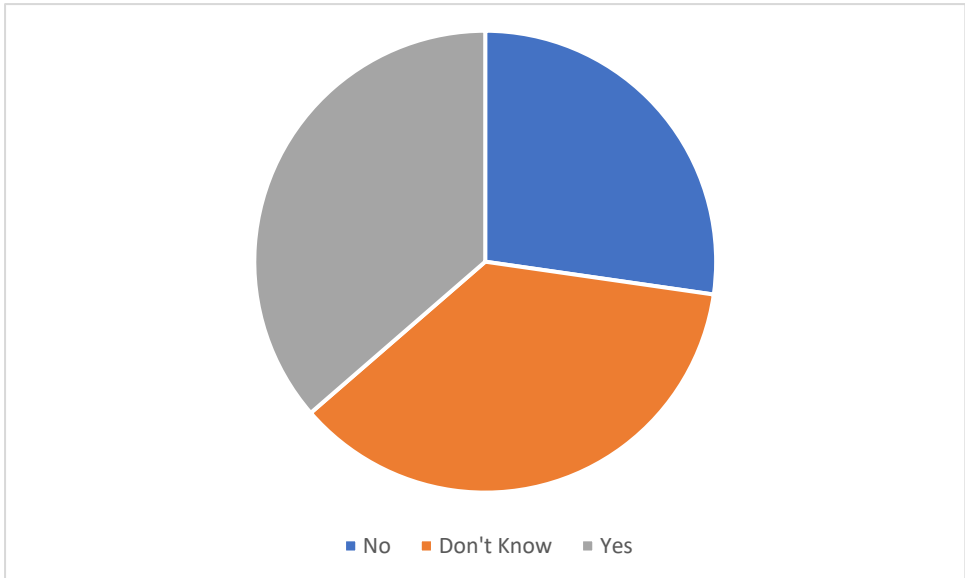
Number 1 :- not user friendly or easy to read. Number 2 :- website is awful, see #1 Number 3:- see #1 Number 4:- The council are out of touch with many citizens and don't listen anyway. Number5:- see number 4.

You talk of technology what about vulnerable groups who do not or cannot rely on technology?

As the council will continue to ignore the feedback from the consultation. Their argument will be there was limited engagement.

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- Action 6: Ensuring that information for potential councillors is available and informative.
- Action 7: Implementing technology that allows Councillors to attend and participate in Council meetings from any location with an internet connection.
- Question 4: Do you feel these actions will make it easier for residents to understand the role of a Councillor and consider representing their community?



If no - why not?

Can't see how the above improves supports residents engage with cllrs

The 2 points do not in any way explain the expectations of councils.

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We want residents to feel that decisions have been made **together**, taking on board public opinion when making Council policy.

Action 8: Developing a petition scheme that sets out how the Council intends to handle and respond to petitions including electronic petitions.

Action 9: Regularly reporting on comments received from residents

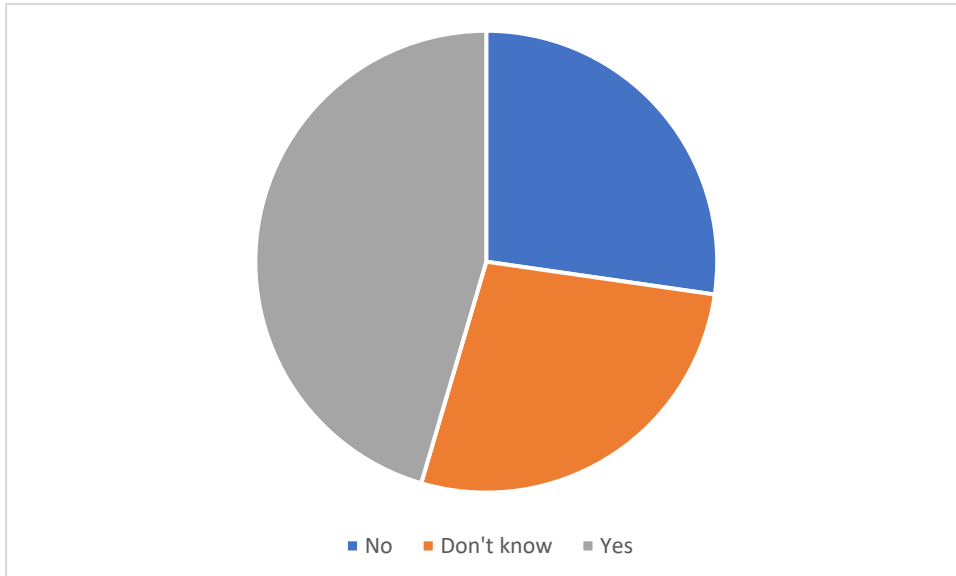
Action 10: Developing a better understanding of the demographics of residents who regularly provide feedback, so that any gaps in representation can be identified.

Action 11: Review and update the Scrutiny Public Engagement Strategy.

Action 12: Report on progress made against these actions through the Council's Annual Self Assessment Report

Action 13: Promoting engagement with residents via social media through induction training and ongoing support for Councillors

Question 5: Do you feel these actions will make it easier for residents to influence decisions taken by the Council??



If no - why not?
Even the question itself is so long winded it shows the lack of understanding in relation to engagement needed
Again you are targeting a certain demographic who use social media, what about those that don't.what happens when those raising concerns via social media do not get responses how are these concerns escalated.

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Question 6: Is there anything else that you think we should consider to make it easier for people to find out how decisions are taken by the Council?

(Free text)

Maybe the worst survey on engagement ever written- so heart and confusing on the narrative it'll be amazing if anyone makes it to the end and this is about communication!!
Be visible, research the residents in your authority area, ask them what matters to them. I have contacted the council via social media twice to not receive a response.
Consultation with children , young people and the public linked to strategic documents such as Newports Play Sufficiency Assessment to be made public to allow residents to know that their views and opinions have been heard and that they have been acted upon and reflected in the Action Plan moving forward Nas recommended by Welsh Government
Simpler plain English guides to how the council decision making process works
More transparency and less vanity projects. Focus on what people actually want.
Drastically improve customer response times as it is difficult for cusomters to wait on the phone for a long time or wait up to two weeks for a reply to an e-mail.

Question 7: Is there anything else that you think we should consider to make it easier for people to influence decisions taken by the Council?

(Free text)

As above!

It might help of all areas of newport were on your list of areas.

From a personal perspective people get fed up of completing surveys .. having alternative methods of consultation to be explored.. online focus groups , using social media to ask questions through polls will allow a greater response to issues that affect all

Make it easier to find information online.

Treat petitions as a mini referendum and make sure they are taken into account or have some teeth. Don't go through the motions like the Senedd does. Petitions mean nothing there.

Drastically improve customer response times as it is difficult for cusomters to wait on the phone for a long time or wait up to two weeks for a reply to an e-mail.