

Agenda



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: Friday, 8 March 2024

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Committee Room 1 / Microsoft Teams Meeting

To: Councillors P Hourahine (Chair), B Davies, G Horton, P Bright, C Baker-Westhead, S Cocks, M Evans and L James

Item	Wards Affected
1 <u>Apologies</u>	
2 <u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
3 <u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u> (Pages 3 - 6)	
4 <u>Strategic Asset Rationalisation Plan 2023-28</u> (Pages 7 - 38) a) Officer presentation b) Committee questioning and discussion c) Formation of comments and recommendations	
5 <u>Strategic Equalities Plan 2024-28</u> (Pages 39 - 76) a) Officer presentation b) Committee questioning and discussion c) Formation of comments and recommendations	
6 <u>Scrutiny Adviser Reports</u> (Pages 77 - 84) a) Forward Work Programme Update (Appendix 1) b) Actions Arising (Appendix 2)	
7 <u>Live Event</u> Please click here to watch the Live Event.	

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Date of Issue: Friday, 1 March 2024

Minutes



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 30 January 2024

Time: 10.00 am

Present: Councillors P Hourahine (Chair), B Davies, C Baker-Westhead, S Cocks and M Evans

In Attendance: Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director - Transformation and Corporate Centre), Tracy McKim (Head of People, Policy and Transformation), Robert Green (Assistant Head of Finance) and Samantha Schanzer (Scrutiny Adviser)

Apologies: Councillors G Horton, P Bright and L James

1 Declarations of Interest

None.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- The Committee requested that the wording regarding the City Contact Centre response be reworded for clarity. The Head of People, Policy and Transformation (PPT) informed Committee that there was a customer engagement review currently underway, but would update the action.
- The Chair informed Committee that future mentions of the University of South Wales would be omitted from the minutes unless they were substantial.

The minutes of the previous meeting held **1st December 2023** were **accepted as a true and accurate record**.

3 2024-25 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan

Invitees:

- **Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director for Transformation and Corporate)**
- **Tracy McKim (Head of People, Policy and Transformation)**
- **Robert Green (Assistant Head of Finance)**

The Assistant Head of Finance gave an overview.

The following was discussed:

- The Committee asked what school budgets being protected meant in real terms, for more detail on school's grants received after the budget had been set and the impact this had. The Assistant Head of Finance informed Committee that no budget savings were being requested from schools, but the budget must increase to cover increased

costs and larger numbers of pupils. They informed Committee the formula for schools is prescribed by pupil numbers which was a key factor in allocating the overall budget. They informed Committee that individual school allocations such as grants are channelled through the regional consortium to local authorities (LA). They noted that Welsh Government (WG) have an 2024-25 agenda to reduced and consolidate grants and it would be difficult to determine the exact budget for schools until they received more information, which was likely to be after the budget was set.

- The Committee enquired how these grants were split between the LA and Educational Achievement Service (EAS). The Assistant Head of Finance informed the Committee that each consortium would top-slice each grant to manage their provision. They informed Committee that this could change in future following the new WG changes, but each LA had an input in these decisions taken by EAS as they are stakeholders.
- The Committee queried whether hardening grants into future budgets would provide greater clarity for schools when budgeting. The Assistant Head of Finance informed Committee that WG were not looking to change the temporary nature of grants and the risk of them being cut or removed in future would remain. They highlighted that WG were looking to streamline grants.
- The Committee enquired whether LAs were likely to benefit from the additional funding announced by UK Government to WG and when would WG inform LAs about this. The Assistant Head of Finance noted that there was unlikely to be an announcement from WG regarding this until certainty from UK Government was received. They informed Committee that they could not rely on this funding, but it may be seen in the next financial year.

The Head PPT gave a verbal update on the budget consultation process.

The following was discussed:

- The Committee asked for more information on the Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) process. The Head of PPT informed Committee that an FEIA is carried out on anything that has the potential to impact communities, residents, or staff. They informed Committee that the full list of FEIAs is available on the Newport City Council website, and these were produced early in the process and continuously updated. They noted that FEIAs are produced by people close to the proposal and signed off by Heads of Service.

Conclusion of Committee Reports

The Committee were content with the budget setting and consultation processes.

The Committee were content to acknowledge the minutes from the Performance Scrutiny Committee – People and the Performance Scrutiny Committee - Place and Corporate for forwarding to Cabinet.

4 Scrutiny Adviser Reports

a. Actions Arising

The Scrutiny Advisor noted that there were no new actions.

b. Forward Work Programme

The Scrutiny Advisor noted the date of next meeting to be 8th March 2024

5 Scrutiny Topic Referral Feedback

The Committee discussed the feedback. The Committee agreed with the content of the report and recommended that some reformatting be done within the report for clarity.

The meeting terminated at 10.32 am

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Scrutiny Report

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Part 1

Date: February 2024

Subject Strategic Asset Management Plan 2023-28

Author Scrutiny Advisor

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Rhys Cornwall	Strategic Director – Transformation and Corporate
Tracy McKim	Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Daniel Cooke	Property Services Manager
Sarah Davies	Newport Norse
Cllr Laura Lacey	Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked:

1. To consider the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2023-28 and assess how effective it will be in:
 - a. Providing a framework and
 - b. Reflecting current needs and Corporate Plan priorities
2. To determine whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations to Cabinet.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 Following local elections, Newport City Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 was agreed by Council in 2022. As a result of this, new Plans, such as the People Plan 2023-28 and the Digital Strategy 2023-27, were created and agreed.
- 2.2 The Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) 2023-28 is the latest of these Plans to be received by Committee for feedback prior to its presentation to Cabinet.

Summary

- 2.3 The SAMP establishes that the main areas covered are:
- What the corporate approach is to its property assets and land
 - What behaviours and culture are expected
 - What principles are going to be followed
 - Supporting policies and work
- 2.4 It also establishes the purpose of the Plan as being designed to ensure the principles of asset management are accepted and reflected in the business decisions of all parts of the organisation.
- 2.5 The Plan provides definitions for terms and other policies that support the SAMP including the Corporate Landlord Model and the Community Asset Transfer etc as well as setting out the Corporate decision making processes.
- 2.6 The Plan shows consideration to internal and external priorities, including the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and to the Organisational Climate Change Plan, highlighting two themes of 'Our Buildings' and 'Our Land' and detailing the 2030 vision and priorities for each.
- 2.7 The Plan sets out the actions and behaviours which need to be adopted under each principle. These principles include:
- Property as a Corporate Resource
 - Properties to meet Service and Community Demands
 - Manage Property and Land Commercially
 - Land and Buildings to Stimulate Growth
 - Collaborative and Efficient Working
- 2.8 Finally, the SAMP highlights the implementation and review processes for the Plan going forward.

Previous Consideration of this Item

- 2.7 The Committee have not previously considered this item. The previous SAMP can be viewed [here](#).

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2023-28.
- 3.2 There are a number of policies which support the SAMP and have been attached for Committee's review:
- Appendix 2 - the Corporate Landlord Policy
 - Appendix 3 – the Acquisitions Policy
 - Appendix 4 – the Disposal of Property Assets Policy
 - Appendix 5 – the Community Asset Transfer Policy
- 3.3 An FEIA has been created for this Plan and can be viewed [here](#).

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

- 4.1 **Role of the Committee**

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- Assess whether the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2023-2028 clearly and effectively sets out:
 - The Corporate approach and how that relates to property and land
 - Expectations regarding behaviours and culture
 - The principles to be followed and
 - The supporting work and policies
- Identify any barriers to effective adoption of this Plan.
- Determine if the Committee would like to make a recommendation(s) to Cabinet on the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2023-2028.

4.2 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

5 Ways of Working	Types of Questions to consider:
Long-term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.	What consideration have you given to the long term trends that could affect your proposal or; how could your proposal impact these trends?
	How will the needs of your service users potentially change in the future?
Prevention Prevent problems occurring or getting worse.	What is the objective (or the desired outcome) of this proposal?
	How are you addressing these issues to prevent a future problem?
	How have the decisions, so far, come about? What alternatives were considered?
Integration Considering how public bodies' wellbeing objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.	Are there any other organisations providing similar / complementary services?
	Have you consulted with the health board, third sector, emergency services, businesses and anyone else you think might be impacted?
	What practical steps will you take to integrate your project with existing plans and strategies of other public organisations to help us all contribute fully to the seven national well-being goals?
Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself).	Who have you been working with? Why? Who have you collaborated with in finding out more about this problem and potential solutions?
	How are you co-working with other sectors?

	How are you using the knowledge / information / good practice of others to inform / influence the Council's work?
Involvement The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.	How have you involved the people who are being impacted by this decision?
	How have you taken into account the diverse communities in your decision making?
	How have you used different / alternative methods to reach people and involve them?
	How will you communicate the outcome of your decision?

4.3 Suggested Lines of Enquiry

The Committee may wish to consider:

- How will the Council ensure that the principles of this Plan are accepted and reflected in business decisions?
- What will be the biggest challenges in implementing this Plan and what mitigation is in place to alleviate this?
- What, if any, additional work/resources are required e.g. are new systems required to collect property information? Will additional staff need to be allocated?
- How will community groups and public sector groups be engaged to ensure to optimise usage of assets?
- What challenge will be carried out for current asset usage to ensure best value and efficiency?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Well-being Objective	1 – Economy, Education and Skills	2 – Newport's Environment and Infrastructure	3 – Preventative and Equitable Community and Social Care	4 – An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council
Aims:	Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.	A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.	Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.	Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core.

5.1 The Plan has strong links across all Objectives and all areas of the Council.

6 Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)
- [The Strategic Asset Management Plan 2018-25](#)
- The Community Asset Transfer Policy
- The Corporate Landlord Policy
- The Acquisitions Policy
- The Disposal of Property Assets Policy
- [Climate Change Plan](#)
- [People Policy and Transformation Service Plan](#)
- [Newport City Council FEIA Webpage](#)

Report Completed: February 2024

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Strategic Asset Management Plan Newport City Council



Introduction

Local authorities across Wales hold large real estate (assets made up of land and buildings) which have been acquired, inherited and gifted over many years.

In the final plan details of the estate overview to be added here.

The last 5 years has seen society change in how it interacts with and uses buildings and land to live, work and for recreation. This has seen people transition into using more digital technology through mobile devices and adopted different ways which they interact with each other such as social media, hybrid working, and virtual meetings. The buildings and land which we operate also have to be sustainable and efficient for the future through the use of more sustainably sourced materials, meeting the Council's net zero emissions target.

At Newport City Council we are responsible for preserving some historic buildings and land. But we are also responsible for many other assets and land which people use on a daily basis such as schools, community centres, residential homes, and libraries. Over the last 10 years, the cost of maintaining all of these assets to ensure they are safe to use has become more challenging as budgets have decreased, alongside increasing demands and statutory requirements for the Council to comply with.

Newport City Council's [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#) has 4 Well-being Objectives to deliver its vision for an 'Ambitious, Fairer and Greener Newport for everyone'. This Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) will be a key enabler to support the Council in achieving this overall vision for the citizens of Newport, Newport City Council and its partners which use our buildings and land. It will set out the high-level strategic framework for the effective management of our land and property assets.

Vision - draft

Newport City Council's vision for its property estate is by 2030 to:

"Have a sustainable and optimised estate that will deliver effective services to Newport's communities; are inclusive and provide social value to residents; and will protect assets for future generations to use."

Principles and Framework

The SAMP uses Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Public Sector Asset Management guidelines and Chartered Institute Public Finance Accountancy (CIPFA) Property Asset Management Framework, that requires an asset management strategy to provide rules and consistent structure to how we manage the key resources of property and land.

The SAMP is designed to ensure the principles of asset management are accepted and reflected in the business decisions of all parts of the organisation (officers, senior managers, and Councillors). To achieve this Vision and meet our statutory requirements, Newport City Council has identified 5 core principles, which will enable officers, senior managers, and Councillors to make effective evidence-based decisions on asset management:

1. Corporate Landlord

We need to embed a culture through a Corporate landlord model that recognises that property assets are a key corporate resource and that the Council will make evidence-based decisions on:

- Supporting and achieving the Council's Corporate objectives and strategic priorities set out in the Corporate Plan, and other strategic plans such as Climate Change Plan, Strategic Equalities Plan, Local Development Plan, People Plan, Digital Strategy, Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and service plans. This list is not exhaustive.
- All decisions are made on the best available data and information in accordance with the Council's Constitution and scheme of delegation.
- Ensure effective and robust systems are in place to accurately maintain, monitor and report on the Council's property estate and delivery of the SAMP.
- Ensure land and properties support the Council's long-term vision for buildings to be net zero carbon by 2030.

Properties and land are sustainable corporate resource which will benefit the people of Newport.

2. Community & Service Need

We need to ensure that the Council's estate is maintained to a good standard which will enable staff to deliver effective and efficient services and meet the needs of its residents, businesses, and other key stakeholders across Newport. To achieve this, we will:

- Involve, engage, and listen to communities, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, service users, staff, and other stakeholders to ensure that the Council's buildings and lands meet their needs now and in the future.
- Ensure that buildings and land are inclusive and provide social value to residents, staff, and service users whereby they are safe spaces to use and fulfils statutory / legal requirements.
- Work with our service areas to understand their longer-term requirements, are able to use the latest technology, integration of wider public services to meet the needs and demands of service users.
- Enable and collaborate with community groups, other public services, private and the third sector who are able to optimise the use of the Council's assets where it will benefit the community and provide social value.

3. Estate Optimisation

To manage and maintain property effectively, efficiently, and sustainably, whilst optimising financial return and commercial opportunities from the rationalisation and disposal of land and buildings. To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure property is suitably managed and maintained within budget constraints.
- Challenge the current use of assets and identify co-location opportunities, to include partners, resulting in rationalisation and disposal of our land and buildings where appropriate.
- Seek efficiencies in occupancy and utilisation and move towards modern ways of agile working.
- Challenge the cost of property activities to drive performance improvement.
- Optimise financial return and commercial opportunities.
- Ensure that buildings (New and Existing) are sustainable in design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

4. Economic Growth and Regeneration

To use land and buildings to stimulate development and growth, together with supporting local business needs and encouraging new business to the area. To achieve this, we will:

- Support and align with Newport's Local Development Plan to ensure sustainable development and regeneration for communities in Newport.
- Council and other public services are designed to meet the demand and needs of residents, and businesses now and in the future.
- Ensure Council owned assets and land protect and enhance the biodiversity and environment in Newport.
- Key Council assets stimulate and support regeneration and inward investment.
- Utilise investment for income generation and to create local employment, increase social value and bring sustainable revenues into Council.
- Manage our commercial portfolio effectively, balancing regeneration needs, job creation and income generation.
- Promote a high-quality physical environment and refreshed identity to Bolt on centres.
- Identify a future supply of land, suitable for housing and employment needs.

5. Collaborative and efficient use of buildings and land.

To promote collaborative working where it can provide benefit for service delivery, whilst securing efficiencies and value for money. To achieve this, we will:

- Work with other agencies, third sector and public services to promote and increase co-location and joint service delivery.
- Support the integration of health and social care including Marmot Recommendations that will enable people to live independent and healthy lives within their community.
- Support the wider aspirations of the national and regional priorities of the Welsh Government Cardiff Capital Region, Gwent Public Services Board, and other regional groups.
- Collaborate with private sector consultants and developers to ensure we have an outside in view of best practice and innovation.

NCC Asset Management Policies

To support the strategic and operational delivery of the SAMP, there will also be internal policies which will outline the Council's approach to managing:

1. **Corporate Landlord Policy** – Outlines the role and responsibilities of the Council's property service partner (currently Newport Norse*) to operate and maintain its buildings and land in accordance with the Council's SAMP, corporate policies and procedures.
2. **Acquisitions Policy (Property and Land)** – Provides the principles and approach to any land or property transaction, ensuring that it delivers best value and supports the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives.
3. **Disposal of Property Assets Policy** – Outlines the Council's approach and procedure prior to the disposal assets that are declared surplus to requirements.
4. **Community Asset Transfer Policy** – Sets out the Council's approach to enable communities and groups in Newport to make best use of land and property through community asset transfer.

This will also be supported by Climate Change policies such as building decarbonisation.

Each of these policies have been developed to align with the Council's Constitution and its scheme of delegation, Financial Regulations, Contract Standing Orders, and other legislative and regulatory requirements.

Note: At the time of this policy, Newport Norse Joint Venture are Newport City Council's Corporate Landlord responsible for the operational delivery and maintenance of the Council's Property Estate. This could be subject to change in future and any changes noted as any future incumbent organisation.*

Governance

To support the delivery of the SAMP and its supporting policies and procedures the governance structure below outlines the Council's approach.

Diagram to be added.

Executive Board

The Executive Board have overall oversight of Council's Corporate delivery including those of financial and asset management. Regular monitoring and reporting of progress against corporate service and strategic delivery is undertaken by the Council's Executive Board.

Asset Rationalisation / Optimisation Programme (interim arrangement)

The Asset Rationalisation / Optimisation programme has been established to examine the current and future use of its assets and land. This programme is providing a baseline which Newport City Council will assess, determine and approve the best optimal use of its assets to meet community and service user needs. This programme has enabled the Council to develop the necessary evidence-based data and information for Cabinet, Cabinet Member, and officers to determine the best use of its assets and land. This programme is anticipated to deliver until 2026 and thereafter will go back into business-as-usual activity which is outlined in the governance arrangements below.

Strategic Asset Management Group

The officer Strategic Asset Management Group (SAMG) is a senior officer group with a remit to provide governance and advice on the Council's property and land asset management. SAMG is responsible for developing and delivering this Asset Management Strategy and any other associated Council strategies and policies. SAMG is chaired by the Strategic Director for Transformation & Corporate and includes staff representation from its Corporate Landlord partner (Newport Norse*), Property services, Finance, Asset Rationalisation / Optimisation programme leads and other officer stakeholders.

Capital Assurance Group

The officer Capital Assurance Group (CAG) provide assurance on the delivery of the Council's Capital programme including any property related projects. CAG ensure capital projects are being delivered to time, scope and cost and support the Council's overall Capital and Treasury Management strategies.

Directorate and Service Areas (Head of Service)

Each service area is responsible for the operational management of assets within their portfolio and is set out within the supporting documents and the Council's Scheme of delegation.

Strategies Aligned to SAMP

Below is a list of some of the current national, regional and local Legislation, strategies and plans considered in the development of the SAMP:

- Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Cardiff Capital Region Strategy
- Gwent Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-28
- Gwent Marmot Region Recommendations
- Gwent Regional Partnership Board Plan
- Newport City Council Corporate Plan 2022-27 including Service Plans
- Newport City Council Climate Change Plan 2022-27
- Newport City Council Local Development Plan and other place strategies
- Newport City Council Digital Strategy, Strategic Equalities Plan and People Plans
- Newport City Council Welsh in Education Strategic Plan – 2023-28 and Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme

List to be reviewed for regional plans and strategies.

Climate Change Plan

As outlined in the Climate Change Plan agreed in March 2022, the Council is committed over the period to 2027 to:

- Reach Net zero carbon as an organisation by 2030.
- Review the services we provide to ensure they support the city's journey to net zero and adaptation to climate change.

This [plan](#) is a key document for the council and will shape our council's climate change mitigation and adaptation journey over the next five years.

With regards to our Assets the Climate Change Plan introduces two themes, **Our Buildings and Our Land**. The main impact on this policy regarding buildings is summarised below:

Our Buildings - 2030 Vision

To achieve net zero carbon energy and support the nature recovery across our buildings by 2030.

Priorities

1. ***New Council Buildings*** All new building to be net zero carbon
2. ***Building Retrofitting*** Deep retrofit to ensure creating net zero carbon energy buildings
3. ***Renewable Heat*** Implementation of renewable heat in new buildings
4. ***Natural Gas*** A commitment to significantly reduce or remove natural gas heating across the buildings
5. ***Building Rationalisation*** Audit current assets to understand their long-term carbon impact with the aim of better strategic utilisation

Monitoring and Review

To monitor the delivery of the SAMP we will develop an annual report which will be presented to the Council's Overview Scrutiny Management Committee.

We will assess our progress against our principles and a range of performance measures to determine how we are optimising our estate to deliver best value.

Each asset acquisition, disposal, change and maintenance will be assessed on a case-by-case basis through the current governance arrangements.

The SAMP will be subject to regular review and updated to align with the Council's Corporate Plan and any changes in the structure, Council Constitution, legislation / regulations.

Feedback and learnings from the policy will be considered by the Strategic Asset Management Group.

DRAFT

Corporate Landlord Policy

Newport City Council - outline



Introduction

Newport City Council owns the property assets from which services are delivered or are supported. The Council, in its Corporate Plan and Strategic Asset Management Plans, has adopted the corporate landlord model in respect of the delivery of property services. This role is supported by the Council's property services partner Newport Norse acting as the client agent to the Council. The joint venture company shares the management of Council buildings with the Council's appointed premises managers.

To ensure the estate is managed effectively, all decisions affecting property assets will be considered from a corporate perspective. Service occupiers will not be free to make independent decisions regarding the use or utilisation of Council premises. The corporate landlord model applies to all Council premises including local authority controlled schools regardless of whether premises related budgets are centralised or devolved.

Service departments and schools are effectively "tenants" within the premises they occupy and will have defined responsibilities for the premises they occupy. The introduction of the corporate landlord model is to ensure good stewardship of the Council's property assets and it is important that service occupiers and schools understand the roles they have to play in the process.

Newport Norse will ensure that the premises related budgets (which it holds) are used wisely and effectively to provide best value; meet legislative requirements, are maintained having regard to available budgets, and accessible to service users. The desired outcome is enhanced service delivery through 'fit for purpose' buildings which contributes to customer satisfaction with the service received.

The Corporate Landlord will take responsibility for providing a corporate and consistent policy/standards approach to:

- Acquisition and disposal
- Space standards and utilisation
- Repair and maintenance
- Premises related Health and Safety requirements
- Statutory inspections
- Security, caretaking and cleaning
- Disabled access requirements
- Insurance – buildings and building works
- Energy efficiency and sustainability issues

This document initially agreed in 2016 provides guidance on the respective roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Responsibilities – Landlord (Newport Norse acting as Client Agent and Service Provider)

Client Agent

- Advising the Council on its property strategy and optimisation of the use of property assets in support of service delivery
- Implementing the Corporate Asset Management Plan
- Acting as consultant on all property matters (where appointed)
- Acting as the Council's agent and assisting the Council in ensuring Council policy is communicated, adopted and complied with
- Advise on all strategic building related issues such as estates management (where appointed)

Service Agent

- Provision of technical support services to assist with the routine operation of the building including;
 1. Building surveyors
 2. Mechanical and electrical engineers
 3. Asbestos and Fire Safety officers
 4. Design and contract management officers (including project management)
 5. Estates/portfolio surveyors
 6. Strategic asset management officers
 7. Facilities Management officers (including cleaning)
- Manage requests for planned, statutory maintenance and cyclical maintenance for the building
- Manage requests for response maintenance in accordance with the maintenance strategy and current SLAs
- Full design services and project management for major refurbishment/improvements (where appointed)
- Surveys/reports in connection with asset management and legislative requirements such as condition surveys, asbestos and Legionella
- Undertake statutory maintenance to ensure compliance with legislation including: boiler plant servicing, fire alarm testing/servicing, electrical inspection/testing, emergency lighting testing/servicing, lift maintenance and duties surrounding the Regulatory Reform (fire safety) Order 2005 and Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Provision of an emergency response to 'out of hours' building maintenance related issues
- Plan and organise office moves (where appointed)
- Hold the centralised budget maintenance budget for the non-school buildings for premise related matters – repairs, maintenance, rates, utilities etc
- Undertake surveys prior to occupation and on leaving the building - damage beyond fair wear and tear caused by the occupier may be recharged on departure from the building

- Ensure that buildings are clean for day to day use e.g. clean toilets, Hoover, empty bins etc. (where appointed).

Occupier (Service Area or School) – Tenant

To ensure compliance and optimum use of assets, all decisions affecting property assets will be considered from a Corporate perspective. Service occupiers will not make independent decisions regarding the use or utilisation of Council premises.

Responsibilities of the Tenant (Service/ Premises Managers)

- Occupying the premises in accordance with Council policy and procedures.
- Ensure a nominated person is appointed to act as the Premises Manager for all building related issues. Contact details to be held by Newport Norse and any changes must be reported to Newport Norse helpdesk.
- Operational management of the building on a day to day basis. This includes elements of statutory maintenance work including, weekly fire alarm checks, weekly flushing of sentinel taps and little used outlets and quarterly asbestos in situ checks.
- To report building maintenance issues to Newport Norse helpdesk in a timely manner in accordance with the procedure.
- To ensure compliance with all Health and Safety legislation in connection with the normal operation of buildings.
- To act as key holder and be totally responsible for security of the building. Contact details for the key holder and an alternative must be provided to the Newport Norse helpdesk and kept up to date at all times.
- To be responsible for energy consumption and energy use, providing meter reading information to the Council as and when required.
- To ensure the building is maintained to an acceptable standard.
- Consult with and where necessary obtain written approval from Newport Norse prior to committing resources for any intended alterations, change of use or improvement works. For non-school premises Newport Norse will arrange all works. For school premises, schools have the option to use their own contractors, but will require formal approval from Newport Norse before any work is carried out.
- Liaise with Newport Norse for all proposed office moves/relocations.
- Liaise with Newport Norse on all Landlord and Tenant matters. e.g. shared accommodation with others
- Assignment or sub-letting is strictly prohibited without the prior written consent of Newport Norse
- Ensuring that all duties surrounding the Regulatory Reform (fire safety) order 2005 are met and that the Council's policies and procedures are complied with.
- Ensuring that all duties around the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 are complied with.

Acquisitions Policy (Property and Land) - draft Newport City Council



Introduction

The Council regards property as a commercial resource and as such it is afforded the same attention as other Council resources in that it is acquired and held in pursuit of helping the Council deliver its corporate priorities.

The Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) specifically details the Council's objectives and approaches to holding and using its land and property holdings and this policy provides an appendix to the framework, stating the principles and guidance when acquiring land or property.

This policy sets out the core principles to be applied when considering land or property for acquisition. Whilst the primary focus of this document is to provide key policy guidance for Officers, Elected Members, businesses, and the public, it is important to note that each individual case will be assessed on its own merits and nothing in this document binds the Council into any course of action when making decisions on acquiring land and property assets.

Purpose

The Acquisitions Policy will form an appendix to the SAMP and will provide principles and a consistent approach to any land or property transaction, ensuring that any transactions deliver value for money and meets the Council's strategic objectives.

Land and property interests should only be considered for acquisition if the following circumstances apply:

- The acquisition will make a positive contribution to the current or future delivery of Council services;
- The acquisition has economic benefits in reducing occupational or service delivery costs (revenue and capital);
- An option appraisal has been undertaken which highlights acquisition as the most economic and efficient means of service delivery, for council and wider public services;
- The acquisition of the interest has potential for future strategic regeneration and or redevelopment or contributes to wider corporate objectives and appropriate funding has been identified.

The policy applies to all stakeholders and partners across the Council but is driven and delivered by the Council Corporate Landlord Model sitting within the Transformation and Corporate Directorate, adopted and endorsed by all Directorates.

The Council's Strategic Asset Management group supports the collective approach – with officers from all services represented providing collective decision making.

Definitions

The adoption of RICS & CIPFA Public Sector Asset Management principles have been incorporated within this policy, to provide an objective reference.

The SAMP provides a 5-year framework of the overall approach to property and land towards a set of objectives (insert here)

RICS Red Book Global Standards (effective 31st Jan 2022) is the current professional guidance the Council/nominated partners are required to comply with in determining objective land & property values.

Policy Approach and Process

Legal Context and Council Constitution

The Council's principal powers to acquire land and property derive from the Local Government Act 1972. This confers powers to the Council to acquire land and property for any of its functions or for the benefit, improvement or development of the city.

The subsequent Local Government Act 2000 introduced 'wellbeing powers' which enables the Council to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area.

This includes the power to incur expenditure, plus land and property acquisition. The legislation includes provisions that enable the Council to support property acquisitions for specific projects or capital programmes. This may for example include acquisitions under the Education or Highway Acts.

All Council acquisitions will be authorised under the auspices of the Council's Strategic Asset Management Policy (SAMP) and be approved following the Council's Scheme of Delegation. Suitably experienced or qualified Council officers or its authorised advisors can enter negotiations to acquire land & property on behalf of the Council but authority from Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Head of People, Policy and Transformation will be required to conclude a transaction.

In addition, any acquisition approval shall be subject to sufficient budgetary funding being in place for the cost of the acquisition plus also the future financial commitments associated with holding/owning the asset.

The Council will ensure acquisition decisions are made in accordance with its constitution and other scheme of delegations, updated copies of which can be found on the Council's website.

Acquisition Principles

The council has developed several principles that support the optimisation and strategic asset management of its land and property assets. These principles will assist the council rationalise its estates holdings, reduce maintenance backlogs and provide buildings which are fit for purpose and enable effective service delivery. These principles will be considered as part of any acquisition decision making process.

- Improve or replace through investment to ensure retained buildings are sustainable and fit for purpose. This will involve ensuring full and proper option appraisal and that each acquisition meets corporate objectives and service requirements.
- Release by identifying poorly performing assets or buildings that are functionally obsolete and to disengage from these to rationalise estate holdings to create efficiency savings and potentially realise new development opportunities.

- Reduce by investigating and implementing measures to reduce the Council's carbon footprint. As part of any pre-acquisition due diligence, newly acquired assets will undergo an energy evaluation appraisal to ensure the Council is investing in energy efficient buildings and so improving its energy performance credentials and reducing carbon footprint.
- Collaboration through working with partners and communities and investigating joint services opportunities, and where appropriate employing the One Public Estate principles to improve economies from property holdings. This will also include adopting a "Place Neutral Approach" and exploring colocation opportunities between Council service departments and if possible, between other external like-minded partner organisations.

Acquisition Justification

In advance of investing time and resource in an acquisition process the Council must satisfy itself and include such evidence in its business case that it does not hold suitable underutilised assets elsewhere in its portfolio that could satisfy an internal service requirement.

The Council's SAMP is clear that acquisition propositions will only be considered if:

- The acquisition makes a positive contribution to the current or future delivery of council services.
- The acquisition has economic benefits in reducing both revenue and capital occupational costs.
- An optional appraisal has been undertaken and which concludes acquisition as most economic and efficient means of ensuring service delivery for the Council & wider public services.
- The proposed acquisition of the interest has potential for future strategic regeneration and or /redevelopment or contributes to wider corporate objectives and appropriate funding has been identified.

Option Appraisal

If the need for alternative accommodation is identified, then the Council's team will determine whether there are suitable assets within the Council holdings and if not then consult with other partner organisations. If this proves unsuccessful then the Council will investigate the Open Market for alternative opportunities.

Once suitable options have been shortlisted these will be evaluated with recommendations being made to undertake further due diligence on the asset with the purpose of establishing any risks or constraints that might affect the performance of the asset and so its delivery service use. In some instances, it may be appropriate to undertake some planning enquiries or as appropriate seek necessary consents in advance of acquisition.

Valuation/Appraisal and Funding

Valuation, due diligence, negotiations and other acquisitions advice will either be undertaken by the Council's property team and once commercial terms have been provisionally agreed these will then be validated by a qualified property agent (RICS Valuation – Global standards). The Councils internal

finance and legal teams including the Councils Section 151 Officer will be consulted over the budgetary implications especially of the acquisition so issues such as VAT and other accounting treatment of amortisation can be considered. Once an acquisition has been identified and shortlisted for recommendation a business case including financial appraisal will be prepared to determine the immediate budgetary consequences and longer-term financial implications of holding the property. This will be considered and approved by the appropriate authority as set out in the Scheme of Delegation, usually by formal report to the Cabinet Member for Assets, with appropriate ward member consultation.

This approval will cover the strategic, commercial, economic and financial considerations as part of the Council's corporate plan delivery and will demonstrate:

- The investment in the acquisition and therefore spending proposal represents value to the public purse and can demonstrate both cash and non- cash benefits and other positive outcomes
- How the investment aligns with and satisfies the Council's corporate strategies and adds further value to the Council's business and its public services
- The capital and revenue requirement for the spending proposal over the anticipated lifetime of the asset or service
- The consultation and communications process undertaken

Implementation and Review

All Council Acquisition appraisals, recommendations and decisions will be actioned following the Acquisition policy criteria and principles.

The policy will be circulated to all officers and partners managing the estate and will be available on the Council's intranet pages.

Recommendations under delegated Authority, Cabinet Member or Cabinet approval, will show adoption of policy principles for a consistent approach and rigour in substantiating recommendations and decisions.

Feedback and learnings from the policy will be considered by the officer Strategic Asset Management Group.

The policy will be reviewed in line with Council's **SAMP**.

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Disposal of Property Assets

Newport City Council - draft



Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief overview of how an asset is declared surplus by a Service area before commencing the disposal process and the following progress to disposal of an asset whether by way of freehold sale or leasehold.

Procedure

If a service area has an asset that is surplus to requirements, they must advise the officer Strategy Asset Management Group (SAMG). This allows other service areas to declare an interest in the asset based on service demand and available funding.

If the asset is not required by any of the service areas and is declared surplus by the service area, then a discussion should take place to decide why the Council would continue to hold the asset. The following points should be considered, and the asset added to the SAMG Disposal Tracker, maintained by the Council's property services partner.

Community Benefit

Does the asset currently provide a community benefit? Does the location of the asset mean that the asset could be utilised by a third-party organisation for the benefit of the wider community. If so, the Community Asset Transfer Policy will be considered.

Alternative Use

Is the asset suitable for an alternative use which will assist the Council with meeting other wider goals and objectives – for example supported housing etc. This could include disposal by way of freehold or lease. If yes, this should be considered further, and Council Officers will consider on a case by case basis, considering service demand, risk, community implications, capital and revenue funding requirements and availability. This would also be subject to approval in line with the agreed governance through the Scheme of Delegation.

Investment Asset

If the asset could be classed as an investment asset (no Social Value) to produce income for the Council, the Council's property services partner could advise on an expected income and if agree should be transferred to People, Policy, and Transformation for inclusion in the Commercial and Industrial Portfolio.

Financial return

Whether the asset will achieve significant capital receipt, or provide revenue savings within the Councils medium term revenue budget, or by reducing future liabilities.

Disposal

If no wider community benefits / Social Value and not considered suitable as an income producing asset, the Council could choose to sell the asset to bring in a Capital receipt, subject to approval in line with the agreed Scheme of Delegation. The following disposal process will then be followed.

The Disposal Tracker will be tabled at each SAMG meeting for discussion and with the Council's property services partner at the regular Client meetings. This list will also detail current Community Asset Transfer requests / programme.

Even though an asset has been declared surplus by a Service Area it may not be appropriate to sell it right away. For this reason, the register is reviewed regularly at SAMG. The Service Area will continue to hold the asset as per the managing vacant property protocol.

Once it has been agreed to sell an asset, the Council's property services partner as the Council's property agent look to progress this through to completion. A Disposal report will be prepared which will provide an overview of why the asset was held, detailing why it is no longer required and how its disposal satisfies the councils obligations set out in legislation to include the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

As the asset is council owned under Section 123 of Local Government Act 1972, there is a requirement to ensure best value is achieved when disposing of an asset and this is taken into consideration when looking at how to market and sell the property.

There may be occasions when instead of exposing an asset on the open market an individual party is approached directly where this is more appropriate for place based planning.

How an asset is exposed to the market will depend on its value and how it is to be sold. Methods of selling will be through formal/informal tender, through agent / advertising or auction. Assets disposed of via other means result in proposals / responses that need to be considered and a decision made. The Council's property services partner will review all responses and present a summary with recommendations to the Council.

Whilst the Council's property services partner may advise, the final decision on how to proceed lays with the Council, supported by legal and finance advice through the usual governance arrangements.

Once an offer has been accepted, heads of terms are agreed and following appropriate approvals, NCC Legal are advised to complete the disposal process.

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DRAFT Community Asset Transfer Policy Newport City Council



Introduction

The Council's [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#) sets out the Council's objectives including placing social value, fairness and sustainability at its core. The Plan sets out that this will include enabling communities to make best use of land and property through community asset transfer (CAT).

Newport City Council recognises that CAT can be a valuable part of supporting and sustaining the third sector in Newport and wishes to ensure Council assets are managed by the people who regularly use them. We will proactively investigate potential opportunities for CAT to local communities and social enterprises but minimising financial liability for the Council in the future.

We will have a transparent process for CAT and will adopt an agreed method of assessing all requests for CAT. This policy supports and will be reviewed in line with the Strategic Asset Management Plan.

What is Community Asset Transfer?

Community Asset Transfer is: *"The transfer of land or buildings from the Council's freehold ownership into the stewardship and/or ownership of third sector organisations."*

CAT can take place in different forms - management agreement, licence to occupy, short or long lease. CAT can also apply to giving an organisation 'first refusal' on a commercial disposal, e.g., by protecting the asset from the open market for an agreed period, which may be particularly appropriate for social enterprises.

CAT can involve a transfer at less than market value. The level of subsidy will be determined by the social, economic, or environmental benefits generated by the transfer, opportunities for funding arrangements and affordability.

CAT can apply to community buildings and to other third sector uses, such as social enterprises or arts venues.

Why Transfer Assets?

Sometimes community based and third sector organisations are best placed to manage facilities in their local communities. They may make extensive use of volunteers, and their local knowledge and hands-on management of the asset is likely to result in lower overheads and better value-for-money, as well as a more intensive use of the asset.

Community management and ownership of assets directly supports the Council's Corporate Plan and asset management principles. It empowers local communities, puts local organisations in control, encourages pride of place and generates wealth in Newport's communities.

The asset transfer can also enable an organisation to apply for external funding that is not available to the Council.

Better use of its assets can help the Council achieve improved outcomes and efficiencies, however such transfers must be managed and provide a sustainable solution to avoid future risk and liabilities for the Council.

Which Organisations can be considered for CAT?

Third sector or organisations that are not for private profit:

- unincorporated charitable organisation
- company limited by guarantee with charitable status
- Community Interest Company (CIC) limited by guarantee
- community benefit Industrial & Provident Society with an asset lock
- CIC limited by shares

CAT recipients can be of any size and need to:

- generate social, economic, or environmental benefits
- directly benefit the people of Newport
- benefit as wide and diverse a range of local people as possible

Privately owned or commercial organisations can only be considered if their main aim is to deliver social, economic, or environmental benefits.

Eligibility criteria

- Need to demonstrate a clear community/social demand for the proposed CAT;
- Need to have a well-prepared sustainable business case;
- Need to have good governance, robust financial systems, and all necessary policies expected of a community organisation;
- Need to have the capacity to manage the asset through for example directors or management committee members who have the necessary experience and skills;
- Need to contribute towards the council's corporate and strategic objectives and Newport's Corporate Plan 22 - 27
- Must not duplicate activities, services or facilities already provided in the local community or area.

For how long will leases be granted?

We will carefully consider the specific needs of the organisation, the condition of the asset and the requirements of potential funders or lenders. We will base the length of the lease term on the needs that are clearly supported by the organisation's business plan, and on the organisation's capacity to manage the asset.

Proposals from community anchor organisations ("independent, community-run and led organisations, rooted in a sense of place, and with a mission to improve things for the whole community") and those which include the co-location of several services (a 'community hub') will be encouraged in this context.

Once granted, leases can usually be extended or restructured at a future stage, to meet changed activities or circumstances, or to meet the requirements of potential funders or lenders.

Leases will be accompanied by a Service Agreement that will secure the longer term benefits of the transfer, but also protect the Council's interests and liabilities. This will set out the agreed minimum standards, if appropriate, opening hours and activities, and how these will be measured and monitored. It will also ensure that the organisation meets all necessary requirements to achieve optimum community benefit and use of the asset.

Leases longer than 7 years will normally only be granted to organisations that have an 'asset lock' and will contain clauses that prevent the asset being assigned or sold on for unintended financial gain and the loss of the agreed benefits.

Leases will contain suitable clauses to ensure the return of the asset to the Council if the terms of the service agreement are not met, or in the case of dissolution, insolvency, or corruption.

What should the Business Case contain?

- Full details of the identified needs that will be met by the Community Asset Transfer
- Clear evidence of the capacity and experience of the organisation to manage and develop the asset – *reference guidance here*
- Detailed evidence that the CAT is financially sustainable over the life of the business plan and will not incur future financial liabilities for the Council, e.g. cash flow forecasts, projected utilisation rates, and details of any financial support secured from or pledged by funders and lenders; the Council will assist by making relevant information and data available;
- Details of the anticipated benefits that the CAT will produce and how these will be measured
- Details of the type of CAT and lease terms sought
- Evidence of support from relevant organisations, Council officers or departments, Council members, GAVO, other local stakeholders and potential funders
- A robust risk assessment of the CAT and details of alternative arrangements if the CAT proves unrealistic or not sustainable
- Plans for governance and decision making.



Scrutiny Report

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Part 1

Date: February 2024

Subject Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028

Author Scrutiny Officer

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Rhys Cornwall	Strategic Director – Transformation and Corporate
Tracy McKim	Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Janice Dent	Policy and Partnership Manager
Donald Mutale	Senior Equalities Officer
Cllr Dimitri Batrouni	Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked:

1. To consider the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 and assess how effective it will be in furthering and promoting equality across Newport.
2. To consider the Objectives included in the Strategic Equality Plan and whether these are appropriately focussed.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 unified and replaced previous laws that prevented discrimination with one single Act. The Act identifies a public sector equality duty which took over the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality from the 5th April 2011 onwards. The general duty's goal is to make sure that public authorities and those who carry out a public function think about how they can contribute to a more just society by promoting equality and good relations in their everyday activities. The duty makes sure that policies and services are designed and delivered with equality considerations in mind and that they are reviewed regularly. Moreover, the Equality Act

requires the Council to publish a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) every 4 years, with several strategic equality objectives.

2.2 The general duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Sex
- Disability
- Marriage and civil partnership (in relation to employment only)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexual orientation
- Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief

Summary

2.3 This iteration of the SEP builds on work done in previous Plans, highlighting how it will meet the 3 aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty and our own priorities to advance equality. This Plan details how the Strategy will be monitored.

2.4 The report gives details the Council's equality duties regarding the Public Sector Equality Duty, who is protected under the Equality Act 2010, Wales specific duties, socio-economic duties and other related duties and key duties.

2.5 The report also details Newport's position and the Corporate Plan aims and objectives which this Plan will support.

2.6 This Plan has been out to consultation and responses can be seen in the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28: Consultation Report.

2.7 The Plan details six equality objectives and breaks down outcomes and which protected characteristics they would most benefit:

- Leadership, Governance and Involvement
- Customer Service, Digital Inclusion and Access
- Representative Workforce
- Community Cohesion
- Equity in Education
- Equitable Service Delivery

Previous Consideration of this Item

2.8 The previous iteration of the Plan was received by Committee in March 2020.

2.9 Annual performance monitoring under this report has been received by Committee between 2020-2024.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.

3.2 Attached at Appendix 2 is the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028: Consultation Report. (To be added)

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

4.1 Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- Assess whether the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 is easily understood and enables the Council to fulfil its Equality Duties.
- Identify any barriers to effective implementation of the objectives.
- Determine if the Committee would like to make a recommendation(s) to Cabinet on the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.

4.2 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

5 Ways of Working	Types of Questions to consider:
Long-term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.	How will the implementation of Plan enable the Council to deliver its Wellbeing Objectives? How will the Plan enable future Cabinets to set its Strategic Objectives and deliver longer term equality priorities for Newport?
Prevention Prevent problems occurring or getting worse.	How are Officers and Cabinet Members monitoring performance of outcomes ensuring pro-active action where there is under performing? How do you ensure Officers take responsibility and account for under performance? Are Officers and Members provided with timely and accurate reports of progress? How does the Council intend to demonstrate the outcome(s) of delivering against its objectives and how this benefits citizens, businesses and other stakeholders of Newport?
Integration Considering how public bodies' wellbeing objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.	Is the plan integrated with other public bodies' wellbeing objectives? Does the plan consider the partnership working with other public bodies and its partners to deliver its objectives?
Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself).	Has the Council considered the policies and procedures of other public, private and third sector organisations as part of this Plan's development? How have you collaborated with Finance, Human Resources in the development of this new Plan?
Involvement The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and	How will you ensure Officers across the Council embed the objectives set out in the Plan?

ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.	<p>Have you involved other key stakeholders outside of Scrutiny and Cabinet in the development of the Plan?</p> <p>How will you ensure the Plan is embedded into working practice?</p> <p>How as a Council are we ensuring we are consistently seeking the views of those who are impacted through the implementation of the Plan?</p>
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Section B – Supporting Information

5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Well-being Objective	1 – Economy, Education and Skills	2 – Newport's Environment and Infrastructure	3 – Preventative and Equitable Community and Social Care	4 – An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council
Aims:	Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.	A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.	Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.	Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core.

5.1 The Plan has strong links across all Objectives and all areas of the Council.

6 Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2022-23](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2021-22](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-21](#)
- [‘Is Wales Fairer?’ – The state of equality and human rights 2018](#)
- [Nation of Sanctuary Plan.](#)

Report Completed: February 2024



NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

2024 - 2028

FOREWORD

Foreword by the Leader to be added following Scrutiny.

DRAFT

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ABOUT THIS STRATEGY

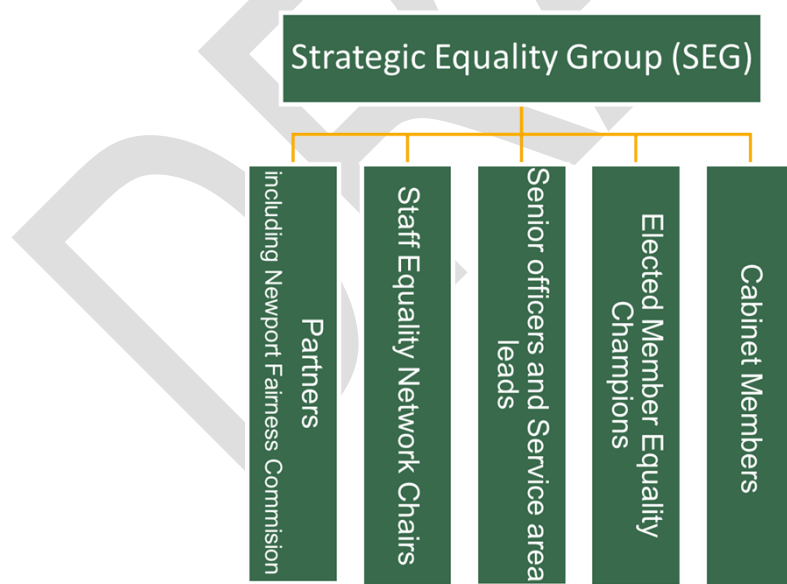
Under the Equality Act (2010), each local authority in Wales must publish a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) that sets out the objectives it wants to achieve over a four-year period. These priorities are called “Equality Objectives.”

Building on the work delivered in our previous SEPs, this plan outlines how Newport City Council will meet the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty and our priorities to advance equality for protected groups, people with care experience and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in every aspect of our work. The strategy runs for four years, beginning in April 2024 and finishing in March 2028.

In this strategy, we have tried to be explicit about how our equality objectives will make a real difference to how we deliver services and to the lives of people in Newport. Within each objective, we have identified clear outcomes we are working towards and actions that will contribute to us achieving those outcomes. You can also see which groups we believe will benefit most from our objectives and actions.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO MONITOR THE STRATEGY?

Delivery of the SEP will be underpinned by a series of comprehensive operational delivery plans and supported by our Strategic Equality Group. This group is chaired by the Cabinet Member lead for Equalities, and membership includes representation from Newport’s Fairness Commission, Trade Unions, Elected Member Equality Champions, Staff Equality Network Chairs, service area leads and senior officers. The Council’s Overview Scrutiny and Management Committee will have responsibility for the scrutiny and monitoring of the SEP’s progress, and update reports will be received by the committee at least annually.



In addition to this level of scrutiny from within the organisation, we will publish annual reports summarising the progress we have made as an authority against each Equality Objective. These will be compiled at the end of every financial year and are considered by our Scrutiny Committee then presented to Cabinet and Council before publication on the Council’s website, in accordance with statutory deadlines.

Annual reports from our previous Strategic Equality Plans are available on our [website](#).

OUR EQUALITIES DUTIES

The Equality Act 2010 brings together separate pieces of legislation into one single Act to improve protection for everyone. The Act includes a general duty (also known as the Public Sector Equality Duty or PSED) that aims to ensure public bodies consider how they can improve society and promote equality in every aspect of their work, including decision making, policy development, and service delivery.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY (PSED)

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, sets out a legal requirement for Newport City Council and other public organisations when making decisions and delivering services to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (protected characteristics are explained later in this report).
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

WHO IS PROTECTED UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT 2010?

The Equality Act 2010 introduced nine protected characteristics, which are characteristics where evidence shows people may experience discrimination.

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Gender Reassignment
- ▶ Pregnancy and Maternity
- ▶ Race
- ▶ Religion or Belief
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Sexual orientation
- ▶ Marriage and Civil Partnership

Everyone has one or more protected characteristic, and the Act also makes it against the law to discriminate against someone because of their protected characteristic(s). It also requires our Strategic Equality Plan to be explicit about how our plan relates to different protected characteristics. If our plan does not impact on a protected characteristic, the Act asks us to explain why.

CARE EXPERIENCE

At its meeting in January 2024, our Council unanimously agreed on a motion to adopt care experience as a protected characteristic in acknowledgement of recommendations by the Children and Young People's Education Committee established by the Senedd Welsh Parliament. As with the protected characteristics under the Equality Act, we have considered the challenges encountered by people with care experience, including Looked After Children, Care Leavers and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) in developing our Equality Objectives and tried to be explicit about how this plan will improve outcomes for this group.

We will continue to consider the impact on people with care experience along with our statutory duties in decision making, policy development and service delivery.

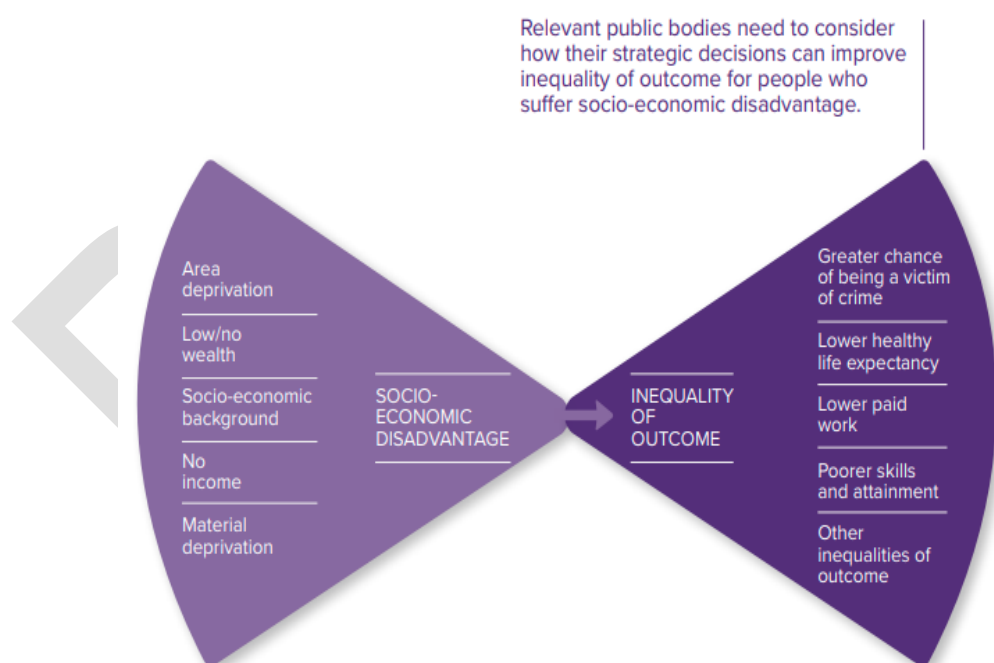
WELSH SPECIFIC DUTIES

To support the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Equality Act 2010 allows for the enactment of specific duties. In Wales, the PSED goes further and contains specific statutory duties also known as the [Wales Specific Equality Duty](#) which public bodies in Wales must comply with. Welsh regulations cover the following areas:

- Equality Objectives
- Engagement
- Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)
- Equality Information
- Employment Information
- Pay Difference
- Staff Training
- Strategic Equality Plan
- Procurement

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

The [Socio-economic Duty](#) came into effect in Wales on the 31st of March 2021. This duty requires public bodies, including Newport City Council, to consider the need to reduce inequalities experienced because of Socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions, such as, setting strategic objectives or developing public services.



In our previous Strategic Equality Plan, we embedded Welsh Government's statutory guidance on the Socio-economic Duty in council processes, including strategic decision-making. This duty will remain an important part of the delivery of this plan.

OTHER RELATED DUTIES AND KEY DOCUMENTS

We have also tried to make sure that this strategy aligns with other related statutory duties and other key strategic documents, as well as considering Welsh Government priorities and national research.

THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act places a duty (also known as the Well-being Duty) on all public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of our decisions and to collaborate with our communities, people, and each other to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. While the Act's Well-being duty is embedded in Council processes and our Equality Objectives cut across all of Wales well-being goals, this plan will particularly support progress to achieve the vision for **A More Equal Wales** and **A Wales of cohesive communities**.



This Act also puts in place a sustainable development principle that helps organisations consider the impact they could have on people living in Wales in the future and ensures they are focused on tackling long-term challenges. Throughout the delivery of this plan, we will ensure our decisions promote or advance the five ways of working that underpin this principle.

CORPORATE PLAN 2022 - 2027

In November 2022, Newport City Council approved its new Corporate Plan 2022-27 to deliver 'an Ambitious, Fairer and Greener Newport for everyone'. In line with the overarching aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), Newport City Council's Corporate Plan recognises the role of the Council in advancing equity internally and in local communities over the next five years. The delivery of this plan will support us to meet our statutory duties, support our Strategic Equality Plan and contribute to Wales's Well-being Goal of "A More Equal Wales" set in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

We have also aligned our SEP with the priorities and themes in other key Council strategic documents, such as our People Plan 2023-2028 and Welsh Language Promotional Strategy 2022 – 2027.

ARMED FORCES COVENANT DUTY

Newport City Council is a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant, which means that we seek to ensure that members of the Armed Forces Community are treated fairly and not disadvantaged in accessing our services due to military life. The Covenant relates to our services generally, but new legislation, the Armed Forces Act 2021, places a duty on the Council to consider the circumstances of the Armed Forces Community in the areas of housing, education, and healthcare. To fulfil this duty, we have embedded consideration of the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant into our Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) process to ensure we consider the impact of our decisions on this community.

WELSH GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC PLANS

In the development of our Strategic Equality Plan, we have worked to align our Equality Objectives and associated actions with the Welsh Government's strategies and plans, which set out actions to deliver a more fair and equitable Wales, including the [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) and [LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales](#).

During the delivery of this plan, we will continue to review our Equality Objectives and actions to ensure alignment with key policy interventions, for example, the forthcoming Disability Rights Action Plan for Wales and HIV Action Plan for Wales

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (EHRC): IS WALES FAIRER REPORT

The EHRC's [Is Wales Fairer? \(2023\)](#) report provides a comprehensive overview of equality and human rights in Wales. It focuses on the nine characteristics established by the Equality Act 2010 and key priority areas, including human rights and socio-economic status. This State of the Nation report aims to support evidence-based decisions by public bodies and drive action and meaningful change to make life fairer for everyone.










This report's findings provide a complete picture of people's life chances in Wales. It also contains key recommendations to promote equality for everyone, which have informed the development of our SEP for 2024-2028, including our Equality Objectives and associated actions. We will continue to draw on this report's data and evidence to support our decision-making, policy, and service development processes.

ABOUT US

Newport is a coastal city with a rich industrial heritage and a long history of welcoming people from across the world to settle and contribute to the growth and success of the city. In the last 10 years, Newport's population has grown by 9.5% to 159,600, and it has remained home to one of Wales' most diverse and multicultural populations. The authority is also one of the largest employers in the local area with 60.2% % of our employees living within council boundaries.

Our Corporate Plan is framed around four main objectives, and aims to deliver an ambitious, fairer, greener Newport for everyone and this means everyone, irrespective of protected characteristics, care experience, socio-economic background, or any other factor.

KEY FACTS ABOUT NEWPORT

		
Newport's population saw the greatest increase in Wales, with a rise of 9.5% to 159,600 in 2021.	51% of the city's population is female 49% of the city's population is male	20.2% % of the population is below the age of 16 (slightly higher than the Welsh average)
		
62.9% of the population is between the ages of 16 and 64 (slightly higher than the Welsh average)	17.0% of the population is over the age of 65 (slightly lower than the Welsh average)	10.0% of the population self-identified as being disabled and limited a lot (slightly higher than the Welsh average)
		Sexual orientation
19.7% of the population comes from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups (figure includes White minorities)	The top three religions in the Newport are: No religion (43.0%), Christianity (42.8%), and Islam (7.1%)	2.9% of the population identifies as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or other minority sexual orientations
Gender Reassignment	Care Experience	
Newport has the third largest proportion (0.6%) of the usual resident populations aged 16 and over identifying with a gender different to their sex registered at birth in Wales.	575 children and young people in Newport had care experience, including 348 Children Looked After, 227 Care Leavers and 30 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children as at 23/02/2024	54.1% of households in Newport are in material deprivation (same as the Welsh average)

OUR CONSULTATION

In developing this Plan, we have used a range of consultation methods to ensure we get the right balance of different views and a complete picture of equality in Newport. We have done this through online surveys aimed at the general public and more targeted focus groups with relevant stakeholders and community groups. We have also considered any relevant data related to Equality we have available to us based on our population, workforce, and the wider priorities of our organisation.

The results from our different consultation exercises suggest that people of Newport feel we were focusing on the right equality objectives, with majority of people agreed with our draft objectives. However, they have also highlighted the inequalities that exist within local communities and have given us a clear steer on how we can improve our services and advance equality for everyone.

Without strong leadership, clear & diverse governance, this work will have a very limited impact.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENT

We have developed a strong set of Equality Objectives that, if achieved, will improve both the way the council operates and the lives of those living and working in the city. It is reassuring that the plan considers the ever-changing Equality landscape and commits to incorporating future guidance, such as national policy under development by the Disability Rights Taskforce.

IN-NCC STAFF NETWORK CHAIRS

Accessing the Council and its services is difficult. Since the pandemic, most services moved online It's important these services are accessible to the public, especially those who might experience barriers.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENT

I feel like it's put too much down on individual schools and that enables certain schools to allow and ignore mistreatment and discrimination.

FOCUS GROUP RESPONDENT

We need to focus on migrant communities in the city, explicitly committing services that consider their specific needs and reducing the tensions often apparent between migrant and settled residents.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENT

We are pleased to see a commitment to Anti-racist values and increasing representation at all levels as well as developing, retaining, and supporting diverse staff. This will support Newport City Council in becoming an inclusive and representative organisation where staff from all backgrounds can achieve their potential.

DIVERSITY NETWORK CHAIR

To read more about how we developed our draft Equality Objectives and the consultation process that has informed the development of this strategy, please read our "Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028: Consultation Report," which accompanies this strategy.

OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

1. LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE & INVOLVEMENT

Newport City Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement.

This Equality Objective focuses on the role that Newport City Council can play in promoting equalities, how we can put the equalities agenda at the heart of our decision-making processes, and how we ensure that we are delivering against our commitments and involving local people in the decisions that affect them.

2. CUSTOMER SERVICE, DIGITAL INCLUSION AND ACCESS

Newport City Council's in-person and online services are accessible to everyone in Newport, providing services that are both inclusive and considerate of individual need.

This Equality Objective focuses on the degree to which the in-person and digital services delivered by the council are accessible to the public. It also focuses on how we can collaborate with local communities and partners to ensure equitable access to services for all residents.

3. REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE

Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city and is a workplace with an inclusive culture which recruits, develops, and retains staff.

This Equality Objective focuses on our staff, how we can be more representative of the communities we serve at every level throughout the organisation. It also focuses on how we can support staff in achieving their potential.

4. COMMUNITY COHESION

Newport City Council promotes positive relationships between different communities, supporting integration and effectively identifying emerging community tensions.

This Equality Objective focuses on building communities that have shared values, where diversity is welcomed and embraced, and where people feel connected to the place that they live.

5. EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Newport City Council promotes a whole school approach that is fully inclusive and looks to positively identify and address any inequality in provision, attainment, and early career pathways of vulnerable learners

This Equality Objective focuses on how we work with schools to support them in addressing areas of inequality that may exist between different groups of pupils.

6. EQUITABLE SERVICE DELIVERY

Newport City Council contributes to the city being a great place to live and grow older, with a range of services that accommodate people in different situations.

This Equality Objective focuses on how the authority can offer a greater variety of support to people and how we can ensure our existing or new services are responsive to the changing and diverse needs of communities.

OUR PLAN

Equality Objective 1: Leadership, Governance & Involvement

“Newport City Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement.”

Outcome 1: Newport City Council shows clear and consistent leadership in promoting equality and diversity across the city.

We will achieve this by:

- Showing visible support on key dates and community events in the equalities calendar throughout the year.
- Showing visible commitment to Anti-Racism through promoting a zero tolerance to racial discrimination within our workforce, service delivery, and communities.
- Building on our work as part of the Proud Councils partnership to be a visible leader and actively champion LGBTQ+ inclusion in communities in Newport.
- Reaffirming commitment to the WLGA's Diversity in Democracy programme and working with Elected Members to improve representation of in local democracy.
- Developing the role of our Member Champions and senior leaders.
- Developing a Cultural Strategy to celebrate and champion the City's unique culture alongside its physical heritage.

Outcome 2: Newport City Council has a strong commitment to Equality at all levels and has a clear governance structure in place to monitor equality performance across the organisation

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring all senior leaders and managers set performance objectives to drive inclusion within the workplace and advance equity in communities.
- Reviewing the service area plans which deliver against our corporate plan, ensuring each area incorporates an equality performance indicator based on Welsh Government Action Plans
- Regularly reviewing, evaluating, and developing our Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) process and impact to ensure equality remain at the heart of our decision-making arrangements.
- Working with our lead Cabinet Member for Equalities, Strategic Equality Group and Corporate Management Team to review our governance arrangements and ensure they are fit for purpose

Outcome 3: Newport City Council will ensure engagement and involvement of people with protected characteristics and lived experience to inform the decision-making process

We will achieve this by:

- Monitoring Protected Characteristics of participants in consultation activity, and analysing results based on demographics.
- Using relevant evidence and the information we hold about communities across Newport to inform decision making, service design and policy making.
- Collaborating with community partners and equality stakeholder groups to further develop opportunities for seldom heard groups to engage with decision makers and improve participation in the decision-making process
- Engagement and consultation with people with care experience inform policy and service development.

Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?

We believe that improved leadership, governance, and involvement will benefit all protected characteristics, people with care experience and make a positive contribution towards helping the authority consider socio-economic disadvantage.

Equality Objective 2: Customer Service, Digital Inclusion and Access

“Newport City Council’s in-person and digital services are accessible to everyone in Newport, providing services that are both inclusive and considerate of individual need.”

Outcome 1: We have a better understanding of the demographics of our service users, and reflect these in service design, removing barriers to access.

We achieve this by:

- Utilising data to identify any under or over representation in people that access our frontline services.
- Working with internal and external stakeholder groups for people that share protected characteristics to support the development of customer service provisions.
- Delivering Equalities, Welsh Language and Hate Crime training to all customer services staff on a regular basis.
- Reviewing accessibility of services for people that speak languages other than English or Welsh, including those that use British Sign Language (BSL)
- Developing an Interpreting and Translation Policy to support communication with non – English or Welsh speakers, people with a hearing or visual impairment or those with a learning disability.
- Ensuring an access audit has been completed for all Council buildings and actions have been taken to improve accessibility

Outcome 2: Citizens with low digital literacy or those experiencing barriers to accessing services will have support and improved access to Digital Services.

We achieve this by:

- Developing standards to ensure self-service facilities, including web applications are accessible to all users.
- Redeveloping the Council’s website to improve accessibility and ensure compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1 AA).
- Providing free public Wi-Fi in community settings, signposting to free data available or connectivity options and improving access to devices
- Working in collaboration with partners to deliver a free digital skills training programme and signpost people to training opportunities.
- Working in collaboration with partners to map digitally excluded communities and deliver on our six pledges to eliminate digital exclusion.

Outcome 3: People are aware of our complaints procedure when accessing services, barriers to access are effectively addressed and complaints relating to discrimination are managed in a way that ensures organisational learning.

We will achieve this by:

- Improving the collation of demographic data for effective monitoring
- Engaging with local communities to raise awareness of our complaints procedure, reduce barriers and promote equitable access.
- Developing public messaging and information about our complaints procedure in community languages
- Signposting people who raise allegations of discrimination against the council to appropriate services
- Introducing a process review in response to complaints relating to discrimination and the Welsh Language

Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?

We believe that an improved approach to customer service and access will benefit all protected characteristics, people with care experience and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage

Equality Objective 3: Representative Workforce

“Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city and is a workplace with an inclusive culture which recruits, develops, and retains staff.”

Outcome 1: Staff with protected characteristics are proportionally represented at all levels throughout the organisation

We will achieve this by:

- Reviewing and improving the information collected on staff at all levels.
- Reviewing workforce data and exploring the implementation of positive action to strengthen our approach to the attraction, recruitment, and development of under-represented groups.
- Mapping pay gaps by protected characteristics and developing actions to address any disparities based on gender, sexual orientation, disability, and ethnic background
- Reviewing our recruitment processes to minimise unconscious bias and promote inclusion. i.e. ensuring language is inclusive and removing unnecessary markers.
- Renewing our commitment to the Disability Confident Scheme and working to achieve Disability Confident Leader status.
- Maintaining Gold employer under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme
- Further developing and mandating our Unconscious Bias training for all staff on recruitment panels
- Develop internal policies that reflect the needs and commitments to people with care experience

Outcome 2: Workplace culture is fully inclusive, promotes equality, and retains diverse staff

We will achieve this by:

- Working in collaboration with Staff Equality Networks to develop and promote active allyship within the workplace.
- Reviewing our Equalities training offer and working with partners to ensure learning opportunities cover Anti-racism, the Social Model of Disability and LGBTQ+ Inclusion.
- Developing a Dignity in the Workplace Policy that sets out a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination with clear interventions, repercussions, and clear pathways to support for staff.
- Improving Internal recording mechanisms for reports of discriminatory behaviour and providing regular updates to our Strategic Equality Group
- Regularly undertaking employee perception surveys and focus groups explore aspects of belonging and value and how this can be improved.
- Developing guidance on the implementation of key workplace policies and mandated learning opportunities targeted at managers to support inclusive leadership.
- Promoting the financial wellbeing support available to all staff to reduce the risk of in work poverty.
- Delivery of the People Plan 2023-28, including strategic themes covering Employee Experience, Engagement, Wellbeing, Transformation and Representation.

Outcome 3: Diverse staff within the organisation have a voice, are listened to, and developed

We will achieve this by:

- Reviewing access to training and development opportunities by protected characteristic.
- Strengthening Staff Equality Networks by providing development opportunities, resources, and internally promoting membership.
- Developing opportunities for staff from diverse or underrepresented backgrounds to engage with senior leaders.
- Reviewing and developing workplace policies in partnership with Staff Equality Networks. i.e. Wellness at Work, Transitioning in the Workplace and Dignity at Work Policies

Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?

This Equality Objective is likely to most benefit against the protected characteristics of: Race, Disability, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Religion & Belief, Gender Reassignment and Age. It is also likely to reduce inequalities for people with care experience and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage

Equality Objective 4: Community Cohesion

Newport City Council promotes positive relationships between different communities, supporting integration and effectively identifying emerging community tensions.

Outcome 1: Everyone living in Newport feels welcomed, and integration is supported by local communities

We will achieve this by:

- Co-developing a Migrant Integration Strategy to support Newport to become a City of Sanctuary for all resident migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees.
- Establishing a task force to implement the findings of our work as an Inclusive City, involving communities and key stakeholders.
- Developing and promoting a Welcome to Newport App to support the integration of new arrivals.
- Working in partnership with locally funded services to support a wide range of communities to secure their rights, access support services, and overcome hardship.
- Working in collaboration with partners and communities to enhance and promote inclusive spaces and events for people in Newport.
- Continuing to support UK Resettlement Schemes and work with partners to support those displaced due to international conflict to resettle in Newport.

Outcome 2: Community tensions are monitored and mitigated effectively

We achieve this by:

- Building on our work with partners to develop multi-agency mechanism to effectively monitor and address community tensions at the earliest stage.
- Continuing the delivery of Prevent training to all schools and frontline staff in Newport, raising awareness of the risks of radicalisation and vulnerable groups.

Outcome 3: Hate Crime based on protected characteristics will be effectively dealt with and victims will have improved access to support

We will achieve this by:

- Reaffirming commitment to Victim Support's Hate Crime Charter
- Delivering training in conjunction with partners to community groups that empowers them to challenge and act on hate speech where they encounter it.
- Collaborating with internal stakeholders and partners to raise awareness of the different types of hate crime, develop multi-agency mechanisms to tackle online hate and tackle underreporting in specific communities.
- Developing a Hate Crime Policy to strengthen the Council's commitment to tackling hate crime and incidents.

Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?

While many of our actions will have a benefit for all protected characteristics, the actions highlighted above will have a particular impact against the protected characteristics of: Race, Religion & Belief, Disability, Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment. It is also likely to reduce inequalities for people with care experience and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage

Equality Objective 5: Equity in Education

Newport City Council promotes a whole school approach that is fully inclusive and looks to positively identify and address any inequality in provision, attainment, and early career pathways of vulnerable learners.

Outcome 1: Schools and education settings ensure quality provision secures improved progress for vulnerable learners

We achieve this by:

- Supporting all schools and settings to improve the outcomes of pupils eligible for free school meals, through supporting high quality professional learning, effective allocation of resources and an appropriate curriculum offer to meet the needs of all learners.
- Working in partnership with schools to reduce rates of persistent absenteeism.
- Supporting schools to provide high quality universal provision for multi-lingual learners.
- Supporting young people into education, employment, and training.

Outcome 2: We have effective measures to reduce the risk of and address prejudice-based bullying, harassment, or discrimination in Education

We achieve this by:

- Providing professional learning opportunities for all staff in schools and educational settings covering Anti-racism, LGBTQ+ inclusion and Hate Crime (to include improved engagement and awareness raising)
- Securing and delivering parental and community engagement sessions.
- Improving measures to report, record and monitor prejudice-based bullying, harassment, and discrimination in schools and education settings.
- Improving our response to identity-based bullying by embedding Welsh Government's key policy interventions.
- Ensuring updated use of terminology in policy and practice, framed in a celebratory model (moving away from a deficit model).
- Supporting schools to include anti racism in their curriculum offer, co-created with students.
- Developing appropriate provision for adults in school settings who have experienced prejudice-based discrimination in the workplace.

Outcome 3: Schools actively address the impact of poverty within education, thus reducing the cost of the school day

We achieve this by:

- Supporting senior leaders to recognise their role in mitigating the impact of poverty through the development of effective strategic planning.
- Engaging with all schools to support leaders to evaluate their anti-poverty strategy and its impact on vulnerable learners.
- Monitoring outcomes of Community Focused School Grants to measure the impact on supporting better educational outcomes for children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds or who have other vulnerabilities.
- Continuing to build and evolve relationships with outside agencies.
- Helping disadvantaged families improve their capacity to support their child's learning, this might involve signposting to other services such as income maximisation and adult education.

Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?

This Equality Objective is likely to most benefit against the protected characteristics of: Race, Disability, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Gender Reassignment and Age. It is also likely to reduce inequalities for people with care experience and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage

Equality Objective 6: Equitable Service Delivery

Newport City Council contributes to the city being a great place to live and grow older, with a range of services that accommodate people in different situations.

Outcome 1: Service delivery is inclusive, looks to address any disparities and is responsive to the challenges faced by communities

We achieve this by:

- Developing an Anti-Poverty Strategy which aims to improve inequalities of outcome for residents experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.
- Working in collaboration with Disability Wales, disabled staff, and residents to embed the Social Model of Disability in service delivery and development.
- Working in collaboration with partners to implement the recommendations in the Building a Fairer Gwent Report to reduce inequality between our communities.
- Working in collaboration with internal stakeholders and partners across Gwent to become an Age-friendly city.
- Working in partnership with partners from the public services, charities, and other community organisations to support the armed forces community in the city.
- Embedding the principles of the Welsh Government's Corporate Parenting Charter in service delivery to safeguard, promote the rights and life chances of children or young people with care experience.
- Applying our equality duties to collaborative public bodies and partnerships

Outcome 2: Housing services are equitable, responsive to the assessed accommodation needs of residents, take action to prevent homelessness and empower people to live independently

We achieve this by:

- Taking a data driven approach to reviewing the needs of people using our statutory and housing support schemes, including specialist provision for vulnerable people and potentially marginalised communities, i.e. Rough Sleepers, Refugees, Gypsy Roma Travellers, LGBTQ+
- Facilitating the provision of equalities training covering Anti-racism, Hate Crime, the Social Model of Disability, Migration, LGBTQ+ inclusion to all Housing staff on a regular basis.
- Ensuring that all commissioned services deliver high quality equalities training and that this is regularly reviewed through the commissioning process.
- Working in partnership with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to improve and develop accommodation for people with a range of diverse needs.
- Supporting people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage to access Welfare Benefit entitlements and signposting to support services.

Outcome 3: Through close partnership working with Newport Live barriers to accessing sports and leisure provision in the city will be reduced

We achieve this by:

- Helping Newport Live to provide accessible opportunities for people to engage in Sports, Leisure, Art, and Culture.
- Helping Newport Live achieve the Disability Sport Wales insport Gold award
- Promoting the availability of benefits available to carers in accessing Newport Live opportunities
- Supporting Education services to provide accessible School based Sport and Physical Activity Opportunities

Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?

This Equality Objective is likely to most benefit against the protected characteristics of: Race, Disability, Sex and Age. It is also likely to reduce inequalities for people with care experience and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage

KEY DOCUMENTS

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORTS

Available online: www.newport.gov.uk/our-council/plans-and-strategies/equalities

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL: CORPORATE PLAN 2017 – 2022

Available online: www.newport.gov.uk/our-council/plans-and-strategies/corporate-plan

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL: PEOPLE PLAN 2023 -2028

Available online:

<https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s28309/09i%20PEOPLE%20PLAN%20Final%20v1.1.pdf?LLL=0>

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL: PLANS AND STRATEGIES

Available online: www.newport.gov.uk/our-council/plans-and-strategies

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL: FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Available online: <https://www.newport.gov.uk/feia>

WELSH GOVERNMENT: ANTI-RACIST WALES ACTION PLAN

Available online: www.gov.wales/anti-racist-wales-action-plan

WELSH GOVERNMENT: LGBTQ+ ACTION PLAN FOR WALES

Available online: www.gov.wales/lgbtq-action-plan-wales

EHRC: IS WALES FAIRER REPORT (2023)

Available online: www.equalityhumanrights.com/our-work/equality-and-human-rights-monitor/equality-and-human-rights-monitor-2023-wales-fairer#:~:text=This%20report%20is%20the%20most,in%20the%20Equality%20Act%202010.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

This Strategic Equality Plan is designed to have a positive impact on the lives of everyone that lives in Newport. It presents an opportunity to build on achievements we have already made both as an employer and a service provider, as well as look to the future and identify new opportunities to reduce inequalities.

To deliver our vision for a more equal Newport, we will need the support of everyone in Newport, including our staff, residents and businesses or organisations based within the city. There are many ways in which you can support the delivery of this plan, get involved in the Council's decision-making process and contribute towards shaping the way which we deliver our services.

If you would like to know more about our work or share your views, you can do so in any of the following ways:

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL WEBSITE - www.newport.gov.uk

NEWPORT CONSULTATIONS - www.newport.gov.uk/haveyoursay

PHONE - (01633) 656 656 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday

EMAIL - nccequality@newport.gov.uk

WRITE TO - Newport City Council
Civic Centre
Godfrey Road
Newport
NP20 4UR

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NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2024 - 2028

DRAFT CONSULTATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Under the Equality Act (2010), each local authority in Wales must publish a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) that sets out the objectives it wants to achieve over a four-year period. These priorities are called “Equality Objectives.”

Building on the work delivered in our previous SEPs, this plan outlines how Newport City Council will meet the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty and our priorities to advance equality for protected groups, people with care experience and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in every aspect of our work.

This consultation report introduces Newport City Council’s Equality Objectives and describes the process we undertook to identify them, including the relevant evidence considered and the engagement undertaken to develop draft Equality Objectives.

OUR EQUALITIES DUTIES

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the general duty (also known as the Public Sector Equality Duty or PSED) and is supported by specific duties which are different in England, Scotland, and Wales.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions and delivering services we must have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (protected characteristics are explained later in this report).
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When considering how to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t, we also need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and are connected to that characteristic.
- Meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low. We must also think

about how it will tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

WELSH SPECIFIC DUTIES

In Wales, the PSED goes further and contains specific statutory duties, also known as the [Wales Specific Equality Duty](#), which public bodies in Wales must comply with. This includes publishing a SEP that sets out the Council’s Equality Objectives to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Equality Act 2010 makes it against the law to discriminate against someone because of their protected characteristics, which are characteristics where evidence shows people may experience discrimination.

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Gender Reassignment
- ▶ Pregnancy and Maternity
- ▶ Race
- ▶ Religion or Belief
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Sexual orientation
- ▶ Marriage and Civil Partnership

CARE EXPERIENCE

At its meeting in January 2024, our Council unanimously agreed on a motion to adopt care experience as a protected characteristic. Similar to protected characteristics under the Equality Act, we will consider the needs and challenges encountered by people with care experience

DEVELOPING OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

This section explains how we developed our draft Equality Objectives before they were taken to public consultation.

The development of our draft Equality Objectives started with examining the broad themes identified across the Council's existing strategic documents, including our [Corporate Plan](#) and the [Gwent Well-being Assessment](#). These documents identify prevalent issues and highlight some key areas of focus based on an understanding of local or national need and existing research.

As part of this process, we also considered key external documents, such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) State of the Nation 'Is Wales Fairer' reports (2018 & 2023), which provide a comprehensive overview of equality in Wales and support evidence-based decision making to address inequality. To ensure our draft objectives aligned with national priorities, we also mapped our draft Equality Objectives against the Welsh Government's strategies and plans, which set out actions to deliver a more fair and equitable Wales, including key policy interventions such as the [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) and [LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales](#).

The key themes identified are presented within the Policy Matrix below:

	CORPORATE PLAN 2022 - 27	WELSH GOVERNMENT	EHRC*
Leadership, Governance & Involvement	•	•	•
Customer Services & Access	•	•	•
Representative Workforce	•	•	•
Community Cohesion	•	•	•
Equity in Education	•	•	•
Independent Living	•		•

*Equality and Human Rights Commission

The following draft Equality Objectives were developed and presented to our Strategic Equality Group (SEG) to use as a basis for further consultation:

- **Equality Objective 1 (Leadership, Governance & Involvement)** - Newport City Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement.
- **Equality Objective 2 (Customer Service and Access)** - Newport City Council's services are accessible to everyone in Newport, providing services that are both inclusive and considerate of individual need.
- **Equality Objective 3 (Representative Workforce)** - Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city and is a workplace with an inclusive culture which recruits, develops and retains staff.
- **Equality Objective 4 (Community Cohesion)** - Newport City Council promotes positive relationships between different communities, supporting integration and effectively identifying emerging community tensions.
- **Equality Objective 5 (Equity in Education)** - Newport City Council supports schools and settings to positively address any inequality in provision, attainment, and early career pathways, of known groups of vulnerable learners.
- **Equality Objective 6 (Independent Living)** - Newport City Council contributes to the city being a great place to live, to grow older and live independently, and has in place a range of services that accommodates people in different situations.

Public engagement and consultation commenced following the Strategic Equality Group's endorsement of our draft Equality Objectives as a basis for consultation.

OUR CONSULTATION

Public engagement and consultation were undertaken following the endorsement of our draft Equality Objectives as a basis for consultation by the Council's Strategic Equality Group. The main aim of this consultation was to capture the views and opinions of Newport residents, particularly those from seldom heard communities and other key stakeholders on our draft Equality Objectives and Strategic Equality Plan, including their thoughts on what actions we could take to tackle inequality and promote inclusion.

To ensure we got the right balance of views and a complete picture of equality in Newport, we engaged with the public through online consultation exercises aimed at the general public and targeted focus groups with equality stakeholder groups, community partners and other interested parties.

ONLINE CONSULTATION

Online consultation ran for 12 weeks from the 11 December 2023 until 25 February 2024. This process included an online public-wide SNAP survey for all citizens. The opportunity to participate in our SEP Consultation Survey was promoted on the landing page of the council website for ease of access and advertised across various stakeholder groups, on social media platforms and other channels (in both Welsh and English). The survey and opportunity to participate was also made available in community languages to enable residents who may experience language barriers to participate.

A total of 103 responses were received through our dedicated SEP online public-wide SNAP survey. This survey specifically asked respondents:

- If they agree or disagree with our draft Equality Objectives and why
- If we should consider and include any other Equality Objectives
- If there are any areas of inequality that are not addressed by our draft Equality Objectives
- If our draft Equality Objectives improve outcomes for people in Newport who are socio-economically disadvantaged
- If they think we should focus on any specific measures, initiatives or protected characteristics.
- If they face any barriers when trying to access the Council's services
- What we can do better/what needs to change/what can we do differently
- Any other comments on our Strategic Equality Plan or draft Equality Objectives

While consultation results suggest that our staff and residents thought we were focusing on the right equality objectives, with majority of people agreed with our draft objectives. However, respondents also highlighted the inequalities that exist within local communities and have given us a clear steer on how we can improve our services and advance equality for everyone.

FOCUS GROUPS

To ensure the involvement of a range of people in developing our SEP, we mapped specific groups across protected characteristics to seek the views of different communities and ensure a good qualitative representation of the lived experiences of communities across Newport. We engaged with a wide range of equality stakeholder groups and sectors throughout our consultation period. However, it is evident while consistent effort was made to engage various stakeholders and arrange targeted focus to seek their views, some did not engage in the process.

It is imperative to note that when asked about barriers to engagement, most stakeholders cited consultation fatigue due to over-consultation as their primary barrier. This may be due to several public sector bodies consulting on their SEPs during this period.

CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 1: LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE & INVOLVEMENT

Newport City Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement.

63% of our SEP online survey respondents stated they agreed with this proposed draft Equality Objective.

Statements from online consultation and supporting exercises broadly suggested that we have scope to improve how we promote and demonstrate leadership in the field of equality.

Some respondents expressed specific concerns about a lack of visible leadership in this area, ranging from the Council needing to be more visible in promoting equality (in the community and online) and marking key dates acknowledging the contributions or experiences of Newport's diverse communities. Our survey responses and engagement with our Staff Equality Networks also referenced the idea that the Council needed to show stronger leadership and encourage meaningful engagement with stakeholders.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 2: CUSTOMER SERVICE AND ACCESS

Newport City Council's services are accessible to everyone in Newport, providing services that are both inclusive and considerate of individual need.

62% of our SEP online survey respondents stated they agreed with this proposed draft Equality Objective.

Statements from online consultation and supporting exercises painted a mixed picture of the accessibility of the Council's frontline services. Some of our feedback suggests the shift to online services prompted by the global pandemic has modernised the Council's services and significantly improved customer experiences. However, it is evident this has exacerbated the barriers experienced by some groups and that this new service delivery model needed to be more inclusive of customers' individual needs.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 3: REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE

Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city and is a workplace with an inclusive culture which recruits, develops and retains staff.

65% of our SEP online survey respondents stated they agreed with this proposed draft Equality Objective.

Statements from online consultation and supporting exercises highlighted the importance of workplace diversity to participants, with some respondents stating that an organisation's visible commitment to inclusion and diversity was important when choosing an employer. Some respondents who agreed with this objective stated they felt it was difficult to enter the organisation as an external candidate and were unsure if they could have a successful career at Newport City Council.

While this objective received widespread support from our Staff Equality Networks and wider staff, all noted that actions needed to include improvements to workplace policies, development opportunities for underrepresented staff, and identifying barriers to retention.

In addition, it is key to note that consultation feedback suggests a lack of understanding of the opportunities available at the Council, especially amongst people from potentially marginalised communities.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 4: COMMUNITY COHESION

Newport City Council promotes positive relationships between different communities, supporting integration and effectively identifying emerging community tensions.

63% of respondents to our online SEP survey stated they agreed with the proposed Equality Objective.

In addition, during focus groups with resident migrants, including Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), participants identified this objective as key to facilitating their integration into the local community.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 5: EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Newport City Council supports schools and settings to positively address any inequality in provision, attainment, and early career pathways, of known groups of vulnerable learners.

65% of our SEP online survey respondents stated they agreed with this proposed draft Equality Objective.

Statements from online consultation and focus groups highlight concerns about the prevalence of identity-based bullying in schools and reporting mechanisms for bullying, harassment, and discrimination, including online hate. Some respondents also felt that the Council needed to do more work within schools to address attainment gaps for vulnerable or potentially marginalised groups of learners.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 6: INDEPENDENT LIVING

Newport City Council contributes to the city being a great place to live, to grow older and live independently, and has in place a range of services that accommodates people in different situations.

52% of our SEP online survey respondents stated they agreed with this proposed draft Equality Objective.

This objective received the least support from respondents. While most participants stated that access to affordable housing was an on-going challenging, this issue was exacerbated by other difficulties, for example, the cost-of-living crisis, multiple levels of deprivation and barriers to accessing support services, including Council services.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Equality Objective 1 – Leadership, governance & involvement

“Newport City Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement”.

This Equality Objective focuses on the role that Newport City Council can play in promoting equalities, how we can put the agenda at the heart of our decision-making processes, how we ensure that we are delivering against our commitments, and that we involve local people in the decisions that affect them.

2.	Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 1 (Leadership, Governance, and Involvement) that we have set out?		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree		<input type="checkbox"/> Partly Agree
	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

3.	Please tell us why you think this.

1.	I am responding as... (you may tick more than one box if appropriate)
	<input type="checkbox"/> A Newport resident
	<input type="checkbox"/> A Newport City Council employee
	<input type="checkbox"/> A Newport City Council elected member
	<input type="checkbox"/> Representing a third sector/ voluntary organisation or community group
	<input type="checkbox"/> Representing a business
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:

Draft Equality Objective 2 – Customer Service and Access

“Newport City Council’s services are accessible to everyone in Newport, providing services that are both inclusive and considerate of individual need”.

This Equality Objective focuses on the degree to which the services delivered by the council are accessible to the public, it also focuses on how we consider the diverse needs of communities when designing new services or amending existing ones.

4.	Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 2 (Customer Service and Access) that we have set out?	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Partly Agree
	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

5.	Please tell us why you think this.

Draft Equality Objective 3 – Representative Workforce

“Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city and is a workplace with an inclusive culture which recruits, develops and retains staff”.

This Equality Objective focuses on our staff, how we can be more representative of the communities we serve at every level throughout the organisation, and how we can support staff to achieve their potential.

6.	Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 3 (Representative Workforce) that we have set out?	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Partly Agree
	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

7.	Please tell us why you think this.

Draft Equality Objective 4 – Community Cohesion

“Newport City Council contributes to the City of Newport being a safe space for all, promoting positive relationships between different communities, supporting integration and effectively identifying emerging community tensions”.

This Equality Objective focuses on building communities that have shared values, where diversity is welcomed and embraced, and where people feel connected to the place that they live.

8.	Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 4 (Community Cohesion) that we have set out?	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Partly Agree
	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

9.	Please tell us why you think this.

Draft Equality Objective 5 – Equity in Education

“Newport City Council supports schools and settings to positively address any inequality in provision, attainment, and early career pathways, of known groups of vulnerable learners.”.

This Equality Objective focuses on how we work with schools to support them in addressing areas of inequality that may exist between different groups of pupils.

10.	Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 5 (Equity in Education) that we have set out?	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Partly Agree
	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

11.	Please tell us why you think this.

Draft Equality Objective 6 – Independent Living

“Newport City Council contributes to the city being a great place to live, to grow older and live independently”.

This Equality Objective focuses on how the council can support people to live more independently, and how we can offer a greater variety of housing-related support that is responsive to individual need.

14.	Do you think we should consider and include any other objectives within the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028?	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

15.	Please tell us why you think this and what other objectives could be included.

16.	Do you think there are any areas of inequality that are not addressed by our draft Equality Objectives and that are of particular importance to you?	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

17.	Please tell us why you think this

Under each of the Equality Objectives, our Strategic Equality Plan will list a number of steps/actions that we will take to achieve the objective. Your answers to the next few questions will help us decide what these actions should be.

18.	Are there any problems you face, or think you may face, when trying to access Newport City Council's services? for example, when visiting a council building, accessing information or service, making a complaint, or requesting a service?	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know	

19.	Please tell us why you think this.

20.	What can we do better/what needs to change/what can we do differently?

21.	Please tell us if you think we need to focus on any specific measures, initiatives or protected characteristics in our 2024-2028 plan, and why...?

The Socio-economic Duty

Living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others in society can have an even more negative impact on people who face additional barriers of inequality. The Socio-economic Duty requires some public bodies to consider how their strategic decisions might help reduce inequalities for people who are socio-economically disadvantaged. Some examples of inequalities of outcome include lower paid work, poorer educational attainment, and an increased risk of being a victim of crime.

In our previous Strategic Equality Plan, we embedded our responsibilities under the Socio-economic Duty in council processes, including strategic decision-making. This duty will remain an important part of the development and delivery of our new Strategic Equality Plan.

22.	Do you think our Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives will improve outcomes for people in Newport who are socio-economically disadvantaged?		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree		<input type="checkbox"/> Partly Agree
	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

23.	Do you have any further comments?

24.	Do you have any other comments on our Strategic Equality Plan or the proposed Equality Objectives?

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Scrutiny Report

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Part 1

Date: March 2024

Subject Scrutiny Adviser Report

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Role
Samantha Schanzer (Scrutiny Adviser)	Present the Committee with the Scrutiny Adviser Report for discussion and update the Committee on any changes.

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

1. Action Plan

Consider the Actions from previous meetings (**Appendix 1**):

- *Note the responses for the actions;*
- *Determine if any further information / action is required;*
- *Agree to receive an update on outstanding issues at the next meeting.*

2. Committee's Work Programme:

Consider the Committee's Forward Work Programme Update (**Appendix 2**):

- *Are there any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?*
- *Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?*
- *Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?*

2 Context

Background

Action Sheet

- 2.1 Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Action Sheet from the Committee meetings. The updated completed actions are included in the table.

- 2.2 Any actions that do not have a response will be included on the Action Sheet at the next meeting to ensure that the Committee can keep track of outstanding actions.

Forward Work Programme

- 2.3 Attached at **Appendix 2** is the Draft Forward Work Programme for the year 2023-24.
- 2.4 The purpose of a Forward Work Programme is to help ensure Councillors achieve organisation and focus in the undertaking of enquiries through the Overview and Scrutiny function. Effective work programming is essential to ensure that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
- 2.4 Further information about the work programming process, including the procedures for referring new business to the programme, can be found in our Scrutiny Handbook on the Council's Scrutiny webpages (www.newport.gov.uk/scrutiny).
- 2.5 The Centre for Public Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the forward work programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be co-ordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 The following information is attached:

Appendix 1: Action Sheet from Previous Meetings;

Appendix 2: Draft Forward Work Programme

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- **Action Sheet from Previous Meetings - Appendix 1**
 - Consider the responses to the actions from the meeting;
 - Are you satisfied that you have received the necessary information?
 - Are there any further issues arising from the responses that you would like to raise?
 - For the actions that do not have responses – these actions will be rolled over to the next meeting and reported back to the Committee.
- **Draft Forward Work Programme - Appendix 2**

Consider:

 - Are there any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?
 - Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?
 - Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The Corporate Assessment, and the subsequent [follow up assessment](#) provide background information on the importance of good work programming. Specific reference is made to the need to align the Cabinet and Scrutiny work programmes to ensure the value of the Scrutiny Function is maximised.
- 5.2 The latest Cabinet work programme was approved by the Cabinet on a monthly basis for the next 12 months and includes the list of reports scheduled for consideration. Effective forward planning by both Cabinet and Scrutiny needs to be coordinated and integrated in relation to certain reports to ensure proper consultation takes place before a decision is taken. A link to the Cabinet work programme is provided [here](#) to the Committee as part of this report, to enable the Committee to ensure that the work programmes continue to reflect key decisions being made by the Cabinet.

6. Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- 6.1 Having proper work programming procedures in place ensures that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services, contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and ensures that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

6.2 This report relates to the Actions from Committee's which support the achievement of the Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the Law and Regulation Service Plan, Objectives, Actions and Measures and the Wellbeing objectives:

Well-being Objective	1 – Economy, Education and Skills	2 – Newport's Environment and Infrastructure	3 – Preventative and Equitable Community and Social Care	4 – An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council
Aims:	Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.	A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.	Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.	Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core.

7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

- 7.1 The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 which came into force in April 2016 sets the context for the move towards long term planning of services.
- 7.2 **General questions**
- How is this area / policy affected by the new legislation?

- How will this decision / policy / proposal impact upon future generations? What is the long term impact?
- What evidence is provided to demonstrate WFGA has been / is being considered?
- Evidence from Community Profiles / other data?
- Evidence of links to Wellbeing Assessment / Objectives / Plan?

7.3 Wellbeing Goals

- How are the Wellbeing goals reflected in the policy / proposal / action?
 - *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A resilient Wales*
 - *A healthier Wales*
 - *A more equal Wales*
 - *A Wales of cohesive communities*
 - *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*
 - *A globally responsible Wales*

7.4 Sustainable Development Principles

- Does the report / proposal demonstrate how as an authority we are working in accordance with the sustainable development principles from the act when planning services?
 - **Long Term**
The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs
 - **Prevention**
How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives
 - **Integration**
Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies
 - **Collaboration**
Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives
 - **Involvement**
The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

8 Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2022-2027](#)
- The Corporate Assessment and [follow up assessment](#).

Report Completed: March 2024

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
ACTION SHEET**

	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
1	Conclusion of Committee reports	Send comments and recommendations to officers	Samantha Schanzer	COMPLETE
10	Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Report 22-23	Provide the number of people who contact the City Contact Centre via phone when they are unable to use the online services.	Tracy McKim/Rhys Cornwall/Meirion Rushworth	COMPLETE – a response has been received by Committee and a recommendation has been made to the Head of Finance by the Committee.

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Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Draft Work Programme: June 2023 to May 2024

Meeting	Agenda Items
02/06/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report • EV Charging Strategy • Consultation Update (Information only)
23/06/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Language Annual Report
28/07/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Risk Report • Climate Change Annual Report
08/09/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Digital Strategy Report
09/10/2023 1pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual Corporate Wellbeing Self Assessment ▪ Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Report
27/10/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transformation Plan / Budget Consultation Plans / Development of MTFP ▪ Air Quality Action Plan
01/12/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Annual Report • People Plan
30/01/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTFP and Revenue Budget – Consultee Meeting
08/03/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Plan • Strategic Equalities Plan 2024-28
26/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report 23-24

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