



Strategic  
Equality Plan  
2020-2024













## FOREWORD

## ABOUT US

Newport is a coastal city with a rich industrial heritage; the authority covers a geographical area of just over 84 square miles. It has an urban hub with an extensive rural hinterland and is home to one of Wales' most diverse and multi-cultural populations. The authority is one of the largest employers in the local area with XX of our employees living within council boundaries.

Our mission at Newport City Council is simple; **to improve people's lives** and this means everyone, irrespective of your background or circumstances.

## WHAT DOES NEWPORT LOOK LIKE?

	Population of: 147,769
	20% of the population is below the age of 16 (slightly higher than the Welsh average)
	51% of the city's population is female 49% of the city's population is male
	62.5% of the population is between the ages of 16 and 64 (slightly higher than the Welsh average)
	17.5% of the population is over the age of 65 (slightly lower than the Welsh average)
	10.1% of the population comes from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups (over double the Welsh average)
	1.7% of the population identifies as either Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual
	17.3% of households in Newport are in material deprivation (slightly higher than the Welsh average)
	10.6% of the population self-identify as having a physical or mental condition which means their "day to day activities are limited a lot" (slightly lower than the Welsh average)
	The top three religions in the city are: Christianity (56.9%), No religion (29.7%) and Islam (4.7%)

## ABOUT THIS STRATEGY

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

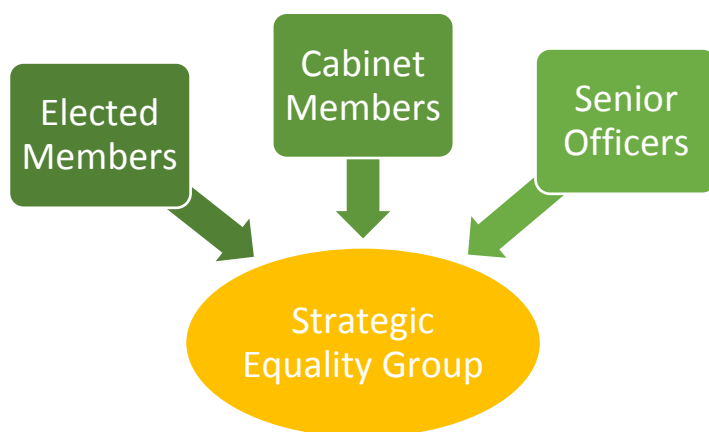
This strategic plan outlines Newport City Council’s priorities for furthering and promoting equality across the city. The strategy runs for four years, beginning in April 2020 and finishing in March 2024.

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 a number of actions that will contribute to us achieving those outcomes. You can also see which groups we believe will benefit most from our objectives.

## HOW ARE WE GOING TO MONITOR THE STRATEGY?

This Strategic Equality Plan will be progressed through our “Strategic Equality Group” (SEG). This group is chaired by the Cabinet Member responsible for equalities and is also made up of other elected members and senior officers who are able to influence the way services are delivered by the authority.

The SEG will meet on a regular basis and each meeting will focus on the progress that is being made against our Equality Objectives.



As well as our ongoing work within the SEG, we will also publish annual reports which summarise 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 before being presented to Cabinet and for publication.

You can read the annual reports from our previous strategic equality plans on our [website](#).

## OUR EQUALITY DUTIES AND RELATED STRATEGIES

### THE GENERAL DUTY

#### **When making decisions and delivering services we must 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?

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their protected characteristic(s). This is the term used in the Equality Act 2010 to identify the types of things that affect how people are treated and can mean people may experience discrimination.

Protected characteristics are:

- |                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▶ age                            | ▶ sex                     |
| ▶ disability                     | ▶ sexual orientation      |
| ▶ gender reassignment            | ▶ race                    |
| ▶ religion or belief             | ▶ pregnancy and maternity |
| ▶ marriage and civil partnership |                           |

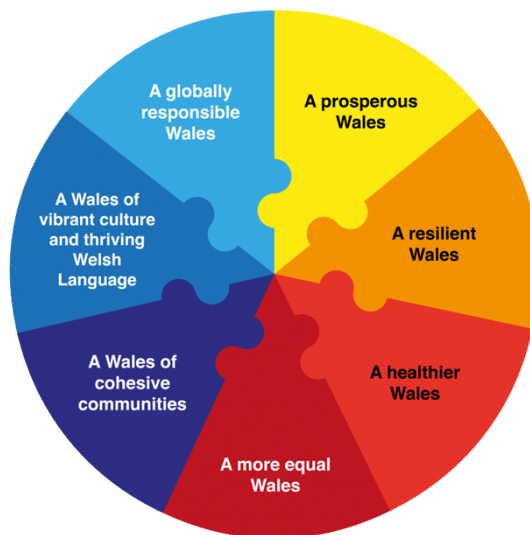
The Equality Act 2010 also says our Strategic Equality Plan should be explicit about how our plan relates to different protected characteristics. If our plan doesn't impact on a protected characteristic, the act asks us to explain why.

### OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS

We have also tried to make sure that this strategy aligns with a number of other key council documents, as well as considering national research and priorities. These include:

- our Corporate Plan; which sets out our vision for council services
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission's "Is Wales Fairer? 2019 Review"; a document which outlines the key challenges we face in Wales in relation to the public sector
- the city's Well-being Plan: which sets out a vision for Newport that is shared by all public sector partners in the city

Our Wellbeing Plan is based on the 7 Wellbeing Goals that we have a duty to deliver under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Those goals most relevant to this plan are 'a Wales of cohesive communities' and 'a more equal Wales'.



**More information on how this plan links to other council priorities can be found within the accompanying SEP 2020-2024: Consultation Report.**

## 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 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.

### 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. LEARN WELL

**“Newport City Council supports the well-being and attainment of the city’s pupils, and actively looks to address any disparity in achievement 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. The objective has a particular focus on reducing gaps in attendance between different groups.

### 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**

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

ILLUSTRATED MAP OF NEWPORT WITH PICTORAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY  
DELIVERABLES

## 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 is visibly committed to advancing equality for all

**We will do this by:**

- Delivering events and communications throughout the year relating to key dates, e.g. Black History Group, LGBT History Month, Deaf Awareness Week
- Supporting the role of our Member Champions for equality themes

**Outcome 2:** Decision-making effectively considers equality impact and is influenced by the diverse communities of Newport

**We will do this by:**

- Ensuring all managers receive Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) training
- Monitoring Protected Characteristics of participants in consultation activity, and analysing results based on demographics
- Updating our well-being profiles, which are used as evidence for decision making and design of services, to better reflect information we hold about communities across Newport
- Embedding Welsh Government's statutory guidance on the "Socio-economic duty" into council governance and strategic decision making processes
- Delivering recommendations for change to our processes made as part of the Council's Gypsy Roma Traveller 'health check'

**Outcome 3:** There is a clear governance structure in place to monitor equality performance across the organisation

**We will do this by:**

- Developing a Delivery Plan for our strategic equality work with clear performance indicators
- Working with our lead Cabinet Member for Equalities and Strategic Equality Group to review our governance arrangements and ensure they are fit for purpose
- Reviewing the service area plans which deliver against our corporate plan, ensuring each area incorporates an equality performance indicator
- Review all HR policies in line with our amended Equality Impact Assessment process.

**Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?**

We believe that improved leadership, governance and involvement will benefit all protected characteristics.



## 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

**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 will do this by:**

- Utilising data to identify any under or over representation in people that access our frontline services
- Establishing a Disability Access Group to support the development of customer service provisions
- Running visits twice a year to the Contact Centre for communities who may be less confident in accessing services or making complaints
- Delivering diversity training on a regular basis to all of our customer services staff
- Reviewing accessibility of services for people that speak languages other than English or Welsh
- Effectively capturing language skills of staff across the organisation in order to best utilise these
- Ensuring our website and apps are compliant with new accessibility regulations

**Outcome 2:** Complaints relating to discrimination are managed in a way that ensures organisational learning

**We will do this by:**

- Sending all closed complaints a customer service experience questionnaire which includes demographic data for improved monitoring
- Introducing Equalities and Welsh Language Complaints data as standing agenda items on our Strategic Equalities Group and Welsh Language Implementation Group
- Delivering hate crime training to all of our customer services staff
- Signposting people who raise allegations of discrimination against the council to appropriate services
- Introducing a process review in response to any complaints of discrimination

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

**We will do 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 the Corporate Parent Membership card
- Supporting Education services to provide accessible School based Sport and Physical Activity Opportunities
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**Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?**

We believe that an improved approach to customer service and access will benefit all protected characteristics.

## 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 do this by:

- Reviewing and improving the information collected on staff
- Mapping pay gaps by ethnicity and taking positive action to address any disparities
- Mapping pay gaps by disability and taking positive action to address any disparities
- Taking positive action to recruit and promote female staff into upper pay quartiles
- Actively promoting vacancies to underrepresented groups

**Outcome 2:** Diverse staff have a voice within the organisation, and are listened to

We will do this by:

- Establishing a BAME staff support network
- Establishing an LGBTQ+ staff support network
- Establish a disability staff support network
- Developing a transitioning in the workplace policy in partnership with LGBTQ+ staff

**Outcome 3:** The potential for unconscious bias in recruitment processes is recognised, and minimised

We will do this by:

- Removing all identifiable information from our paper applications, often referred to as a 'blind application processes'
- Reviewing access to training and development opportunities by protected characteristic
- Delivering Unconscious Bias training to staff undertaking interviews

### 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 positive impact against the protected characteristics of:

- Race
- Religion & Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Disability

## 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 do this by:

- Developing an Integration Strategy for Newport focussing on refugees, asylum seekers and migrants
- Establishing a task force to support the delivery of our work as an Inclusive City, involving communities and key stakeholders
- Developing a Welcome to Newport App for new arrivals
- Working in partnership with locally funded services to support EU nationals to apply to the EUSS
- Working in partnership with our Youth Council and local LGBTQ+ people to develop a 'safe space' for LGBTQ+ people in Newport
- Resettling a further 7 families under the Home Office's UK Resettlement Scheme

**Outcome 2:** Community tensions are monitored and mitigated effectively

We will do this by:

- Developing a multi-agency mechanism to effectively monitor community tensions at the earliest stage
- Delivering Prevent update training to all schools in Newport, raising awareness of the risks of radicalisation and vulnerable groups
- Delivering training to community groups that empowers them to challenge and act on hate speech where they encounter it

**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
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment

## Equality Objective 5: Learn Well

Newport City Council supports the well-being and attainment of the city's pupils, and actively looks to address any disparity in achievement of vulnerable learners

**Outcome 1:** There is greater parity in attendance and exclusion rates for all pupils in Newport

We will do this by:

- Mapping and reducing gaps in attendance and exclusion rates of BAME learners.
- Mapping and reducing gaps in attendance and exclusion rates of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) learners
- Mapping and reducing gaps in attainment rates of eFSM / non-FSM learners (students eligible for free school meals and those who are not)

**Outcome 2:** We have a better understanding of the challenges faced by potentially marginalised pupils

We will do this by:

- Working proactively with LGBTQ+ students via school councils and the youth council
- Developing a cross-organisational strategy for post-16 Education
- Monitoring and developing the rates of post-16 participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects for vulnerable learners
- Tackling period poverty and distributing sanitary products into Newport Schools
- Improving our response to identity based bullying by embedding Welsh Government's 'Rights, Respect and Equality' anti-bullying guidance in our practices

**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
- Gender Reassignment

## 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”**

**Outcome 1: People are empowered to live in their own accommodation for longer**

We will do this by:

- Delivering housing related support to adults with learning disabilities
- Providing dedicated housing related support aimed specifically at refugees
- Providing generic ‘in home support’ for lone parents via the LIFT project.
- Developing bespoke accommodation in partnership with Registered Social Landlords (RSL’s) for people with a range of different needs.

**Outcome 2: People are empowered to play an active role in their local communities**

We will do this by:

- Promoting independent living skills at an earlier age through closer working with local schools and the council’s Education team
- Providing a dedicated Community Connectors team that signposts people to services and activities delivered in their local communities
- Supporting adults with learning disabilities to access Welfare Benefit entitlements to better utilise their own financial resources and support their independence

**Outcome 3: The city is responsive to the accommodation needs of victims of domestic abuse**

We will do this by:

- Providing Refuge provision for victims of domestic violence, delivered in partnership with Women’s Aid and Llamau.
- Delivering a BAME specific women’s refuge and associated supported aimed at women fleeing domestic violence

### **Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?**

This Equality Objective is likely to most benefit against the protected characteristics of:

- Race
- Disability
- Sex
- Age

This Equality Objective is also likely to make a positive contribution towards helping the authority consider socio-economic disadvantage.

## TO FIND OUT MORE

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. If you would like further information on this plan or our equality work, please get in touch: [equality@newport.gov.uk](mailto:equality@newport.gov.uk)

This plan is available in Welsh and can be made available in other formats and languages.

### **Key Documents**

Is Wales Fairer? The State of Equality and Human Rights 2018 (Available online:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/is-britain-fairer-2018-is-wales-fairer.pdf>)

Welsh Government: Strategic Equality Objectives 2020-2024 (Available online:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-09/strategic-equality-objectives-2020-2024-consultation.pdf>)

Newport City Council: Corporate Plan 2017-2022 (Available online:

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/About-the-council/Corporate-Plan-2017-2022.pdf>)

Newport's Well-being Plan: 2018-2023 (Available online: <http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/One-Newport/Local-Well-being-Plan-2018-23-English-Final.pdf>)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Care-and-Support/Newport-Directory-of-Supporting-People-Services.pdf>