

## **Solihull Council Plan 2025-30: Consultation Analysis**

### **Contents**

Background.....	2
About the Phase 2 Consultation .....	2
Who Responded to the Phase 2 Consultation? .....	3
Vision.....	4
How we have responded to feedback .....	5
Ambitions.....	6
How we have responded to feedback .....	7
How we will deliver .....	8
How we have responded to feedback .....	10
Monitoring.....	10
How we have responded to feedback .....	11
Staff focus groups.....	11
Key findings .....	11
How we have used the feedback .....	12
Next steps .....	12



## Background

The Solihull Council Plan is the Council's most important document. To support the development of a new Council Plan for 2025-30, it was agreed that we would undertake a programme of engagement with residents and local organisations to inform the Plan.

We took a two-phase approach to delivering this engagement. In phase one, between January and March 2025, we engaged with partners, Councillors, businesses and the Voluntary Community Faith & Social Enterprise sector about the Council's vision and the most important topics for our new Plan to focus on. The feedback that we received was used to inform the content of the draft Council Plan.

At the same time, we engaged with Council employees about the organisational vision and values. This informed the new vision which we then consulted on in phase two of the engagement, which involved a wider public consultation on draft Plan content.

The rest of this document describes phase two of the engagement and summarises the key findings.

## About The Phase 2 Consultation

The consultation was open from Tuesday 6 May to Sunday 15 June 2025. It was publicly available and aimed at people who live and / or work in the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull.

To take part in the consultation, respondents had to create an account for the Council's digital engagement platform '[Your Voice Solihull](#)'. Paper copies of the survey were also available at four key locations across the Borough: the Council House reception, The Core Library, Shirley Library and Chelmsley Wood Library.

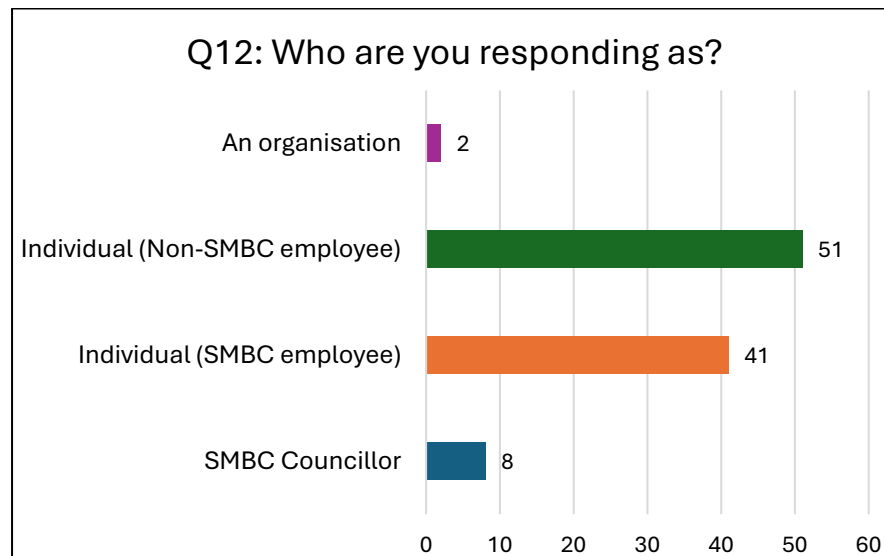
There were over **2,000 unique views** of the Your Voice Solihull web page and we received **103 responses** to the consultation.

We organised two focus groups for Solihull Council employees based on the questions outlined in the consultation document. We also talked to the Learning Disabilities and Autism Partnership Boards.



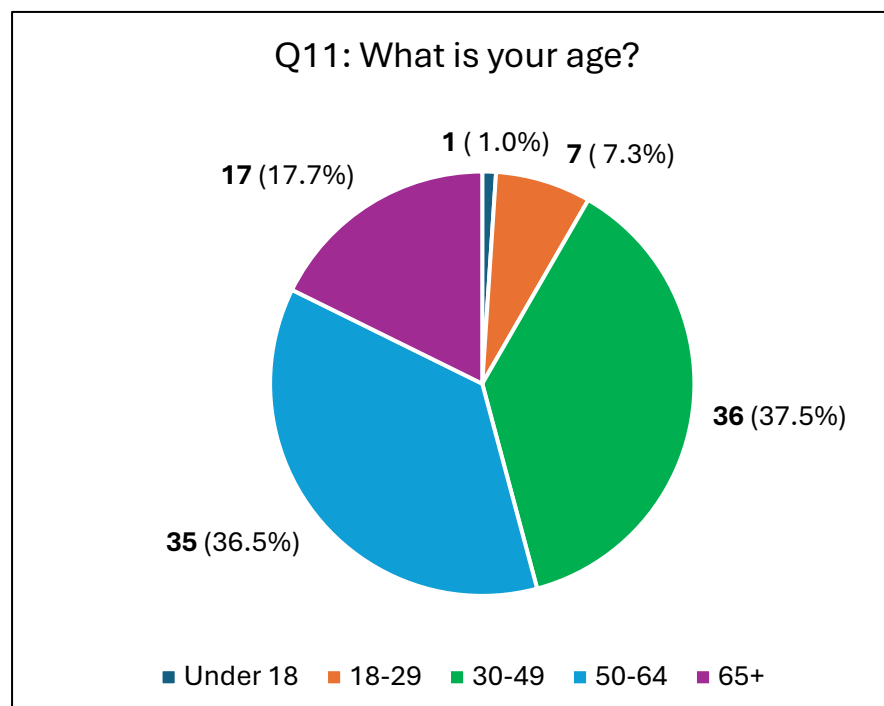
## Who Responded to the Phase 2 Consultation?

We received the most responses (49%) from individuals who were not Council employees; 40% of responses were from individuals that worked for Solihull Council; 8 (8%) responses were from Solihull Councillors; and 2 responses (2%) were from organisations. 1 respondent did not answer this question.



Among the 84 respondents that provided a postcode, most (82%) were in Solihull. The remaining 18% had postcodes within neighbouring local areas such as Birmingham, Warwickshire and Worcestershire and are likely to be people who work in Solihull.

Those aged 30-49 and 50-64 were the most represented groups within the consultation, accounting for 38% and 36% of the total responses, respectively.



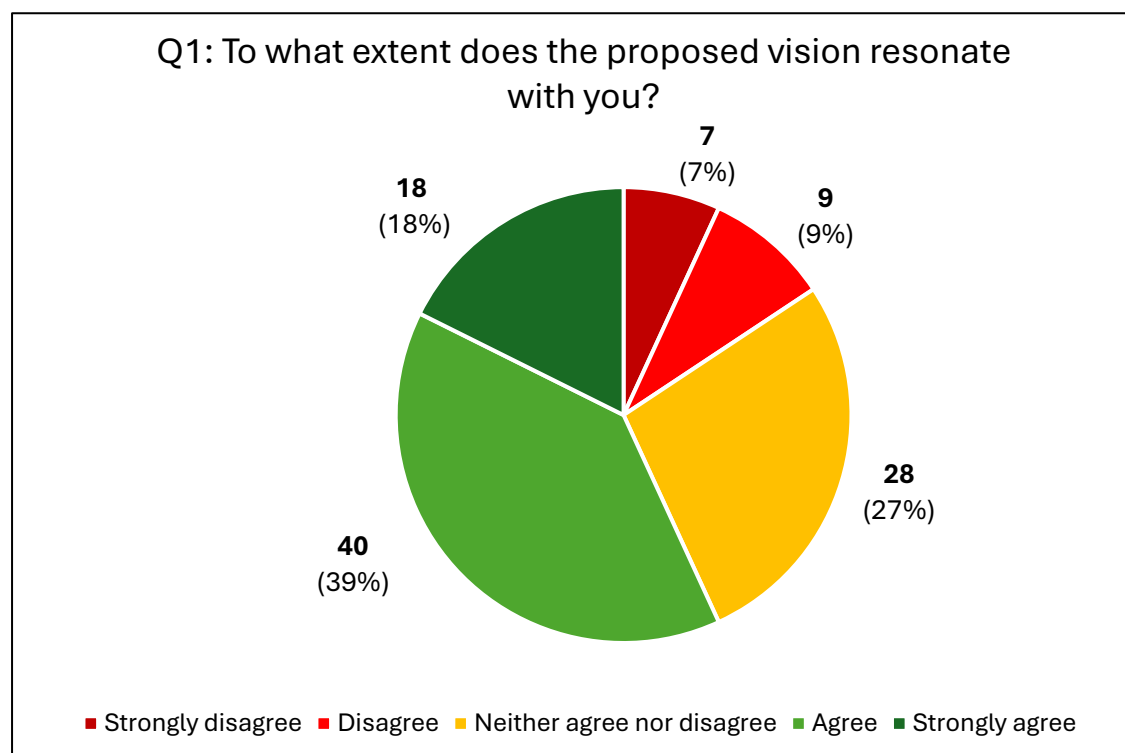


## Vision

Question 1 asked respondents: ***“To what extent does the proposed vision “Solihull – a great place to live, work, invest and enjoy” resonate with you?”***

58 respondents (57%) stated that the proposed vision did resonate with them, including 18 (18%) who strongly agreed. In contrast, 16 (16%) disagreed with the proposed vision, including 7 (7%) who strongly disagreed. A reasonable minority of respondents (27%) indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the vision.

1 respondent did not answer this question.



Question 2 asked respondents to provide comments to support their answer to Q1.

15 respondents agreed that the vision resonated with them as they believed Solihull is a good place to live. Similarly, 15 comments agreed that the vision represents Solihull and what people living and working in the Borough wanted.

16 comments related to the vision being too vague or broad. However, their reasons for noting this varied. Some comments stated that it was too generic, whilst others felt certain words such as ‘enjoy’ and ‘invest’ did not resonate with them.

9 comments related negatively to the environment, generally reflecting concerns over development on greenbelt land. 5 comments expressed concerns over crime and antisocial behaviour which they believe conflicted with the proposed vision.



Some comments were received about specific Council services that were outside the remit of this consultation, and these were passed on to the relevant teams.

Some of the comments received were:

“It nicely sums up all the reasons why people may want to be in Solihull.”	“I'm not sure the 'invest' relates much to me.”
“It covers everything we want Solihull to be”	“I strongly agree with the above statement - Solihull is a fantastic place, with a warm community feel, meaning it is a great to both live and work, and with great leisure centres, facilities and restaurants there are plenty of things to enjoy across the Borough.”
“Who wouldn’t want to live in an area that was like this”	“It’s very generic. I expected something a little more aspirational.”

## How we have responded to feedback

The proposed vision was supported by 56% of respondents in the consultation, with a small minority disagreeing with it (16%). It was also supported by most respondents in the earlier phase one engagement. Additionally, in our staff engagement sessions this was the vision that received the most support. Given this support, we did not feel it was necessary to change the proposed vision in the final version of the Plan.

Some comments highlighted that the use of the word ‘invest’ in the vision did not resonate with them. Following consideration, we decided to keep the word ‘invest’ within the vision because being a desirable place to invest is a clear strength of the Borough. In the final version of the Plan, we included references to businesses and Solihull’s thriving economy throughout to ensure that the ‘invest’ element of the vision is clear.

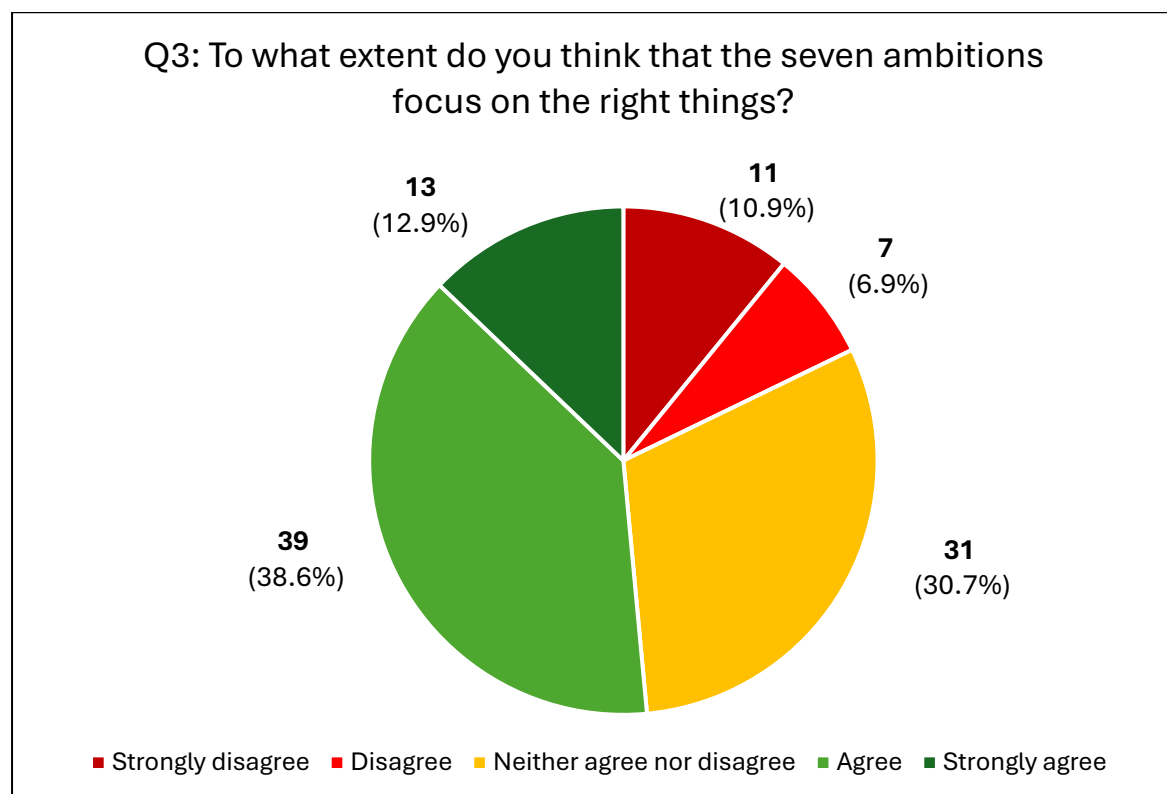


## Ambitions

Question 3 asked: ***“To what extent do you think that the seven ambitions, which we set out to achieve for people and our Borough, focus on the right things?”***

Just over half of respondents (51%) agreed that the seven ambitions focused on the right things for Solihull, including 13% who strongly agreed. However, a minority of respondents (31%) indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed with the ambitions, perhaps suggesting that they only agreed with some of the seven ambitions proposed. A further 18% disagreed with the seven ambitions, including 11% who strongly disagreed.

2 respondents did not answer this question.



Question 4 asked respondents to provide comments to support their answer to Q3.

17 comments agreed that the seven proposed ambitions focussed on the right things, and that they reflected the needs of the Borough and the residents living in it. The two organisations who responded highlighted that the ambitions are consistent with their organisational objectives.

15 respondents stated that the proposed ambitions were too broad or lacked a wider meaning. 4 of the 15 comments noted that the ambitions lacked a specific mention of areas such as affordable housing, financial sustainability, biodiversity, health and community, and public transport. A further 3 comments said the ambitions did not cover essential services provided by the Council, such as highways and refuse services.



The remaining 8 comments said the ambitions were too broad or lacked a deeper connection to Solihull as a place.

4 comments noted that the ambitions were not specific enough about the needs of elderly, young people and the diversity of the Borough.

4 comments related to children and young people. 3 of these were supportive of our ambition, but some of the feedback stressed that children and young people should be the Council's main priority or that there needs to be a specific focus on children with special educational needs. The remaining comment queried what 'the best outcomes for children and young people' meant in practice.

3 comments inquired about the monitoring of the Plan and metric-based targets for how the ambitions will be achieved. Question 10 of the consultation directly asked respondents for comments on how the Plan progress will be monitored, and a comprehensive analysis of this can be found on page 13 below.

Some of the comments relating to the seven ambitions were:

"It's the right focus and the ambitions of doing the best for the residents"	"Not clear what 'best possible outcomes' means for Children & Young people."
"It's a strong ambition. Delivery is key."	"I do think the 7 ambitions are relatively reflective of the Borough and the services offered."
"I like the variation of ambitions. However, personally, environmental goals are more important and should be emphasised."	"The Ambitions are a bit misleading. There is no mention of health, community or environment."
"Most will be helpful to the community."	"They fit the purpose of the Council."

## How we have responded to feedback

As we only consulted on the draft Plan on a Page and the key activities for our seven ambitions, rather than the entire Council Plan itself, we received comments concerning the lack of reference to specific groups, such as the elderly, care experienced persons, young people and diverse groups of residents. Further comments we received queried what a specific ambition intended to achieve. We have taken steps to ensure that the final version of the Council Plan addresses this within the sections for each ambition.

Other comments related to the ambitions being too broad, or not specific enough to areas such as transport, biodiversity or affordable housing. As we wanted to ensure that our ambitions were concise, it was not possible to cover everything within the title of the ambition. However, we have ensured that references to specific areas were detailed within the explanatory text relating to each ambition. For example, references to public



transport can be found within ‘the right conditions for everyone to thrive’ and ‘a vibrant economy with increased access to opportunities’ ambitions.

Some comments noted that basic Council services, such as highways, refuse collection and street cleaning, were not mentioned in the ambitions. However, it is important to recognise that the Council Plan is a strategic document which aims to articulate our top goals and objectives, which account for only 15% - 20% of the overall work that we do. We still aim provide high-quality everyday services that residents expect and need alongside these identified ambitions.

Following feedback received through the consultation, we have also incorporated a highlights page (page 6) in the Council Plan, which provides key statistics relating to Council services. Included with that, for example, are the number of waste and recycling collections and applications processed for primary and secondary school places in 2024/25.

A further comment stated that there was no mention of ‘delivering value for money’ within the ambitions. However financial sustainability is covered within ‘How we will work’ section of the Plan, rather than as a separate ambition, as we need to ensure that financial sustainability runs through everything that we do.

## How we will deliver

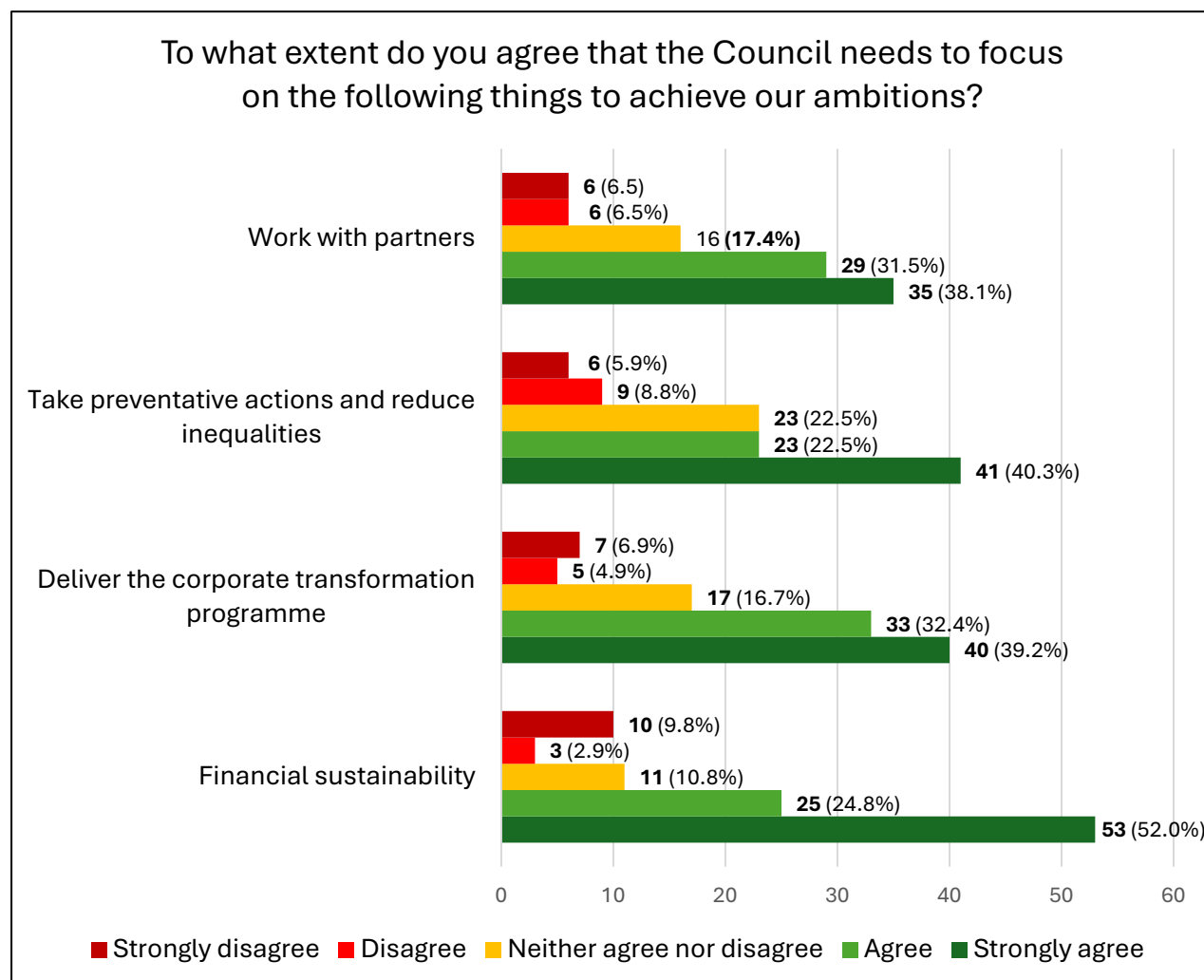
The bar chart below summaries the responses from questions 5 to 8 of the consultation document. In response to the question ***“To what extent do you agree that the Council needs to focus on the following things to achieve our ambitions?”***, respondents were asked rate the following statements:

- Achieve financial sustainability (ensuring that the Council can provide essential services while living within its means) - Q5.
- Deliver our corporate transformation programme (transforming the way that we work to ensure the Council is fit for the future) - Q6.
- Work with partners (for example, public sector organisations, businesses, the Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise and Faith Sector) to achieve the best outcomes for Solihull) - Q7.
- Take preventative actions and prevent inequalities (embedding a ‘think prevention and addressing inequalities ethos’ into everything we do and taking targeted action to prevent problems from occurring) - Q8.

Overall, all four statements setting out how the Council will work to deliver its ambitions were strongly supported, with most respondents agreeing / strongly agreeing that we should focus on them within the new Council Plan.



The statement with the strongest support related to financial sustainability, which was backed by 76.8% of respondents, including 52% who strongly agreed. 9.8% of respondents stated they strongly disagreed with the Council working to achieve financial sustainability and some of the comments received expressed concern that financial sustainability would mean an overall cut to service levels.



The second highest supported statement related to the corporate transformation programme, which was agreed with by 71.6% of those surveyed, of whom 39.2% strongly agreed. Working with partners was also backed by 69.6% of respondents, including 38.1% who strongly agreed.

Although 62.8% of individuals agreed that the Council should focus on preventative actions and preventing equalities, it was the least supported statement in the ‘How we will work’ section. Notably, 23 respondents (22.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Taking preventative actions and preventing inequalities also had the highest proportion of disagreement (14.7%) out of the four statements overall. The comments we received indicated that some people did not fully understand what this meant in practice.



## How we have responded to feedback

Some comments called for the Council to be more explicit about how we will work, particularly relating to relationships with partners and the corporate transformation programme. Unlike the ambitions, which were accompanied by information about the key activities that we Plan to undertake to achieve these ambitions, the ‘how we will work’ statements were only displayed as standalone statements on the Plan on a Page. Based on the feedback received, we have ensured that the final version of the Plan clearly explains what these statements mean.

## Monitoring

Question 10 asked: ***“Do you have any comments about how we plan to monitor progress in achieving our ambitions?”***

The main theme within the comments for Q10 was the need for clear metrics and Key Performance Indicators that allow progress to be tracked, which received 12 associated remarks? 7 respondents stated that there should be greater transparency on the progress of the Council Plan and whether the Council is achieving its ambitions, with suggested reporting periods being on an annual basis. Similarly, 4 respondents agreed that the existing monitoring in place was sensible, but some reiterated that progress reporting should be more widely available.

A further 3 comments questioned how the Council was going to measure success for areas such as partnership working and delivering services ‘that people needed in the right place at the right time’. Finally, there were 2 comments each relating to the need for greater consultation with residents by the Council, and a stronger focus on action in implementing the Council Plan than monitoring the Plan itself.

Some of the comments relating to the monitoring of the Council Plan were:

“Progress should be shared periodically (annually minimum).”	“What are the measurable factors? Each key activity bullet point needs a measure and/or date that can be actively tracked”
“Clear and open monitoring of progress is essential”	“Please be more transparent in setting metrics and publicising them. A public forum to discuss would be a good idea.”
“I’m assuming that monitoring methods will be in place, but it will be good to do this and to keep workers and residents aware of how the Council are doing and be honest and transparent.”	“Very specific actions with very specific outcome targets”



## How we have responded to feedback

Some of the comments related to sharing progress of the Council Plan at least annually.

It is important to recognise that progress is reviewed annually by elected members at the Resources and Delivering Value Scrutiny Board and an Annual Report is made publicly available on the Council's website.

There was also strong demand for key metrics to be used to ensure that the Council is on track to achieve its ambitions. As part of the reporting and monitoring process, we will set out milestones for the key activities delivering our seven ambitions. Progress against these will be reviewed each quarter by the Council's [Corporate Leadership Team](#) and we are considering how to make information about progress more widely available.

## Staff focus groups

Two focus groups were held for Council employees during the consultation period. We sent invites to staff who had previously attended a Lunch and Learn session on 'What the Council Plan means to you' on 26 February.

The participants of the focus groups were asked the same questions as in the Council Plan consultation document but were provided with more time to allow a more in-depth discussion.

## Key findings

Both groups found the vision to be clear and concise, as well as representative about Solihull. However, there was feedback which stated that whilst the vision was accurate, some wording appeared too generic.

The focus groups found the ambitions relevant and covered the current opportunities and challenges facing the Borough. There was a debate on whether the ambitions were too short, but it was acknowledged that more detailed ambitions could result in them being too long and descriptive. Minor changes to the ambitions were suggested, such as changing their order to ensure they were grouped by 'people' and 'place'.

Both groups agreed that the four statements which set out how we will work to achieve our ambitions were right for Solihull. There was strong support for working with partners, but some comments stressed that the 'partners' element was not specific enough. Further feedback identified the lack of reference to 'community' and 'people' which it was suggested could make the language appear as too corporate. Some comments also reflected that the Plan did not focus on the 'business as usual' activities undertaken by the Council.

Both focus groups agreed that the arrangements for monitoring for the Council Plan was sensible. However, there was demand for greater transparency on the reporting of the



Council Plan, to make it as easy as possible for people to see whether the Council was on track to achieving its ambitions. One comment suggested a short summary of each quarterly reporting period should be published on the news page of the Council's website. It was highlighted that greater transparency would align with the organisational values of being 'Trustworthy' and 'Respectful' in particular.

### How we have used the feedback

After staff members suggested re-ordering the ambitions on the 'Plan on a Page' to allow them to be structured based on 'People' and 'Place', we amended the document to show the four ambitions on the left of the page being people focussed, and the three in the middle reflecting Solihull as a place.

There was a clear demand within both focus groups to demonstrate the Council's organisational values in practice. We have a [People Strategy](#) which helps employees to understand their role and responsibilities in delivering the Council's priorities. This is supplemented by an Action Plan which highlights the progress in achieving aspirations for our workforce across five key themes.

### Next steps

The [Council Plan for 2025-30](#) was approved by Council on 8 July 2025.

Going forward, the Plan will be refreshed on an annual basis to take into account the evolving local, regional, and national changes affecting Solihull.

Performance against the Council Plan is scrutinised annually by elected Councillors at the [Resources and Delivering Value Scrutiny Board](#). This is typically in March each year, but we are considering changing this timeline to July, to better align scrutiny with the annual refresh of the Council Plan.

The final Annual Report for the previous Council Plan cycle will be published in August 2025. That will reflect on our achievements and highlights during the period from April 2024 to March 2025.