

Summary of results: CIPFA Consultation Panel Survey Winter 2009/10

1. Introduction

396 members of the CIPFA Consultation panel responded to a survey on climate change, sustainability and carbon reduction, carried out between 17th December 2009 and 22nd January 2010. The Panel consists of a mix of stakeholders who work for or with different public sector bodies across the UK, mainly but not exclusively in the finance function.

2. How much do you know about each of the following climate change initiatives of the last few years?

Table 1

	A lot %	A fair amount %	A bit %	Not heard of %
Climate Change Act 2008	2	12	66	19
Performance Indicators for climate change	3	17	59	22
Low carbon transition plan	1	9	53	37
Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme	4	18	56	22
10:10 climate campaign	1	14	36	49

2.1 Respondents were asked how much they knew about four initiatives affecting the public sector and one public campaign to which a number of public bodies have signed up to (the 10:10 campaign).

2.2 In most cases, respondents knew a bit about the initiatives – 66% knew a bit about the Climate change Act 2008, 59% knew a bit about performance indicators, 56% knew a bit about the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRCEES) and 53% knew about the Low Carbon transition plan.

2.3 However, nearly half (49%) had not heard of the 10:10 climate campaign which had been high profile in the national newspapers in recent months – asking individuals, public organisations and private companies to sign up to a reduction of 10% in 2010 in their use of finite resources.

2.4 The initiative that elicited the greatest knowledge was the CRCEES where 22% (nearly one quarter) claimed to know a lot or a fair amount about the scheme.

3. Policies, plans and guidance

3.1 Nearly half of respondents claimed their organisation (47%) had a climate change, sustainability or carbon reduction policy whilst half (50%) claimed to have a plan of action. A further 4% said that they were developing these or they had appointed green champions or had specific smaller scale schemes.

3.2 Nearly one quarter of respondents claimed their organisation (28%) had a green procurement policy and nearly one third (32%) claimed to have green procurement guidance. A further 3% said that they included green procurement within their overall procurement policy, or had some specific smaller scale green procurement schemes.

4. Knowledge of sustainability costing and reporting guidance

Table 2

	A lot %	A fair amount %	A bit %	Not heard of %
Whole life costing	7	27	43	23
Social Return on Investment	1	10	38	51
Global reporting initiative	1	6	34	60
Greenhouse gas protocol	1	8	40	51
Accounting for sustainability – Connected Reporting Framework	2	8	37	53
Govt. Financial Reporting Manual (FRem) Exposure Draft – Sustainability Reporting	1	5	31	62

4.1 The only guidance that had any sort of real recognition was Whole Life Costing where 34% knew a lot or a fair amount. A further 43% knew a bit about this, making 77% who knew a lot/a fair amount/a bit About Whole Life Costing.

4.2 Over half in each case had not heard of the other five costing and reporting guidance initiatives or protocols. However, 49% knew a lot/fair amount/bit about the greenhouse gas protocol, 49% the Social Return on Investment (SROI), and 47% knew a lot/fair amount/bit about Accounting for Sustainability.

4.3 The Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRem) Exposure Draft had the least recognition – only 37% knew a lot/fair amount/ a bit about this.

5. To what extent should climate change and sustainability factors be incorporated into public sector decisions etc?

Table 3

	Large extent %	Some extent %	Not at all %	DK %
Strategic planning	60	36	1	3
Policy formulation	55	40	1	4
Purchasing decisions	54	41	2	4
Day to day staff behaviour	50	44	2	4
Investment decisions	50	43	3	4
Operational decision making	36	55	5	4
Annual reporting	31	61	4	4
Governance	29	59	6	6
Accounting & reporting systems	17	64	11	9

5.1 Panel members were clear in the importance they attached to climate change issues – between one half and two thirds believe climate change and sustainability factors should be incorporated **to a large extent** into public sector strategic planning (60%), policy formulation (55%), purchasing decisions (54%), day to day staff behaviour (50%) and investment decisions (50%).

5.2 However, although a significant percentage thought operational decision making, annual reporting and governance should be incorporated to a large extent the majority thought these factors should only be incorporated to some extent. It was clear, however, that accounting and reporting systems were only considered to relate to climate change to some extent.

6. Information on climate change and its costs kept by the organisation

Table 4

Information kept	%	Costs kept	%
Amount of energy used	81	Cost of energy used	85
Amount of water used	66	Cost of water used	79
Volume of waste generated/recycled/disposed	66	Cost of waste	68
Amount of greenhouse gases produced	39	Costs of greenhouse gas reduction	26

6.1 Most respondents were aware that statistics were kept on the amount of energy used by the organisation (81%) and the costs of this (85%). In the case of energy, water and waste more were aware that the **costs** of these resources were kept than were aware that the actual usage was monitored. In particular, 13% more were aware that water costs were kept than were aware water usage was recorded.

6.2 Less than half were aware of any records being kept regarding the production of greenhouse gases (39%) and only one quarter (26%) knew that costs of greenhouse gas reduction were being kept.

7. Who keeps information?

7.1 In nearly half of cases (46%) information was kept by the person responsible for building services/energy and water use. 38% of those who replied worked for an organisation where a dedicated climate change/sustainability officer was responsible for keeping such information.

Table 5

	%
Person responsible for building services/energy and water use	46
Dedicated climate change/sustainability officer	38
Finance/Resources officer	16
No particular person	8
Don't know/Not applicable	22
Other (including devolved green champions, specific job titles e.g. Energy Conservation officer, centralised Green forum/group)	4

8. Financial benefits from specific environmental schemes

Table 6

	%
Substantial	4
Moderate	23
Minimal	23
None so far due to cost of investment	6

DK/Not applicable	43
Other	2

8.1 A quarter of respondents (23%) said they had derived moderate benefits from specific environmental schemes, and a further 4% said these had been substantial. A further quarter (23%) said the benefits had been minimal whilst 6% said there had been no benefits so far due to cost of investment. However, nearly half of respondents (43%) did not know the benefits or this did not apply to them.

9. Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme

9.1 A total of 19% of respondents were aware their organisation qualified for the Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme. A further 5% knew their organisation did not qualify. Two thirds (68%) were unsure one way or the other.

9.2 A total of 45% of those who responded felt their organisation was very or quite well prepared to consider making a Carbon Reduction Commitment (NB this was generally, not just in connection with the CRCS scheme, as a number of CRCS "Unsure" answered this question).

10. Annual climate change or sustainability reports for stakeholders

10.1 A total of 18% knew their organisation produced an annual climate change or sustainability report (NB these are compulsory for Scottish local authorities). A quarter (26%) said such a report was not produced by their body, whilst half (51%) were unsure one way or the other.

11. Encouraging environmental sustainability in the community

11.1 One third of respondents (34%) knew that their organisation had encouraged environmental sustainability within the local community (these were likely mainly to be local authorities). 14% said this was not encouraged by their organisation. A further 44% were unsure one way or the other.

12. Demographics

12.1 A total of 63% of respondents held a finance related role, 6% were in procurement, and 11% held a resources role. More than one answer was possible. Over one quarter (27%) held non finance related roles.

12.2 Three quarters of respondents (73%) consisted of the following groups: CEO's/directors or equivalent (12%), senior managers (24%) and middle managers (37%). Others (27%) consisted of junior managers, professional advisers, non managers, consultants etc.