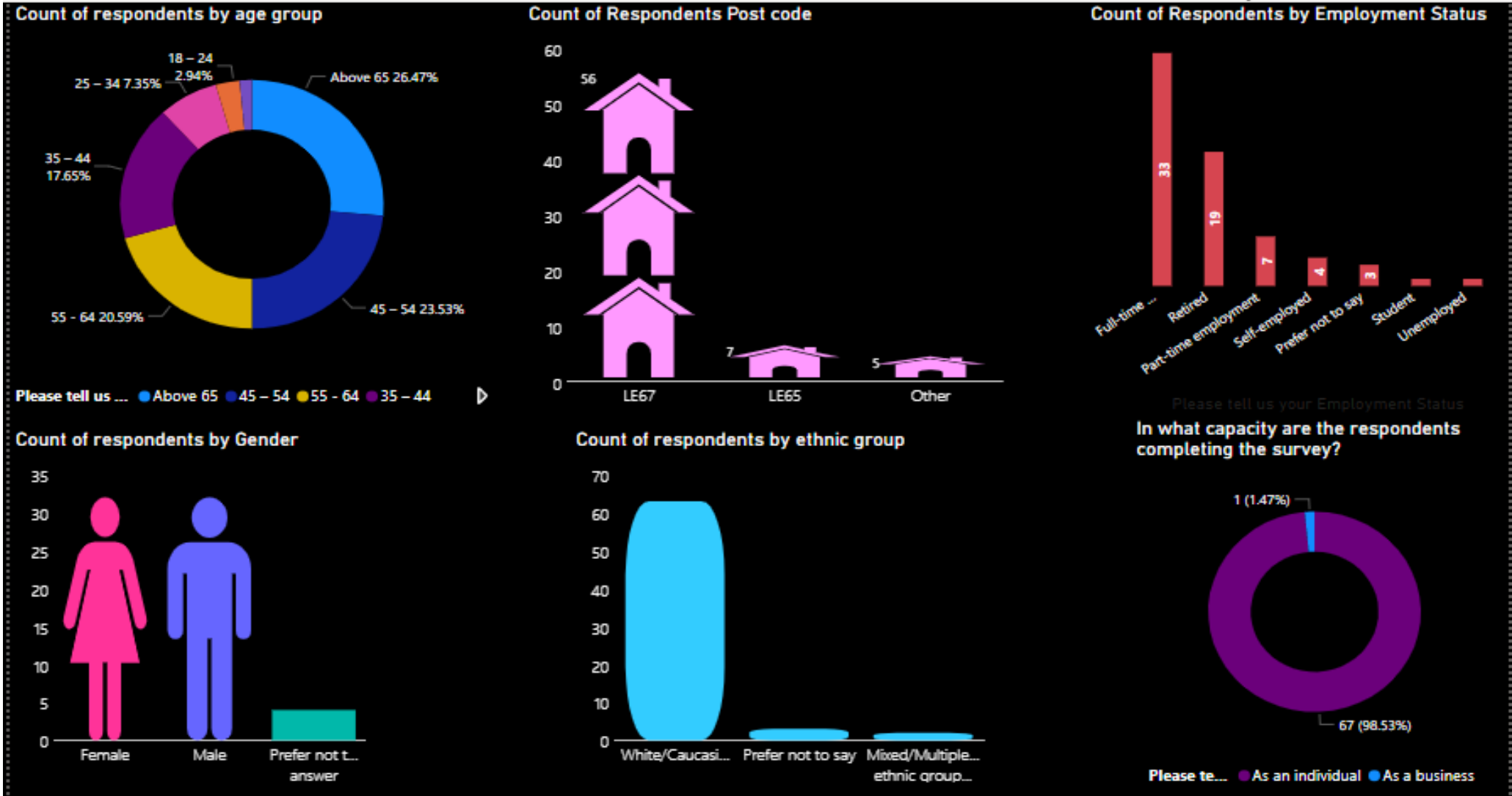


Budget Consultation Survey - Responses as at 28/1/23

Demographics

In total there were 68 responses to the Budget Consultation Survey, how does this breakdown in terms of demographics?



In terms of age breakdown of respondents, the majority (48 respondents, equating to 70.58%) were aged 45 or above.

There was a significantly lesser response from the younger age group (in the 18-24 age group there were only 2 respondents and in the 25-34 age group there were 5 respondents). It may be that the younger age groups who are working, have less time to fill in surveys like this one or it could be that we may need to explore other ways to reach these groups, for example how the survey is advertised, if we want to obtain their views.

In terms of postcode, the majority of respondents (56 - equating to 82.35%) were residents in the LE67 postcode area, which covers the Whitwick and Coalville area with 7 respondents from the LE65 postcode area (which covers Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Calke, Smisby, Willesley and Worthington). Of the remainder 4 respondents had a Derby (DE11, DE12 or DE74 postcode) and one was resident in an LE12 area.

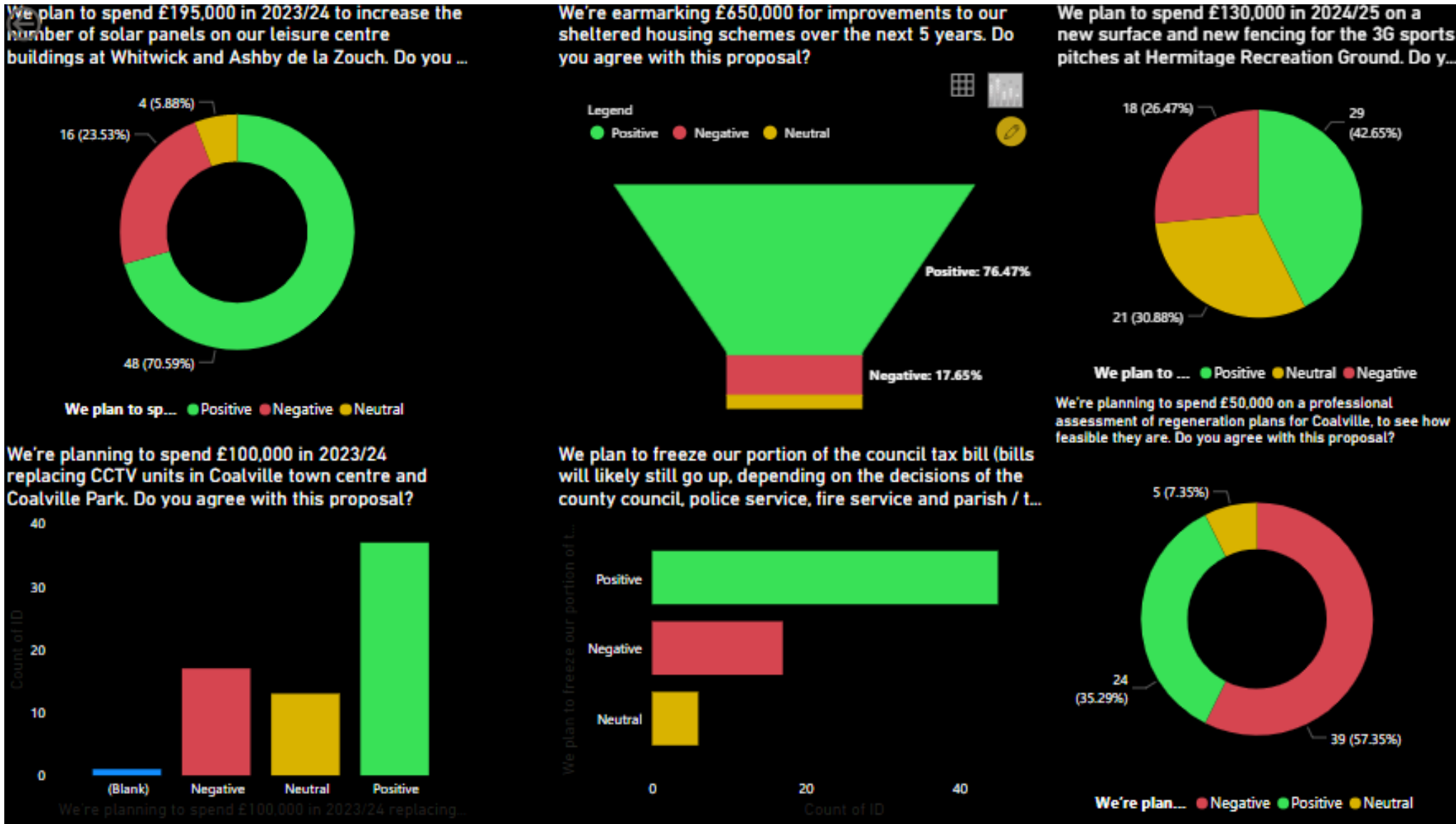
In terms of employment status, the majority of respondents (44 respondents equating to 64.7 %) stated that they are in employment - either part time, full time or self-employed, with the next largest group (19 respondents, equating to 27.94 %) telling us they are retired with 3 respondents preferring not to answer.

When responding to a question about gender, there was an even split between those identifying as male and those identifying as female (32 respondents for each category) and only 4 respondents preferring not to answer.

In terms of race, the overwhelming majority of respondents (92.64%), told us they from a White/Caucasian background, of the remaining respondents 3 preferred not to answer and 2 identified as being mixed race/ethnicity)

The primary capacity in which respondents were completing the survey was as an individual (this applied to 67 respondents with the remaining one undertaking the survey on behalf of a business)

Responses to focussed budget questions



The majority of respondents (70.59%) were positive about the proposal to spend £195,000 increasing the Solar Panels at the Whitwick and Ashby Leisure Centre with only 23.53% responding negatively to the concept and 5.88% remaining neutral.

In respect of the plan to allocate £650,000 for improvements to sheltered housing schemes over the next 5 years, again the response was predominantly positive - with respondents (76.47%) in agreement with the proposal. Only 12 respondents reacted negatively towards the plan, and 4 were neutral towards the concept.

Opinion was much more divided over the proposal to allocate £130,000 in 2024/25 on a new surface and new fencing for the 3G sports pitches at Hermitage Recreation Ground – 21 respondents (30.88%) were neutral towards the plan, 18 respondents (26.47%) disagreed with this proposal and 29 respondents (42.65%) were in agreement with the proposal.

By far the strongest negative reaction was to the proposal to spend £50,000 on a professional assessment of regeneration plans for Coalville - 39 respondents (57%) were in disagreement with the proposal with only 24 respondents (35%) responding positively. The remaining 5 respondents were neutral about the proposal.

A proposal looked on far more favourably was the plan to freeze the District Council’s portion of the Council tax bill - 45 out of 68 respondents (66%) were in favour of this plan, with only 17 people reacting negatively to the idea.

The proposal in respect of allocating £100,000 to replace CCTV cameras in Coalville was another popular proposal - 55% were in support of this plan with 25% responding negatively and the remainder having a neutral opinion on the issue.



There was divided opinion over the proposal to allocate £2.2 million in 2023/24 upgrading the Council’s fleet of vehicles to electric vehicles, making them zero carbon - 47% were in support of this plan with 41% responding negatively and the remainder choosing to remain neutral.

There was a greater level of support for the proposal of a below-inflation increase to council home rents of 7% and investment of the money into council homes to maintain a decent standard – 67.65% of the responses being positive and only 22.06% of the responses being negative.

A further proposal in respect of council housing pertained to the plan to spend £3.1 million in 2023/24 on retro-fitting sustainable energy measures on our council housing which will be partly funded by £1.4 million in Government grant funding - this was widely supported by the respondents with 67.65% in agreement with the proposal and 23.53% against, with the remainder being neutral on the issue.

We had 28 individual pieces of feedback on the budget proposals overall:

Instead of using Homes bonus to prop up your election commitments that you never increase the rates. You should be more honest with the electorate how you do it.

You can spend all the money you like but can't even put the street lights on at night-Disgrace.

Need a new bin.... Have to wait 6 weeks. Disgrace.

Planning Dept - Disgrace.

Pensions you are all on - Disgrace.

Dealing with NWLDC is an absolute Public Sector couldn't give a toss nightmare.

Spending money on consultations then disagreeing with them, aka: the old leisure centre for instance, is a very bad look.

Whilst another freeze in council tax is welcome, the level of council tax is still relatively high compared to other districts in the county/ country, so perhaps you should consider a cut rather than just a freeze, to help hard-pressed residents?

Freezing Council Tax for 14 years has led to funding shortfalls elsewhere. With inflation at ~10% what is hidden in this survey are the real (and possibly otherwise unnecessary) cuts to services. Council Tax is quite a fair tax, albeit that there maybe should be an extra Band for Mansions. For most people's incomes it is not a particularly significant Tax, this "zero increase" has become a NWL Conservative Party mantra, which now appears to be more about ego than care in the community.

As for the zero carbon vehicle upgrades, this should only be done when the vehicles NEED replacing as any new vehicle even if it is electric will have a larger environmental cost (in its manufacturing) than using old ones until they can go no more.

Both these policies have a "look at us" vanity air about them.

It is important to install energy saving measures for environmental purposes but you do need to publish the saving made on energy bills so residents can see the cost benefit as well.

Coalville needs a complete rethink of the centre area, Home Bargains leaving the Belvoir will gut the place and mean a lot less footfall. Ignore vanity projects like a cinema and bowling alley, Meridian is close enough,

The District Council have not increased their part of the Council Tax at all in the last 14 years, due in the main to New Homes Bonus & extra Council Tax from all the new development. Inflation compounded over that period based on consumer price index shows an increase of more than 35%. A modest increase in council tax over that period would have provided additional funds for council services, including much needed additional car parking in Ashby, as recognised in the Council's Future Provision for Parking Services 2020 to 2023. The Council Delivery Plan states "Our commitment to promote a 'shop local, support North West Leicestershire ethos" is not being met for Ashby if additional parking is not provided. The planned car parking provision on the Money Hill development funded by developers is too far out and inaccessible for those shopping in or visiting the town centre. There is too much disparity between the planned future expenditure on services and community and cultural facilities for the Coalville Urban Area in comparison with the needs in Ashby (Key Service Centre in the Local Plan).

The freezing of the Council Tax for another year is unacceptable in that funding for any improvements to the locale have to be sourced from reserves or "private" funding which needs paying back. This is equivalent to robbing Peter to pay Paul. The switching to electric vehicles in an effort to make them zero carbon there's no concrete evidence to suggest that they have no impact on the environment since the metals and materials for the batteries are mined. Also there is still, particularly in NWL, very little effort to install charging stands has been made in easy accessible locations ie town centre carparks

You really need to think about the vulnerable and everyone is struggling. Maybe next year when hopefully things are on the up you can think about increases in rent, council tax.

1. Coalville cctv. Is there any quantifiable evidence that the spending will actually reduce crime / keep people safer? Would better lighting perhaps be more effective?

2. £50 k consultation on regeneration is a huge sum. This program has been ongoing for years now. Surely we know what needs to be done and what's most likely to give the best payback? Is it going to tell us anything new?

3. Agree with increasing council rents. I'm inclined to think they should go up by inflation. Hard one.

4. Completely disagree with freezing council tax. We can't make improvements or maintain service without investment.

5. I assume vehicles will only get replaced with electric vehicles when they are at the end of their life and not early?

Repairs to homes need sorting because some of us are waiting months for things or over a year for outside repairs it's not right.

It's like the repairs are done with a sticking plaster and that will do, people are sick of it.

It's not about the allocation of funds but the actual budgets is crazy - these costs per item need interrogating to a fine detail and local tradespeople should be contacted for honest quotes - Not overinflated estimated

Some good ideas. Personally I think it's too early and expensive to go fully electric but would be interested to see the roi. Also difficult to back the council housing proposal without more detail.

Nothing to support small businesses?

Subsidies in public transport are needed instead of isolating people in villages etc. people cannot travel to work or other appointment, social reasons.

Wasting vast sums of money on consultations for regenerating Coalville- yes regeneration is needed and to attract retailers but people (councils) have been talking about it for decades and nothing ever changes

The pavements in some places are awful, not good for elderly or those with disabilities ie past the library towards hotel street .

Do vehicles need upgrading, can we put this off for 12/24months and spend on more urgent things.... time to invest in the town and make people proud.... from someone who recently moved back.

What about the rest of the Area. Why is it always Coalville?

To carry on doing good rather than the useless crap coalville can are trying to do

2 million changing vehicles!?! I'm sure that money could be put to better use elsewhere. With the rising cost of electricity and lack of charging points I'm not sure how much this will benefit the community & council budgets

£100,00 for CCTV how much of that gets spent in brides? The white leisure centre should have been designed with energy saving measures, everyone active should pay for more improvements. Potentially the designers who signed off lack of solar panels should pay for them. Cars, all NWLDC staff/visitors should be charged for parking if they do not have an electric car?

Irresponsible to not increase council tax for as long as it has been. It would have been a preferred option to have increased council tax for all last year than charging for an extra green bin.

Although below inflation, if council home rents are being increased then the standard of repairs and maintenance must be higher.

Some costs may be too low for investment, for example solar panels. Will there be any additional funds to support from the council.

I think there should be some increase in council tax to fund services and minimise any additional charges.

It's great to see all the initiatives proposed for Coalville and I am sure it will improve the town centre but there seems to be nothing for towns and villages in NW other than Coalville. What about Ashby? The town centre, which is a night life hot spot, could really do with additional money being spent on CCTV. There is no community centre on Ashby. I appreciate Ashby is the cash cow for NWLDC so isn't it time to start investing in this town too - cycle lanes, better footpaths, money towards events etc.

Spend money that will alleviate poverty

Freezing the council tax year on year for the past 14 years has reduced the budget by over 25% during this time, therefore significantly reducing services by over a quarter. It's applying austerity at a local level and it has simply resulted in diminished public services. It sounds like a vote-winning approach but in the long-term the reduction in services has resulted in great dissatisfaction with local services and politicians. And the public is totally unaware that NWLDC has frozen council tax for 13 years, if you ask anyone on the street they won't be aware, as the increases in tax for LCC/police/parish councils has increased the overall tax they pay. So the NWLDC portion is a drop in the ocean and totally missed. False economy, need to stop underinvesting in our public services and start delivering more local projects that help local people in a tangible way.

The solar panels should have been considered when the new sports centre was designed. It will now cost more to retrofit. How many years will the energy saved take to recoup the cost?

Vehicles should be replaced at end of life with electric/ hybrid and not before.

No money being spent in Moira, the Woulds Court land is an absolute disgrace. Do something with it while you wait to build social housing. The flats nearby are also a disgrace to NWLD, do you care?

Why do none of the recently build warehouses have solar panels? To late now should have been a planning condition, still possible for those still in the planning stage.