

Request:

We are in the process of developing Susie, the Sustainable Society Insight Engine, a platform aimed at facilitating collaboration between councils, academic institutions, and private sector suppliers on climate action. The platform will be provided free of charge and aims to significantly enhance the effectiveness of climate action initiatives, reduce costs and help Wigan Metropolitan Borough increase the speed of your journey to net-zero. Your responses will not only help us tailor the platform to the needs of UK councils but also offer you an early opportunity to shape the development to meet your specific needs.

Below are the questions we would like to ask. If you are able to provide additional information beyond the question itself then this would also be very helpful. For example, for question 1 it would be helpful if you could also provide details of the collaborations – the more, the better.

1. How many councils have you formally collaborated with on climate action initiatives in the past 12 months?
2. Do you have a formal process for sharing information and best practices with other councils? If yes, please provide a link to the documentation outlining this process.
3. Do you have a dedicated team or individual responsible for monitoring climate action initiatives undertaken by other councils?
4. Do you subscribe to any databases, newsletters, or other resources that provide updates on other councils' climate actions? If yes, please list them.
5. How many public consultations or surveys related to climate action have you conducted in the past 12 months?
6. What percentage of businesses in your jurisdiction have been formally engaged in your climate action plans?
7. Do you have a scoring or ranking system for prioritising climate actions? If yes, please provide a link to the documentation outlining this system. If no, how do you currently prioritise potential actions?
8. What are the most significant barriers you face in implementing climate action initiatives?
9. Do you have a formal process for discovering, evaluating and adopting climate solutions from private sector suppliers? If yes, please provide a link to the documentation outlining this process.
10. How many people in the council have roles that focus on environmental issues? Please provide job titles and an indication of whether they are part or full-time roles. If these could be listed in order of seniority it would also be helpful.
11. What percentage of your annual budget is specifically allocated for climate action initiatives?
12. Do you have a sustainable procurement policy? If yes, please provide a link to the policy document.
13. Do you have any case studies highlighting successful climate action initiatives? If yes, please provide links.

Supplementary questions:

If you are able to answer them then it will help us to tailor the development to what you really need.

The platform will provide the following benefits (list below). Please can you tell us how beneficial these would actually be for your net-zero and environmental actions. Please answer on a scale of 1-5 as follows: 1 = Not beneficial at all, 2 = somewhat beneficial 3 = Don't know, 4 = Very beneficial, 5 = Extremely beneficial

1. **Centralized Collaboration Platform:** Susie (the Sustainable Society Insight Engine) will serve as a centralized hub where councils can collaborate on climate action initiatives, share best practices, and coordinate efforts, thereby reducing duplication and increasing efficiency.
2. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** The platform will provide analytics and key performance indicators (KPIs) that councils can use to measure the effectiveness of their climate action initiatives, enabling data-driven decision-making.
3. **Streamlined Public Engagement:** Susie will offer tools for managing public consultations and surveys, making it easier for councils to engage with their communities and gather valuable feedback on climate action plans.
4. **Knowledge Repository:** The platform will feature a comprehensive database of case studies, academic research, and government guidelines, serving as a one-stop-shop for all information related to climate action.
5. **Vendor Marketplace:** Councils will have access to a curated list of private sector suppliers offering innovative climate solutions, complete with reviews and ratings to help in the decision-making process.
6. **Sustainable Procurement Guidance:** Susie will offer resources and tools to help councils develop and implement sustainable procurement policies, aligning their purchasing decisions with their climate goals.
7. **Funding Opportunities:** The platform will provide information on available grants, subsidies, and other funding opportunities for climate action initiatives, helping councils secure the necessary resources.
8. **Real-Time Updates:** Councils will receive real-time notifications on new climate action initiatives, research publications, and funding opportunities, helping them stay up-to-date with the latest developments.
9. **Customized Recommendations:** Using AI algorithms, Susie will offer personalized recommendations for climate action initiatives based on each council's unique needs and circumstances.
10. **Transparency and Accountability:** The platform will feature dashboards that display the progress of various climate action initiatives, enhancing transparency and accountability.
11. **Legal and Regulatory Compliance:** Susie will offer guidance on how to comply with national and international climate regulations, reducing the risk of legal issues.
12. **Community Building:** The platform will enable councils to create digital interest communities and working groups, facilitating more focused and effective collaboration.
13. **Skill and Knowledge Sharing:** Councils can share their expertise and learn from others through webinars, forums, and other educational resources available on the platform.
14. **Reduced Operational Costs:** By streamlining various processes and offering a centralized platform for multiple needs, Susie can help councils reduce operational costs.
15. **Global Network:** Councils will have the opportunity to connect with international counterparts, fostering a global community focused on climate action.
16. **Have we missed anything?** Please tell us about any other benefits that you'd like to see from the platform.

Response:

1. As part of Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), Wigan Council routinely work with the 9 other districts within the city region to achieve the Net Zero Carbon 2038 commitment. This has been the focus over the past 12 months.

2. GMCA created a number of internal working groups to tackle the climate emergency across the city region, including the GM Climate Emergency Group and the Decarbonising of the Public Estate Group. GMCA should be contacted for any information pertaining to these groups.
3. The Climate Response Team at Wigan Council work with GM colleagues to progress climate action across the city region.
4. Climate Emergency UK climate action scorecards, Friends of the Earth routine assessments of climate action by local authorities, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero annual greenhouse gas emissions per borough, APSE and APSE Energy newsletters and benchmarking.
5. 1
6. 0-10% of businesses
7. Not currently. Wigan Council are working on a risk matrix approach to prioritise climate adaptation and mitigation measures that both the Council, and the borough, need to focus on.
8. Lack of behavioural change across society including the general public, businesses, organisations etc. Misinformation and fake news surrounding climate change hampering any awareness raising. Lack of funding and support from central government for local authorities to deliver on Net Zero ambitions.
9. No.
10. This question is too broad – there is a whole directorate within Wigan Council dedicated to Environment. Job roles pertaining to ‘environmental issues’ relate to over 1,000 staff members.
11. Less than 5%
12. No, however there are sustainable procurement principles within our current Procurement Policy.
13. Please see below links for progress on climate action

[Annual Progress report on the climate crisis 2020-2021 \(wigan.gov.uk\)](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/annual-progress-report-on-the-climate-crisis-2020-2021)

[Appendix A - Annual Progress Report on the Climate Crisis 2021-22.pdf \(wigan.gov.uk\)](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/annual-progress-report-on-the-climate-crisis-2021-22.pdf)

Supplementary Questions

1. Centralised Collaboration Platform – 5
2. Data Driven Decision Making – 5
3. Streamline Public Engagement – 2
4. Knowledge Repository – 5
5. Vendor Marketplace – 4
6. Sustainable Procurement Guidance – 5
7. Funding Opportunities – 4
8. Real-Time Updates – 2
9. Customised Recommendations – 5
10. Transparency and Accountability – 5
11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance – 2
12. Community Building – 2
13. Skill and Knowledge Sharing – 2
14. Reduced Operational Costs – 4
15. Global Network – 2

Wigan Council would be interested in participating in the government funding for the development of Susie.