



Newport City
Council
Draft
Strategic
Equality Plan
2020-2024

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg.
Mae fformatau eraill ar gael ar gais.

This document is available in Welsh.
Other formats are available on request.

FOREWORD

I am very pleased to be able to present our third Strategic Equality Plan to the people of Newport. Our city has long been home to progressive ideas, tolerance, and respect, and this plan demonstrates we are continuing in that proud tradition.

This strategy represents an evolution from our 2016-2020 plan, with more outcome based objectives that have been developed by working closely in partnership with various teams across the authority and, of course, in collaboration with key stakeholders from across the city, not least the members of the public who contributed to the development of the plan in January 2020.

We are living in unprecedented times, we find ourselves not only at the start of a new decade, but also at a societal cross roads following both our exit from the European Union and as we collectively look to recover from the global covid-19 pandemic. A series of events that has touched us all, but has impacted specific groups in our communities so acutely, and often laid bare the inequalities that exist between us.

However, in many ways our challenges remain the same. We must continue to strive to deliver equitable public services for all of our residents in the face of an increasingly challenging economic backdrop, and we must do this while not allowing the forces of division to create an environment of intolerance and hostility between us.

That said, I remain confident that we are on the right track, and that this plan represents a positive contribution in our journey towards making the city safer, more accessible and a better place to live for everyone.



Cllr Jane Mudd

Leader of the Council

Newport City Council

ABOUT THIS STRATEGY

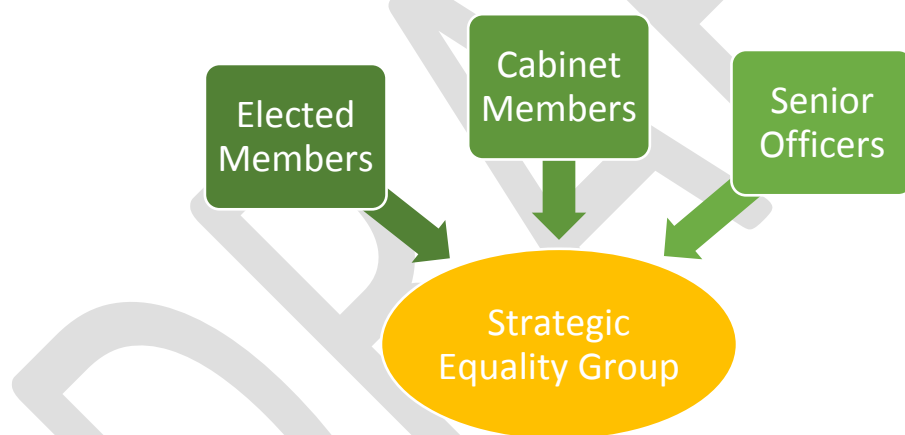
Under the Equality Act (2010), local authorities in Wales must publish a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) that sets out the objectives it wants to achieve over a four year period. These priorities are called “Equality Objectives”.

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?

Delivery of the SEP will be supported by our Strategic Equality Group and underpinned by a series of comprehensive operational delivery plans. The Strategic Equality Group is made up of senior officers and elected members and is chaired by the Cabinet Lead for Equality. The Council’s Overview Scrutiny and Management Committee will have additional responsibility for the scrutiny and monitoring of the SEP’s progress, and update reports will be received by the committee every 6 months.



In addition to this level of scrutiny from within the organisation, 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 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 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'.

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 66% 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%)

Our Consultation

In developing this plan we have used a range of consultation methods to ensure we get the right balance of different views. 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 the equality information we have available to us based on our population and workforce, and the wider priorities of our organisation.

While results from our different consultation exercises suggested that people felt we were focusing on the right equality objectives, with 72.4% of people agreed with our draft objectives, they also gave us a clear steer on how we could look to improve our services.

“In regards to how the council promotes equality, I think they could do a lot more”
(Questionnaire respondent)

“I don’t have the skills to access council services online. It’s too overwhelming”
(Focus group respondent)

“I don’t think I could have a succesful career at Newport City Council because I have a disability”
(Questionnaire respondent)

“Many of my friends that I know live in Newport and they range from a variety of ethnicities, but I still think there is a lot of discrimination”
(Questionnaire respondent)

“The council could do more outreach in schools for young people from marginalised backgrounds”
(Questionnaire respondent)

“It’s important to ensuring that vulnerable adults have the proper support to understand and identify the social and financial help they have a right to”
(Focus group respondent)

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 2020-2024: 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 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.

NOTE: the final published version of this plan will be presented using this design style on the next pages

OUR MAP TO A MORE EQUAL NEWPORT

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 1

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND INVOLVEMENT

Embedding Welsh Government's statutory guidance on the "Socio-economic duty" into council governance processes.

Monitoring Protected Characteristics of participants in consultation activity, and analysing results based on demographics

Delivering events and communications throughout the year relating to key dates, e.g. Black History Group, LGBT History Month, Deaf Awareness Week

Reviewing the service area plans which deliver against our corporate plan, ensuring each area incorporates an equality performance indicator

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 3

REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE

Removing all identifiable information from our paper applications, often referred to as a 'Blind application process'

Actively promoting vacancies and a career opportunities at Newport City Council to underrepresented groups

Mapping pay gaps by ethnicity and disability and taking positive action to address any identified disparities

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 2

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND ACCESS

Improving the process that we go through when we review complaints of discrimination

Establishing a Disability Access Group to support the development of customer service provisions

Delivering hate crime awareness training to all of our customer services staff

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 4

COMMUNITY COHESION

Working in partnership with our Youth Council and local LGBTQ+ people to develop a 'safe space' for LGBTQ+ people in Newport

Developing a multi-agency mechanism to effectively monitor community tensions at the earliest stage

Delivering Prevent update training to all Newport schools, raising awareness of the risks of radicalisation to vulnerable groups

Developing a Welcome to Newport mobile app for new arrivals to the city.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 5

LEARN WELL

Mapping and **reduce** gaps in attendance and exclusion rates of BAME learners

Mapping and **reduce** gaps in attendance and exclusion rates of ALN learners

Working proactively with LGBT+ students via school councils and youth council

Mapping and **reduce** gaps in attendance and exclusion rates of eFSM / non-eFSM learners

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 6

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Delivering 'in home support' to adults with learning disabilities

Delivering Refuge provision for victims of domestic violence delivered in partnership with Women's Aid and Llamau

Providing new properties by working in partnership with registered social landlords

Promoting independent living at an early stage through closer working with education

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 do this by:

- Showing visible support on key dates and events in the equalities calendar; i.e. raising flags, promoting events in Newport Matters through our social media accounts, and promoting events through our internal staff communications
- Supporting community events throughout the year that relate to key dates, i.e. Black History Month, LGBT+ History Month
- Supporting the role of our Member Champions

Outcome 2: Newport City Council has a clear governance structure in place to monitor equality performance across the organisation

We will do this by:

- Reviewing the service area plans which deliver against our corporate plan, ensuring each area incorporates an equality performance indicator
- Ensuring all managers receive Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) training
- Embedding Welsh Government's statutory guidance on the "Socio-economic duty" into council governance and strategic decision making processes
- Working with our lead Cabinet Member for Equalities and Strategic Equality Group to review our governance arrangements and ensure they are fit for purpose

Outcome 3: Newport City Council will improve how it understands the impact of changing services by engaging residents and relevant groups in the decision making process,

We will do this by:

- 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

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 our customer facing services (for example Neighbourhood Hubs, 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 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?

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

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>