

# Agenda



## Newport City Council

Ddydiad: Dydd Mawrth, 29 Medi 2020

Amser: 5.00 pm

Lleoliad: Cyfarfod rhithwir

At sylw: **Pob Aelod o'r Cyngor Dinas**

### **HYSBYSIAD GWE-DDARLLEDU**

*Gall y cyfarfod hwn gael ei ffilmio ar gyfer darllediad byw neu ddarllediad wedi hynny trwy wefan y Cyngor.*

*Ar ddechrau'r cyfarfod, bydd y Maer neu'r Person sy'n Llywyddu yn cadarnhau os yw cyfan neu ran o'r cyfarfod yn cael ei ffilmio. Efallai y bydd y delweddau a recordiad sain yn cael eu defnyddio hefyd at ddibenion hyfforddiant o fewn y Cyngor.*

*Yn gyffredinol, nid yw'r ardaloedd eistedd cyhoeddus yn cael eu ffilmio. Fodd bynnag, wrth fynd i mewn i'r ystafell gyfarfod a defnyddio'r ardal seddau cyhoeddus, rydych yn rhoi caniatâd i chi gael eich ffilmio a defnydd posibl o rhai delweddau a recordiadau sain ar gyfer gwe-ddarlledu a/neu ddibenion hyfforddiant.*

*Os oes gennych unrhyw ymholiadau ynghylch hyn, cysylltwch â Rheolwr Democratiaeth a Cyfathrebu*

### **Eitem**

### **Wardiau dan Sylw**

1. Agenda yn Gymraeg
2. Rhagofynion
  - i. To receive any apologies for absence.
  - ii. To receive any declarations of interest.
  - iii. To receive any announcements by the Mayor.
3. Cofnodion (*Tudalennau 3 - 16*)  
To confirm and sign the minutes of the last meeting dated 27 February 2020.
4. Penodiadau (*Tudalennau 17 - 20*)  
To consider any proposed appointments.
5. Materion yr Heddlu  
30 minutes is allocated for questions to the Gwent Police representative.
6. Cyfraddau Annomestig Cenedlaethol: Rhyddhad Dewisol: Cynllun

Contact: Anne Jenkins

Tel: 01633 656656

E-mail: [democratic.services@newport.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@newport.gov.uk)

Date of Issue: Dydd Mawrth, 22 Medi 2020

Rhyddhad Cyfradd Manwerthu, Hamdden a Lletygarwch (*Tudalennau 21 - 40*)

7. Adroddiad Rheoli'r Trysorlys sy'n cwmpasu'r Flwyddyn Ariannol 2019/20 (*Tudalennau 41 - 54*)
8. Cynllun Cydraddoldeb Strategol 2020-2024 (*Tudalennau 55 - 100*)
9. Cwestiynau i Arweinydd y Cyngor
10. Cwestiynau i Aelodau'r Cabinet
11. Cwestiynau i Gadeiryddion Pwyllgorau
12. Dyddiad y cyfarfod nesaf  
24 Tachwedd 2020, 5pm



# Minutes

## Council

---

Date: 27 February 2020

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors J Cleverly, P Cockeram, D Davies, M Al-Nuaimi, C Evans, M Evans, C Ferris, G Giles, J Guy, D Harvey, I Hayat, Councillor R Jeavons, M Linton, D Mayer, R Mogford, A Morris, Councillor J Mudd, M Rahman, J Richards, M Spencer, T Suller, H Thomas, K Thomas, C Townsend, Councillor R Truman, T Watkins, R White, K Whitehead, D Wilcox, G Berry, J Clarke, V Dudley, R Hayat, T Holyoake, P Hourahine, J Hughes, J Jordan, L Lacey, S Marshall, W Routley, H Townsend and J Watkins

In Attendance:

Apologies: Councillors M Cornelious, K Critchley, D Fouweather, C Jenkins, M Kellaway, M Whitcutt, D Williams and Y Forsey

---

### 1. Preliminaries

#### i. To receive any apologies for absence

The Monitoring Officer reported apologies for absence (noted above)

#### ii. To receive any declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest at this stage.

#### iii. To receive any announcements by the Mayor

There were no announcements made by the Mayor.

### 2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 January 2020.

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of 28 January 2020 be approved and adopted.

### 3. Appointments

To consider the proposed appointments set out in the report

Councillor Harvey moved the appointments set out in the Report, as agreed by the Business managers, subject to the additional appointments set out below.

**Resolved:** That the following appointments be agreed.

## Internal Appointments

### Champions

Older Persons Champion - Cllr Trevor Watkins  
Disabled, Vulnerable Persons & Mental Health Champion - Cllr Kate Thomas  
Carers Champion - Cllr Graham Berry  
Anti-Poverty Champion - Cllr Phil Hourahine  
Armed Forces Champion - Cllr Mark Spencer  
Homelessness - Cllr Yvonne Forsey  
Biodiversity Champion - Cllr Laura Lacey  
B.A.M.E Champion - Cllr Majid Rahman  
L.G.B.T. Champion - Cllr Laura Lacey  
Welsh Champion - Cllr Jason Hughes

### Appointments to External Organisations

Organisation	No. of Vacancies / Replacements	Nominations Received
WLGA 3	Leader, Deputy Leader and Cllr M Spencer	
WLGA Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure	1 New appointment	Councillor D Harvey
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1 Reserve	Councillor J Hughes

### Governing Body Appointments

Governing Body	No. of Vacancies / Re-appointments	Nominations Received
Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd	1 Continuation of appointment	Alan Speight
St Patricks RC Primary School	1 Continuation of appointment	Allan Morris
St Patricks RC Primary School	1 Continuation of appointment	John Richards
St Josephs RC Primary School	1 Continuation of appointment	Ceri Gibbons
St Mary's RC Primary School	1 Continuation of appointment	Charles Ferris
Tredegar Park Primary School	1 LEA Governor	Mr Savage

## 4. Police Issues

Superintendent M Richards gave the Council an update on current police matters before inviting questions from councillors

□ Councillor Truman referred to a spate of serious antisocial incidents in Alway, Ringland and Lliswerry. A meeting was held by residents, who raised their concern that there was lack of communication and visibility from the Police. Residents understood and sympathised with the Police cuts and the Councillor thanked the Police for attending. Councillor reiterated that it was an easy thing to fix; communication and visibility. Supt M Richard, thanked Councillors Truman, Guy and Jeavons and had recognised the massive support from councillors and was aware that police needed to do more and with this in mind, was committed to acting on issues raised at the resident's meeting and was working more closely with the elected members.

□ Councillor Linton was at the above mentioned meeting and echoed the sentiment of Councillor Truman and asked what was to be done by the police in addition to the above mentioned for Ringland. Supt M Richard was stressed that it was important to get visibility right. Community Safety Officers presence was taken out of Alway and Ringland and placed with primary school children for extra security. Improvements however was expected in the key areas.

- Councillor Harvey thanked the police on swift their swift reaction in relation to the above wards and thanked Insp Cawley, who was a good inspector that cared about residents. Police were faced with cuts and residents did not understand this until they attended the meeting. The Superintendent was committed to working together with residents and councillors.
  
- Councillor Guy referred to scams targeting older people and asked was there any help from organisations to prevent this occurring. Supt M Richards advised that preventative work was published online but was aware that there was probably a lot of senior citizens that did not go online. With this in mind, he would meet with Councillor Guy to discuss an alternatives way to raise awareness.
  
- Councillor Rahman mentioned the drug issues around Morris Street which was discussed at the last council in January. Councillor Rahman was litter picking recently with John Griffiths AM and Jessica Morden MP. Drugs were found hidden on the weekend in places such as drains. Two PCSOs were seen in the area but with Summer approaching and a lack of police presence, this problem would increase. The Superintendent advised that he would contact Insp Cawley to look into this matter.
  
- Councillor Marshall referred to the recent space of burglaries in Gaer, and advised that it was difficult for victims to obtain communication from the police, could the Superintendent therefore take into consideration the deep concern from residents. Supt M Richards stressed that he was aware of the crimes and would focus on tackling the issue as a matter of priority.
  
- Councillor Jeavons asked if there was any update on speeding cars outside Tesco in Spytyt. The Superintendent advised that there was nothing to update at present but would email Councillor Jeavons on any progress.
  
- Councillor Spencer referred to speeding issues within Beechwood Ward; near the park. There had been serious accidents around Chepstow Road, Maindee and Alway, cars had been written off due to the nature of the accidents. The Councillor reiterated to keep up any work being done in this area. This was noted by the Superintendent.
  
- Councillor Ferris mentioned that a resident recently opened door selling household goods, went inside the resident's house and allegedly took over £100. This was not only about the loss of money but it knocked the resident's confidence and they felt embarrassed and needed assurance. The Superintendent would speak with Councillor Ferris and contact the victim.
  
- Councillor Morris attended a public meeting recently due to a spate of fires in Alway, Ringland and Somerton, which might be linked. Victims felt abandoned by the police. The pattern of fires was troubling and getting out of hand. Supt M Richards was aware and this was an ongoing investigation, he was disappointed to hear that victims were not kept up to date and would contact his colleagues.
  
- Councillor J Watkins, reflected Councillor Ferris' concerns regarding door to door callers, which had also taken place in Caerleon selling paintings, although there had been no report of a crime. In addition, there was heavy traffic on the bridge into Caerleon, happening on a daily basis. It was also disappointing at a recent ward meeting there was no police or PCSO in attendance to represent Caerleon. Supt M Richards would look into police attendance at the next Caerleon Ward meeting.
  
- Cllr Hourahine supported Cllr Guy's query and referred to a recent seminar on money and pension service and warned that anyone could be scammed. The most vulnerable ages ranged between 45-60yrs, there was information that the Councillor was happy to provide the police and councillors. The Superintendent would also distribute the information.

□ Councillor Holyoake welcomed the police presence in Pill as residents walking past youths gathering outside shops on Commercial Street were intimidated. The mounted police presence was a positive move to engage with the community. Monthly meetings working well but some areas including outside Kwik Save, drug dealers congregated. Would this be watched by the police. The Superintendent would hold inspectors to account as Pill was a priority area for the police.

□ Cllr H Thomas referred to Superintendent mentioning that crime figures were down, this was in his opening remarks. Councillor Thomas wanted to know were less people reporting crime, as residents in Shaftesbury still complained about incidents. Supt M Richards advised that the reduction in crime had been more than likely been as a result of residents not reporting incidents and was sad to hear that people might not be reporting crime. There were less solved crimes than that recorded in the previous year.

□ Cllr Cockeram praised the work of the safeguarding team and the partnership with the police and hoped it would continue with no threat of any financial cuts. The Superintendent agreed and hoped that it may continue and was committed to the resource and could not see it being withdrawn

## **5. Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Leader presented the report, explaining the key details around the administration's 2020/21 budget and highlighting the Council Tax increase underpinning that budget, at 6.95%.

The budget proposals were for the administration to decide; this was done at Cabinet in February. Whilst the budget agreed required a 6.95% Council Tax increase to fund it, full Council would review this and agree the Council Tax rate.

The background as to how on the budget and Council Tax position was that the draft budget in December was based on an a number of assumptions. The key one being the Revenue Support Grant Settlement, and other things such as provision for pay and contract price increases and investment to support increasing demand for essential services. A budget gap of almost £6m was anticipated in 2020/21 at that stage; however, these assumptions were updated once the draft settlement was received from Welsh Government on the 16 December.

At Cabinet in February, the better Revenue Support Grant gave around £7.3m more funding than assumed. Savings of around £5.2m had already been identified in the December position and a further two proposals totalling £300k were identified. Furthermore, further cost pressures were considered and approved in response to external influences, for example, an increase in the national minimum wage and an increase in the South Wales Fire Levy and the opportunity to remove the reliance on reserves in order to balance the budget. A 'balance in hand' of £3.9m allowed the administration to consider and respond to the public consultation feedback and to make decisions in terms of how to utilise the additional money available for the greater good of the City. Some of the investment decisions included investment in schools, youth services, bringing empty homes back in to use and making savings elsewhere in the council as outlined within the report, and reducing the draft proposed council tax increase down to 6.95%.

The final settlement was received two days ago, with no change to the Council's Revenue Support Grant to that included in the provisional settlement and assumed in the budget papers.

The Council's recommended net budget would increase from its current £281m to about £300m, an increase of nearly £19m. The increase was funded from increased Revenue

Support Grant of nearly £14m, proposed increased Council Tax income of just over £4m and an increase in the number of new homes paying Council Tax at nearly £1m.

It was well known that Newport's Council Tax is low compared to nearly all other Welsh Councils and indeed, across the UK. This had consequences on the Council's finances, in terms of ranking in Wales on its budget position against the 'standard spending assessment' – it is 19th worst funded currently but had the second lowest level of Council Tax in Wales.

The Council made significant savings over many years to balance the Council's budget as well as increasing Council Tax.

The report detailed the Council's medium term financial projections and the future uncertainties that were faced such as future grant settlements from Welsh Government, Brexit and the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review. As the date of the spring budget was confirmed for 11th March, it was hoped that this would provide more certainty on the medium term outlook for Welsh Government funding. For Local Government, much would depend on the decision taken by Welsh Government, in particular on NHS funding in Wales.

The usual Council Tax resolution, included The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent and Community Councils' precept requirements.

It was therefore proposed to recommend the Council Tax levels required to underpin the budget to protect the much needed services for the Council.

The report was seconded by Councillor Jeavons.

The following points were made in favour of the report:

- ☐ The difficulties faced by the council.
- ☐ The tough decisions taken as a result of austerity affecting the Council's financial position.
- ☐ The rise in responses by the public for this year's consultation process.
- ☐ The support for the youth services within Newport.
- ☐ Whilst there was an increase in Council tax by comparative figures, Newport was still the second lowest in Britain and third lowest in Wales.
- ☐ Newport residents facing financial difficulties in Newport were supported by the Council.
- ☐ The tax increase would directly support social services; including senior citizens and children services, schools and youth services.
- ☐ This was the best possible budget under the circumstances with the listening support of Cabinet, the Leader and Scrutiny.
- ☐ The budget was designed to improve the life of many, such as foster care benefits.

The following points were made against the report:

- ☐ The reduction of a cabinet member and the income generation from Newport Matters would make a cost neutral budget(?)
- ☐ That the precept for Police Crime Commissioner was not supported.

There were no votes against the proposals.

The conservative members, including the Chair abstained.

Resolved

1 To note that an extensive consultation exercise was completed on the savings over the medium term, including the 2020/21 budget proposals. Cabinet had taken these into account in recommending final details of their budget.

2 To note the Head of Finance's recommendations that minimum general reserve balances be maintained at £6.5million, the confirmation of the robustness of the overall budget underlying the proposals, subject to the key issues highlighted in section 7, and the adequacy of the general reserves in the context of other earmarked reserves and a general revenue budget contingency of c£1.5million.

3 To consider and approve a council tax increase for Newport City Council of 6.95%, a Band D tax of £1,197.88; and resulting overall revenue budget shown in appendix 1.

4 To approve the formal council tax resolution, included in appendix 3 which incorporated The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent and Community Council precepts

## **6. Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy**

### **1. Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy**

This 'Capital Strategy 2019/20 to 2028/29' was an update of the Council's capital strategy following the requirement placed on Local Authorities by the 'Prudential Code for capital finance in Local Authorities (2017)' to determine a capital strategy. Council was required to approve the strategy and the prudential indicators within it on at least an annual basis to be kept under review, updated and brought to Council as necessary.

The key areas contained were included in the report, such as the five year capital programme to 2022/23 and the longer term projection for capital financing costs.

The programme above was increasing the capital financing costs, included in the Council's MTFP, which was challenging in the current financial climate. Costs would continue to increase into the medium to long term. Compared to comparative authorities, the percentage of the capital financing costs as a proportion to the Council's total net revenue budget was high. Further work was planned to inform this issue.

The Council is involved in two types of treasury activity, borrowing long-term for capital purposes and short term for temporary cash flow and investment of surplus cash.

These activities were controlled by the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and various measures and limits were set by its Prudential Indicators to regulate/control the implementation of that strategy.

In terms of our borrowing strategy the Council had significant long term borrowing requirements but in recent years the strategy was able to fund its capital expenditure from reducing investments rather than undertaking more expensive additional borrowing, using 'surplus cash', known as 'internal borrowing'.

The capacity for being internally borrowed was fully used and new borrowing requirements would need to come from new external loans. In addition, as the Council reduced its reserves, it would need to replace this lower headroom for internal borrowing created, with new external borrowing too. This was an important and significant issue and again, as the capital strategy recommended, the council needed to maintain a sustainable level of capital spending in order to control new levels of borrowing, this would create and the revenue costs associated with that.

Given the very low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority aims to diversify into higher yielding asset classes during 2020/21. This is especially the case for the estimated £10 million that is available for longer-term investment and which we are required to have invested in order to maintain our regulatory position. All of the Authority's



surplus cash is currently invested in short-term unsecured bank deposits and local authorities. This diversification will represent a change in strategy over the coming year.

The strategies are very comprehensive and the report provided a useful summary of the key messages.

Given the increasing risk and very low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority aimed to diversify into higher yielding asset classes during 2020/21.

The report was seconded by Councillor Jeavons.

Councillor C Evans advised that the Council should lead by example if there were any environmental impacts, as this was paramount. Additionally it was not made clear whether the Council would invest ethically.

Councillor Hourahine agreed with Councillor C Evans and also mentioned that this was considered the most important document put before council. The legacy of the Council should be left behind and the new Cabinet Member post for Sustainable Development was a positive move forward.

The vote was unanimous.

#### Resolved

- ☐ To approve the Capital Strategy (Appendix 2), including the current capital programme within it (shown separately in Appendix 1), its associated Prudential Indicators and the borrowing requirements/limits needed to deliver the current capital programme, noting the increased revenue costs in the MTFP for the increased borrowing.
- ☐ To approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Management Indicators, the Investment Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for 2020/21. (Appendix 3).
- ☐ To note the comments made by Audit Committee on 29 January 2020 (paragraph 6 and 7).

### 7. **National Non Domestic Rates: Discretionary Relief - High Street Relief Scheme 2020/21**

The Leader presented the report, in which the Welsh Government had again made available grant funding for billing authorities to deliver in 2020-21, the High Street Rate Relief Scheme to reduce the rate burden on qualifying high street retail properties. The Welsh Government agreed to reimburse the Council in full for any awards made under the scheme and it was envisaged that around 400 businesses would again benefit from reduced rates by way of this relief.

The scheme was identical to the retail rate relief schemes that operated in previous years, and would deliver reduced rates to qualifying properties which were broadly retail in nature. As well as rate relief of up to £2,500 for each qualifying property.

The report was seconded by Councillor Jeavons.

The vote was unanimous.

#### Resolved

The Council resolved to adopt the Welsh Government's Wales High Street and Retail Relief Scheme for 2020-21 by making the appropriate determination and decision, as required by Sections 47(1)(a) and 47(3) respectively of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, and set out in the Appendix to this report.

### 8. **Questions to the Leader of the Council**

- The Leader gave the following announcements, before proceeding with questions:

The launch of the Western Gateway Website and prospectus went live on Wednesday this was an exciting collaboration of which the Council was a key member.

This was launched by Cabinet Ministers in November last year, and was the UK's third powerhouse after the Northern Powerhouse and the Midlands Engine.

The Western Gateway went one step further than the regional powerhouses formed to date - stretching across south Wales and western England.

All partners focussed on inclusive and clean economic growth on a large scale.

The new prospectus outlined the emerging vision and the key ambitions for the economic partnership, developed through discussions between the partnership's local authorities, businesses, LEPs and city regions. It set out the scale of the Western Gateway's ambitions and identified the emerging strategic priorities of connectivity, innovation and a co-ordinated international approach to trade and investment.

It came ahead of a full vision document for the partnership, following the completion of an Independent Economic Review later this year that would provide an evidence base across the countries, area and regions of the partnership. ([www.western-gateway.co.uk](http://www.western-gateway.co.uk))

- It gave the Leader great pleasure to confirm that work to restore the historical Market Arcade was now underway. The Council worked very hard to secure funding from the Heritage Fund, Cadw and Welsh Government for the project. It had been a complex scheme and fortunately restoration work began last week. This would make a huge difference to the city centre, benefiting not only the businesses in the arcade but also those in the surrounding area. The arcade would remain open and was due to be completed next year. It included the restoration of the shopfronts and refurbishment of the glazed canopy. Importantly, the council would be helping to protect an important part of the city's heritage.

- The ambitious Solar panel project was progressing well, making a considerable contribution to the Council's aim to become a carbon-neutral organisation. Working in partnership with Egni Co-op, roof-mounted solar panels were being installed on council buildings across Newport.

Following a detailed feasibility study, with support from the Welsh Government Energy Services, Sustainable Communities Wales and the Wales Co-operative Centre a plan was drawn up to install 6,000 solar panels across 21 sites at zero cost to the council. Once installed, the solar panels would generate more than 1.9 million units of clean renewable electricity per year.

Work had recently been completed at Parklands and Blaen-Y-Pant Residential Care Homes, where 129 solar panels were installed across both sites. Most of the electricity generated would be used on site reducing the council's carbon emissions by 348 tonnes per year. Some electricity would also be exported onto the grid for use in the city.

The council was determined to take a lead on tackling the climate crisis and by working with Engi Co-op we would achieve a 20 fold increase in the amount of renewable energy installed on our buildings.

- The Leader acknowledged the considerable efforts made by council staff in response to Storm Dennis. Whilst Newport was lucky enough not to be hit as badly as other parts of Wales and the UK, we still received more than 100 requests for assistance over that weekend.

Preparations had been made for the forecast conditions and staff worked around the clock from Friday to Monday morning. Almost unprecedented levels of rain fell on ground that was already saturated and into rivers already swollen because of Storm Ciara. Despite the significant call on resources, the council teams dealt with every call and reported incident at some stage during the weekend.

Most of the requests were for sandbags, but crews also dealt with highway flooding, road closures and fallen trees. The Leader thanked all those who were out in such horrendous conditions to help residents and ensure safety on our roads and within council facilities.

Finally, the Leader mentioned two events recently attended, one was the LGBTQ+ event for younger people. The other was the first meeting of the black and minority staff network at the Civic Centre both were an honour and a privilege.

#### Leader's Questions

□ Councillor M Evans understood that the Leader was attending a conference in Cannes, France in March, called Mippin and what did the Leader hope to achieve, who was paying for it and what promotional work was being undertaken prior to attending.

Yes, the leader was attending as part of the Cardiff Capital region in March and made it clear that it was funded by the Capital Regen and not the Council. Part of this was speaking at the event and attending 10 Downing Street. Representing the Capital regen on several events. The purpose was to stand proud and speak open and honestly about the improvements being made in the city. Newport deserved to sit round the table with investors.

#### Supplementary:

Councillor M Evans supported the Leader attending but referred to the city region being Cardiff 'centric but there was nothing on social media about Newport being promoted at the event. Could the Leader give an update on her return on what was achieved.

The Leader answered and advised that Cardiff CC was promoting itself. An investment prospectus was being developed for Newport similar to Cardiff and the Leader would talk to key sites and provide a full report to Council on her return.

□ Councillor K asked was the Leader in a position to improve the aesthetics of the Malpas Road and Shaftesbury M4 roundabout entrance to Newport, in particular, near the old Sainsbury's site.

The Leader referred to the economic growth strategy and master plan, a lot was being done in the background as part of this. There was also work planned to within the area. The old Sainsbury's site was in private ownership and the Leader would speak with key stakeholders on improving the site. The site had the potential to provide 230,000 Sq Ft office accommodation, homes and other public facilities. The local was key and had benefits with links to public transport and M4. Anticipating that planning permission would be granted later this year and development would commence in the autumn. It did take time for projects to get underway but the benefits would be positive.

#### Supplementary:

Councillor Whitehead asked was talks with the Fear family invested in the old Sainsbury's site ongoing.

Leader advised that it was ongoing.

□ Councillor C Townsend mentioned that recent figures had shown that Newport had the second largest rough sleepers in Wales and asked that with the recent clean up

operation, could the Leader commit to updates on a quarterly updates be provided on homeless provision as well as additional efforts to provide accommodation for those living on the streets.

The Leader advised that she was able to provide an update from today, after a meeting with Julie James AM. The Council had employed a rough sleeper outreach worker and was most successful element of the project was working with third sector and humanitarian groups. The officer was engaging with rough sleepers on a daily basis which made monitoring of the situation more effective. Also mapping exercise to see where individuals and groups were located and could speak with them more regularly. Re-housing has been identified through working with the housing association and partners such as Housing First and Pobl. This was a time consuming process because of the vulnerability and would share with colleagues some case studies:

One person was rehoused and mental and physical health improved on a daily basis and was now volunteering with housing charities.

A second person who engaged regularly with co-ordinators and seeking voluntary support work with mental health sector. In terms of housing first, numbers were low but level of work was quite progressive.

Newport City Council was therefore working really hard with partnerships to help tackle homelessness.

## 9. **Questions to the Cabinet Members**

### i. Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for City Services

Councillor Mogford asked the following question that had been submitted:

‘Will the Cabinet member give an update on how the City has coped with recent flooding throughout Newport and importantly what initiatives and preventive measures should be taken so going forward we are less adversely impacted by storms of these magnitudes.’

The Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for City Services responded:

City Services staff worked on a shift rotation from Friday afternoon until the Monday morning carrying out preventative action and responding to requests for support. Over 120 separate incidents were dealt with, mainly consisting of:

- ☐ Sandbag requests (over 1,000 residents were supplied with sandbags)
- ☐ Blocked gullies
- ☐ Traffic signal failing (due to water ingress)
- ☐ Falling Trees

Three roads were closed for a short period of time: A48 Penhow, Coast Road Marshfield and Cardiff Road near Pont Ebbw.

Flood defences were deployed where required including the closing of Gwastad Gate at Malpas Brook. Following the event, river bridges and critical culverts have been inspected and there are no immediate structural concerns, but officers are also working with NRW to address any debris accumulating at river bridges.

To address flooding at the Redrow site, the developer plans to install additional, temporary flood defences to protect the development; a meeting with Council officers is being arranged to explore permanent solutions.

Welsh Government has also set up a number of funds for financial assistance:

- Support for councils – through the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme
- Support for households – support for those affected by flooding is to be provided via Emergency Assistance Payments.
- Support for businesses – Business Wales are offering advice and support companies affected and they will refer them to the Development Bank for Wales if they need loans.

Significant flood defence works have already been carried out in Shaftesbury, and officers are currently working with NRW to develop plans for further flood mitigation works at Stephenson Street. The Council is committed to working in partnership with NRW and WG to review and improve flood defences and through its role as a sustainable drainage approval body, NCC will also ensure that new developments over 100 square meters will comply with the new regulations.

Supplementary question:

Councillor Mogford expressed his thanks to everyone involved.

ii. Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Councillor J Watkins asked the following question that had been submitted:

‘Primary Head Teachers recently wrote to you outlining their serious concerns on matters including the state of school buildings and the funding of schools, what has been your response to their letter?’

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills responded:

The Newport Association of Primary Head Teachers wrote to Cabinet expressing their views on the budget consultations for 2020/21. The views of Head Teachers are always considered within the wider context of budget consultation. This year more than three and a half thousand responses were received from citizens and organisations across the city regarding a range of service issues. As a Cabinet we listened carefully to the public and made a decision to invest a further £10.4 million pounds into our schools to further support the education of children and young people.

Minor works and repairs should be managed within existing school budgets. However, the re-development and larger scale capital maintenance of schools where appropriate, is financially supported through additional funding streams, allowing schools to receive significant investment without using their delegated budgets.

In 2019 Cabinet took a decision to invest £24.5 million pounds into the 21st Century Schools Band B project. This scheme will provide a total of £70 million pounds worth of investment in to our schools estate which will bring ‘once in a lifetime change’ to a number of Newport schools over the next four years.

In 2018/19, as Cabinet Member for Education I requested a ring fenced allocation of £1.1 million pounds to support school capital maintenance. Cabinet supported this request and in turn this supported 23 individual school building projects across the city.

In 2019/20 the council was awarded a further £1.8 million pounds to offset capital expenditure across schools. The full £1.8 million was re-invested across the school estate. Maintenance work is currently underway on the identified projects at High Cross Primary, Llanmartin Primary, Milton Primary and Lliswerry High schools. The Council has recently received notification of a similar grant totalling £2.1m for 2020. Work is currently underway to confirm how this can be spent to best and maximum effect.

I would also like to take this opportunity to assure you that Cabinet Members and Officers of the council are working tirelessly to look for every funding opportunity available to the city, ensuring that we are maximising every penny. Some excellent examples of our success include:

1. The Council has successfully submitted two bids to Welsh Government in relation to the 'Reducing Class Sizes' grant. An amount of £520,000 has been awarded to undertake a project at Maesglas Primary School, and £580,000 has been allocated to a project at St Woolos Primary School. These projects are underway and are scheduled for completion by September 2020.

2. In 2019 the Education Service was advised that a grant funding application to Welsh Government's Integrated Care Fund had been successful. As a result, an amount of £300,000 was awarded to support the expansion of Ysgol Bryn Derw through refurbishment of an annexe building within the school grounds. Notably, this represented the first time across the Aneurin Bevan Health Board area that an Education project had been awarded funding from this source. The amount of money allocated to the project was later increased to £430,000, and the work was completed in January 2020.

3. Notification that Welsh Government had approved a funding application of £5.8m in relation to a specific Welsh-medium Capital Grant to enable the establishment of a fourth Welsh-medium primary school. This is one of the largest allocations given to any project across Wales. This funding will be used to open a brand new school for Pillgwenlly, a fourth Welsh Medium Primary and an expanded Tredegar Park Primary.

So to conclude, you can see that Cabinets' response to consultation feedback from Head Teachers both this year and in previous years has been robust.

Supplementary:

Councillor J Watkins asked did the Cabinet Member acknowledge that the concerns raised by the Primary School Head Teacher's were real.

Councillor Giles was aware of the concerns and issues that were identified by Head Teachers and a priority list was put in place but addressing issues was difficult with financial cuts faced by the Council. Every penny raised or funding provision for Education was put back into the schools.

Councillor R Mogford asked the following question that had been submitted:

'Given the fact that a number of Newport secondary schools are burdened with significant debt (Caerleon Comprehensive for example has a £1.2 Million debt and rising, due to what some might say is inadequate funding). How does the Cabinet member propose that these debts be paid down, over what timescales at what real cost to the pupils, teachers and other staff that continue to be affected by ongoing cut-backs.'

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills responded:

Schools budgets were delegated to Governing Bodies to manage efficiently and effectively. Schools can apply for a temporary licensed deficit providing they have a deficit recovery plan which outlines the actions the Governing Body intends to take forward in order to reach a balanced budget. Cllr Mogford will be fully aware of the plans to reduce Caerleon Comprehensive Schools debt as he sits on the Governing Body at Caerleon Comprehensive and is responsible for such decisions and actions.

It is within the gift of the Governing Body to determine how they will manage their budget and to consider how they will reduce their spending if they need to. Governing Bodies should consider which cost savings have the least impact on learners.

Incidentally, Caerleon Comprehensive School received £4.9 million pounds of funding last year. Caerleon Comprehensive School has always received the third highest school budget within the city. The two secondary schools ahead of Caerleon Comprehensive, receiving larger budgets have a higher number of Key Stage 4 learners and a higher proportion of pupils with Additional Learning Needs and pupils entitled to Free School Meals. Most would agree that this is right and fair.

The local authority has established deficit recovery support and challenge meetings for those schools currently in deficit. Schools meet with the local authority every six weeks to discuss their deficit recovery plans and how they are progressing. The first priority is for schools to ensure that they do not continue to overspend and are tackling their 'in-year deficits'. The majority of schools with a deficit have provided reassuring plans to address this. Remaining deficits can be addressed over a much longer timeframe. In some cases this may be between 5 and 7 years. It is important that we support schools on a case by case basis.

You will also be aware that this evening, Cabinet has asked full council to agree a schools funding increase from £96.5 million to £106.5 million. This significant increase will support schools cost pressures and may also support some of the deficit budgets situations. Whilst I am very pleased that Cabinet colleagues have committed this £10 million pound increase, it's important to note that any additional funding will not replace diligent financial monitoring required to keep schools budgets balanced.

Supplementary:

Councillor Mogford mentioned that as a role of governor he worked hard on behalf of the schools and authority to reduce the deficit, therefore what would the Cabinet Member do about the debt once the deficit was reduced.

As previously mentioned schools in deficit were asked to meet with the local authority every six weeks. This allowed consistent channels of communication where schools could ask for support or the local authority could offer assistance. In many circumstances, finance officers had visited schools to support school business managers with their budgets, accurate forecasting and the production of deficit recovery plans. Human resource officers supported schools with benchmarking information and officers from the Business Improvement Team have supported school financial reviews. These reviews provided useful recommendations for low impact costs savings. Moving forward, it was our aim to ensure all schools were provided with a financial review and bespoke support. A permanent model of support was currently being designed within Education Services to ensure that best practice was shared effectively.

**10. Questions to the Chairs of Committees**

**11. Democratic Services Committee Minutes**

The Minutes of the above Committee from 24 October 2019 and 20 February 2020 were noted, along with the following recommendations, which was presented by Councillor M Evans in the absence of the Chair of Democratic Services Committee.

The Chair advised that a composite agreement be made on the first three points put forward from the two previous meetings.

The Minutes were seconded by Councillor R Mogford and unanimously carried.

Resolved:

☐ 24 October 2019  
Chair of Council

That the Council should not appoint a Chair of Council/Presiding Member.

☐ 20 February 2020

Review of the Constitution Revised Officer Scheme of Delegation

That the Council agreed to the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers and recommended that it be adopted as Part 3 Appendix 3 of the Constitution at Council.

☐ Support for Councillors in their Ward Work

That the Council agreed that the current arrangements in relation to ward meetings should continue.

☐ Scheme of Allowances

That the Council noted and agreed the new Scheme of Allowances.

At the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee on 20 February 2020, it was recommended that after very careful discussion and consideration the Committee recommended that Council, should submit a response to the Boundary Commission to the effect that the draft proposals were broadly accepted but that Bettws and Beechwood should continue to be three member wards because of the particular social and economic issues in those areas and the amount of work generated for their ward Councillors.

The Boundary Commission was debated separately and the following comments were made:

☐ Councillor Clarke supported the additional ward members for Beechwood and Bettws.

☐ Councillor M Evans did not support the extra Ward member for Beechwood.

Resolved:

20 February 2020

Boundary Commission Review of Electoral Arrangements – Draft Proposals

That the Council agreed to the above recommendation made by Democratic Services Committee.

The meeting terminated at 6.40 pm



# Report

## Council

---

### Part 1

**Date:** 29 September 2020

**Subject** **Appointments**

**Purpose** To agree the appointment of Council nominees to committees and outside bodies.

**Author** Governance Team Leader

**Ward** General

**Summary** In accordance with its terms of reference within the Constitution, Council is responsible for appointing the members of Council Committees, and the Council's representatives on outside bodies. The current vacancies and nominations received are set out in the attached report.

**Proposal** **Council is asked to receive and approve the nominations for representatives, as listed in the report**

**Action by** Governance Team Leader

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Council Business Managers
- Head of Law and Regulation

## Background

In accordance with its terms of reference within the Constitution, Council is responsible for appointing the members of Council Committees, and the Council's representatives on outside bodies. The current vacancies and nominations received are set out below.

Any vacant appointments / nominations received after the publication of this report, will be announced at the Council meeting by the appropriate Business Manager or Group Leader.

### Internal Appointments

None

### Appointments to External Organisations

Organisation	No. of Vacancies / Replacements	Nominations Received
Business Improvement District	1	Councillor D Harvey to replace the Leader

### Governing Body Appointments

Organisation	Nominations Received	Number of Vacancies/Replacements
Malpas C/W Primary School	Andrea Mulcahy	Re-appoint
St Josephs RC High School	David Fouweather	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Terynon Welsh Medium School	David Fouweather	End term of office
Mount Pleasant School	Dilwyn Gurney	Appoint as LA governor
Temporary Governing Body - Welsh Medium School	Sheereen Williams	4 / Information only
Temporary Governing Body - Welsh Medium School	Cllr Tracey Holyoake	4 / Information only
Temporary Governing Body - Welsh Medium School	Cllr Jason Hughes	4 / Information only
Glasllwch Primary School	Matthew Evans	Re-appoint
Llanwern High School	Ray Truman	Re-appoint
Alway Primary School	Ray Truman	Re-appoint
Bassaleg School	Margaret Cornelious	Re-appoint
Pentrepoeth Primary School	Margaret Cornelious	Re-appoint
Crindau Primary School	Paul Cockeram	Re-appoint
Kimberley Nursery School	Paul Cockeram	Re-appoint
High Cross Primary School	Sally Mlewa	Re-appoint
Jubilee Park Primary School	Sally Mlewa	Re-appoint
Langstone Primary School	Ray Mogford	Re-appoint
Caerleon Comprehensive School	Ray Mogford	Re-appoint
Llanmartin Primary School	Martyn Kellaway	Re-appoint
Glan Llyn Primary School	Martyn Kellaway	Re-appoint
Llanmartin Primary School	John Davies	Re-appoint
Llanwern High School	Ray Truman	Re-appoint

Eveswell and Somerton Primary School Partnership	John Guy	Re-appoint
Llanwern High School	John Guy	Re-appoint
Lliswerry High School	Kenneth Critchley	Re-appoint
St Andrews Primary School	Kenneth Critchley	Re-appoint
Maindee Primary School	Majid Rahman	Re-appoint
Maes Ebbw Primary School	Majid Rahman	Re-appoint
Malpas C/W Primary School	Andrea Mulcahy	Re-appoint
Malpas Court Primary School	Jane Mudd	Re-appoint
Newport High School	Jane Mudd	Re-appoint
Marshfield Primary School	Thomas Suller	Re-appoint
Monnow Primary School	Valerie Delahaye	Re-appoint
Mount Pleasant Primary School	Stephen Bowen	Re-appoint
Malpas Court Primary School	Stephen Bowen	Re-appoint
Mount Pleasant Primary School	Kelly Jones	Re-appoint
Monnow Primary School	Kelly Jones	Re-appoint
Newport High School	David Mayer	Re-appoint
Newport High School	Valerie Delahaye	Re-appoint
Gaer Primary School	Valerie Delahaye	Re-appoint
St Davids RC Primary School	David Hutchings	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon Welsh Medium School	David Hutchings	Re-appoint
St Josephs RC High School	Mark Whitcutt	Re-appoint
St Woolos Primary School	Miqdad Al-Nuaimi	Re-appoint
St Woolos Primary School	Kate Thomas	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed Welsh Medium School	John Harris	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed Welsh Medium School	Elin Maher	Re-appoint
Llanwern High School	Elin Maher	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed Welsh Medium School	Christopher Chapman	Re-appoint
St Josephs RC High School	Christopher Chapman	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon Welsh Medium School	Shereen Williams	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael Welsh Medium School	Olwen Allender	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael Welsh Medium School	Glyn Jarvis	Re-appoint

## Proposal

Council is asked to receive and approve the nominations for representatives, as listed in the report.

## Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

### **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

The appointment of individuals to serve on outside bodies is a Local Choice function under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007. The Council has determined that responsibility for this function shall rest with Full Council unless delegated by the Council.

### **Background Papers**

Newport City Council Constitution

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007

Dated: 22 September 2020

# Report

## Council

---



### Part 1

Date: 29 September 2020

**Subject** **National Non-Domestic Rates: Discretionary Relief: Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2020-21**

**Purpose** The purpose of this report is to obtain retrospective Council approval for the Welsh Government's Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-21.

**Author** Head of Finance

**Ward** All

**Summary** Following the announcement of the Covid-19 coronavirus lockdown, a number of businesses were prohibited from trading or saw their revenue greatly reduce.

In response to this Covid-19 coronavirus emergency Welsh Government made available grant funding for billing authorities to deliver in 2020-21, the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme to reduce the rates payable to zero for qualifying properties. The Welsh Government agreed to reimburse the Council in full for any awards made under the scheme.

As the rate relief was for 2020-21 and there was a need to act quickly, the matter was agreed as urgent under the constitution and was approved by the Leader.

This report seeks retrospective Council approval for the scheme.

**Proposal** **It is proposed the Council agrees to adopt the Welsh Government's Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-21 by making the appropriate determination and decision, as required by Sections 47(1)(a) and 47(3) respectively of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, and set out in the Appendix to this report**

**Action by** Head of Finance to implement the Scheme and make discretionary awards using delegated powers.

**Timetable** Effective from 1 April 2020

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Law & Regulation
- Head of People & Business Change
- Head of Regeneration, investment & Housing

**Signed**

## **Background**

In response to the coronavirus covid-19 emergency Welsh Government made available funding for billing authorities to deliver in 2020-21, an all Wales Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme.

The Scheme is fully funded by Welsh Government and will enable those businesses that are in the retail, leisure or hospitality sector to benefit from not having to pay any business rates in 2020-21.

The scheme covers all businesses that occupy premises with a rateable value of less than £500,000 and operate in the retail, leisure or hospitality sector.

The means of making the awards of Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief is the Council's discretionary powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Under normal operating conditions the Council would have made a formal determination (Section 47(1)(a)) and decision (Section 47(3)) to adopt the scheme so that this discretionary power could be exercised by the Head of Finance under delegated powers. When the scheme was announced it was not possible for Council to meet and approve the scheme due to the coronavirus emergency. There was a pressing need to award the relief to relieve the financial burden on affected businesses, therefore as permitted under the constitution, the Leader of the Council made the determination on behalf of the Council. Council is now required to ratify the scheme formally for completeness.

The report approved by the Leader of Council is provided at appendix 1 and provides full details of the scheme.

The scheme was rolled out quickly to qualifying businesses and they were notified that they had no rates to pay at the start of the financial year before the first instalment was due. The scheme has been positively received and to date around 800 businesses have benefitted from the scheme.

As detailed in the original report, the Council will be reimbursed for the rates income foregone as a result of the Scheme when calculating monies to be paid over to the Welsh Government 'pool'.

## **Financial Summary**

There are no direct financial implications to the Council in adopting the scheme. The full value of discretionary awards is reimbursed by the Welsh Government, Staff resources will be prioritised appropriately within the revenues team to meet the administration requirements of the scheme.

## Risks

The risk assessed when the scheme introduced was:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)</b>	<b>Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)</b>	<b>What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect</b>	<b>Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?</b>
Failure to implement the scheme will result in Newport ratepayers being financially disadvantaged	H	L	Adoption of the scheme will allow relief awards to be awarded and rate bills reduced to zero.	Head of Finance

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The adoption of the schemes fits with the Council's aims to improve the local economy, and the well-being of its citizens

## Options Available and considered

The scheme was approved by the Leader of the Council in order to ensure that city businesses benefitted from the scheme quickly and while they were experiencing the immediate financial pressures of the national lockdown.

Council is now being asked to retrospectively approve the scheme for completeness.

## Preferred Option and Why

To formally adopt the Scheme.

## Comments of Chief Financial Officer

This is a key part of the UK/WG support package for businesses and was agreed by the Leader in absence of full Council meetings. This enabled the relief to be given before any payments were due and taken. The scheme is fully funded by Welsh Government.

## Comments of Monitoring Officer

The proposed Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-21 is in accordance with the Council's statutory powers under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to grant discretionary business rates relief. This is a national scheme, which fully funded by Welsh Government and enables the Council to grant rate relief for qualifying businesses in the retail, leisure or hospitality sector.

Full Council is required to make a formal determination under Section 47(1) (a) of the 1988 Act and a formal decision under Section 47(3) to adopt the scheme. The power to award discretionary rate relief in accordance with the scheme is then delegated to the Head of Finance under the officer scheme of delegation.



Because of the suspension of Council meetings during the COVID-19 lock-down period, then the Leader of the Council took an urgent decision to adopt the scheme as from April 2020, in accordance with the urgent decision making powers under Standing Order 24.1, where a decision can be taken outside the budget framework when it is not practical to call a quorate meeting of full Council. However, full Council are now being asked to ratify that decision and formally confirm adoption of the scheme

#### **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this paper.

The rate relief scheme is intended to support retail, leisure and hospitality businesses during the Coronavirus and assist in preventing business closures in these sectors. As such, the scheme is in line with the Council's Well-being Objective "To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment."

The scheme supports businesses within sectors that are highly significant to the city's economy and recognised as cornerstones of the Newport offer. Its implementation has therefore been an important element of the Council's Covid-19 response.

#### **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Cabinet Member responsible is fully aware of the background to this report, in particular the need to make the early decision under emergency powers and the need now to bring this to full Council for formal ratification.

#### **Local issues**

None

#### **Scrutiny Committees**

N/A

#### **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

Once adopted, the Council is obliged to comply with the Welsh Government's rules in applying the Scheme. These are detailed in the Appendix to this report.

#### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

N/A

#### **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

This scheme is being delivered in collaboration with Welsh Government and is intended to help prevent businesses failing as a result of Covid-19 and to help sustain the local economy for the short and long term.

When developing the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2020-21, consideration was given to the wellbeing duty contained in section 3 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This included consideration of how the policy would contribute to supporting the wellbeing goals under section 4 of that Act, and the wellbeing objectives set by the Welsh Ministers, whilst acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle. Providing this scheme will assist ratepayers and, as such, it will help to contribute to the achievement of the wellbeing goals of a prosperous Wales and a more equal Wales.

#### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

N/A

**Consultation**

N/A

**Background Papers**

The Welsh Government's Guidance on the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2020-21 is available here:



MA-RE-0992-20 -  
Retail, Leisure and H

## **Appendix 1**

### **Report Council**

---



#### **Part 1**

**Date:** 30 March 2020

**Subject** **National Non-Domestic Rates: Discretionary Relief: Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2020-21**

**Purpose** The purpose of this report is for to agree that Newport City Council adopts the Welsh Government's Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-21.

**Author** Head of Finance

**Ward** All

#### **Reason for Urgency**

Due to the Covid-19 coronavirus situation, a number of businesses are prohibited from trading, others have seen their trade drastically reduced. In response, Welsh Government has issued details of a fully funded scheme to give 100% rate relief for one year for businesses occupying properties in the retail, leisure or hospitality industry.

Business rate bills have already been issued for 2020-21 and payments will start to become due in early April 2020. It is therefore vital that the business rate relief is applied as soon as possible to these businesses to relieve the financial burden of making rate payments at a time when they are not allowed to trade.

For this reason and to expedite the help available for businesses this report is being treated as urgent.

**Summary** In response to the Covid-19 coronavirus emergency situation the Welsh Government has made available grant funding for billing authorities to deliver in 2020-21, the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme to reduce the rates payable to zero for qualifying properties. The Welsh Government has agreed to reimburse the Council in full for any awards made under the scheme and it is envisaged that around 800 businesses will benefit from not having to pay rates by way of this relief.

The scheme will deliver:

1. Full relief from business rates for 2020-21 for qualifying properties which are broadly used for retail, leisure or hospitality and have a rateable value of less than £500,000.

**Proposal**      It is proposed that the Leader of the Council agrees to adopt the Welsh Government's Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-21 by making the appropriate determination and decision, as required by Sections 47(1)(a) and 47(3) respectively of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, and set out in the Appendix to this report

**Action by**      Head of Finance to implement the Scheme and make discretionary awards using delegated powers.

**Timetable**      Effective from 1 April 2020

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Law & Regulation
- Head of People & Business Change
- Head of Regeneration, investment & Housing

**Signed**

## **Background**

In response to the coronavirus covid-19 emergency Welsh Government has made available funding for billing authorities to deliver in 2020-21, an all Wales Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme.

The Scheme is fully funded by Welsh Government and will enable those businesses that are in the retail, leisure or hospitality sector to benefit from not having to pay any business rates in 2020-21.

The scheme covers all businesses that occupy premises with a rateable value of less than £500,000 and operate in the retail, leisure or hospitality sector.

The means of making the awards of Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief is the Council's discretionary powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Under normal operating conditions the Council would make a formal determination (Section 47(1)(a)) and decision (Section 47(3)) to adopt the scheme so that this discretionary power may be exercised by the Head of Finance under delegated powers. However this is not possible due to the coronavirus emergency and the need to award the relief as soon as practicable to relieve the financial burden on affected businesses, therefore the Leader of the Council will make the determination on behalf of the Council.

The Council will be reimbursed for the rates income foregone as a result of the Scheme when calculating monies to be paid over to the Welsh Government 'pool'.

The Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme forms part of a package of Welsh Government measures available to support businesses during the coronavirus covid-19 emergency.

The relief will be applied directly to all businesses identified as operating in one of the named sectors and no application is required. It is anticipated that there will be a small number of businesses where it is not possible to identify from rating records the nature of their business, these businesses will need to contact the Business Rates Team to claim the rate relief.

If the scheme is adopted, around 800 businesses will benefit from not having to pay rates in 2020-21 and an adjusted 2020-21 rates bill will be issued before the first payment is due in April 2020. Any businesses subsequently identified that meet the criteria of the scheme will be issued with adjustment notices as soon as practicable thereafter.

## **Financial Summary**

There are no direct financial implications to the Council in adopting the scheme. The full value of discretionary awards is reimbursed by the Welsh Government,. Staff resources will be prioritised appropriately within the revenues team to meet the administration requirements of the scheme.

## **Risks**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)</b>	<b>Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)</b>	<b>What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect</b>	<b>Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?</b>
Failure to implement the scheme will result in Newport ratepayers being financially disadvantaged	H	L	Adoption of the scheme will allow relief awards to be awarded and rate bills reduced to zero.	Head of Finance

### **Links to Council Policies and Priorities**

The adoption of the schemes fits with the Council's aims to improve the local economy, and the well-being of its citizens

### **Options Available and considered**

- Adopt the Wales Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2020-21
- Decide not to adopt the Scheme

### **Preferred Option and Why**

Adopt the Scheme so that as many retailers as possible may benefit from not having to pay business rates.

### **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

This is a key part of the UK/WG support package for businesses and needs to be agreed by the Leader in absence of full Council meetings. This will enable the relief to be given before any payments are due and taken. The scheme is fully funded by Welsh Government and whilst the detail of that is not yet in place, the principle is.

### **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

The proposed decision is in accordance with the Council's statutory powers under the Local Government Finance act 1988 to grant discretionary business rates relief. This is a national scheme, which fully funded by Welsh Government and will enable the Council to grant rate relief for qualifying businesses in the retail, leisure or hospitality sector. Full Council is required to make a formal determination under Section 47(1) (a) of the 1988 Act and a formal decision under Section 47(3) to adopt the scheme. The power to award discretionary rate relief in accordance with the scheme is then delegated to the Head of Finance under the officer scheme of delegation.

Because of the suspension of Council meetings during the COVID-19 lock-down period, then this decision will need to be taken by the Leader of the Council in accordance with the urgent

decision making powers under Standing Order 24.1, where a decision can be taken outside the budget framework when it is not practical to call a quorate meeting of full Council. The decision can be ratified by Council in due course and the reasons for the urgency in adopting the scheme in this way will be reported to Audit Committee in due course.

### **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

There are no HR related issues arising directly from this report.

Adoption of the Welsh Government's Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme is in line with the Council's Well-being Objective to "Promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment" and will support the "Newport Offer" intervention within Newport's Well-being Plan.

### **Comments of Cabinet Member**

#### **Local issues**

None

#### **Scrutiny Committees**

N/a

### **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

Once adopted, the Council is obliged to comply with the Welsh Government's rules in applying the Scheme. These are detailed in the Appendix.

### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

n/a

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

When developing the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2020-21, consideration was given to the wellbeing duty contained in section 3 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This included consideration of how the policy would contribute to supporting the wellbeing goals under section 4 of that Act, and the wellbeing objectives set by the Welsh Ministers, whilst acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle. Providing this scheme will assist ratepayers and, as such, it will help to contribute to the achievement of the wellbeing goals of a prosperous Wales and a more equal Wales.

### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

n/a

### **Consultation**

n/a

### **Background Papers**

The Welsh Government's Guidance on the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2020-21 is available here:



MA-RE-0992-20 -  
Retail, Leisure and H



## **Resolution**

- (a) The Council determines that, unless hereditaments are excepted under (b) below, Section 47(1)(a) (discretionary relief) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 will apply as regards the hereditaments described in 'The Scheme' in accordance with the rules described in relation to those hereditaments.

It is reasonable for the Council to make this decision having regard to the interests of persons liable to pay council tax set by the Council.

- (b) Relief is not available under this resolution in respect of any hereditament which is occupied by -
- the Welsh Ministers, a Minister of the Crown or government department,
  - any public authority (including any local authority),
  - the holder of any public office, or
  - the Crown
- (c) The Council decides, under Section 47(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, that during the billing year 2020-21 'The Scheme' shall apply to the hereditaments described, and that the Head of Finance use his delegated powers to apply the relief.

## **The Scheme to be Adopted**

### **Introduction**

The relief is intended to be a temporary measure for 2020-21 only, aimed at businesses operating in the retail, leisure and hospitality sector in Wales, for example shops, pubs, restaurants and cafes.

The Welsh Government will provide relief, eligible retailers occupying premises with a rateable value of £500,000 or less in the financial year 2020-21.

Properties that will benefit from this relief will be occupied properties such as shops, hotels, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments, with a rateable value of £500,000 or less on 1 April 2020.

### **Level of Support**

Eligible ratepayers must be occupying premises and have a rateable value of less than £500,000 for the financial year 2020-21 and meet the criteria set out by Welsh Government, see appendix for full details.

### **State Aid**

Whilst the UK left the EU on 31 January 2020, the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated by the UK Government and the EU provides that during a transition period State Aid rules will continue to apply as now and will be subject to control by the EU Commission as at present.

The UK Government has notified the EU of its intention to bring forward an immediate change to the UK's tax treatment of non-domestic property, in response to the ongoing

Covid-19 emergency, and to seek clearance under Article 107(3)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Subject to this approval, the Expanded Retail Discount Scheme will become a notified state aid scheme. Once the notification has been approved by the European Commission, it will supersede the de minimis regulation as the appropriate cover for awarding the discount, meaning existing de Minimis limits will no longer restrict the provision of support.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief in Wales 2020-21 Guidance**

#### About this guidance

1. This guidance is intended to support county and county borough councils (“local authorities”) in administering the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme (“the relief”). On 18 March, the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd announced the expansion of the relief on a temporary basis for 2020-21. This guidance applies to Wales only.
2. This guidance sets out the criteria which the Welsh Government will use to determine the funding for local authorities for relief provided to retail, leisure and hospitality properties. The guidance does not replace any existing non-domestic rates legislation or any other relief.
3. Enquiries about the scheme should be sent to: [localtaxationpolicy@gov.wales](mailto:localtaxationpolicy@gov.wales)
4. The relief is being offered from 1 April 2020 and will be available until 31 March 2021.

#### Introduction

5. This relief is aimed at businesses in Wales in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors, for example shops, pubs and restaurants, gyms, performance venues and hotels.
6. The Welsh Government will provide grant funding to the 22 local authorities in Wales to provide the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme to eligible ratepayers for 2020-21. The scheme aims to provide support for eligible occupied properties by offering a discount of 100% on the non-domestic rates bill for a property, to all eligible premises. The scheme will apply to all eligible ratepayers with a rateable value of £500,000 or less.
7. This document provides guidance on the operation and delivery of the scheme.

### **Section 1**

#### **Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief - How will the relief be provided?**

8. As this is a temporary measure, we are providing the relief by reimbursing local authorities that use their discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. It will be for individual local authorities to adopt a scheme and decide in each individual case when to grant relief under section 47. The Welsh Government will reimburse local authorities for the relief that is provided in line with this guidance via a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 and 58A of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

#### **How will the scheme be administered?**

9. It will be for local authorities to determine how they wish to administer the scheme to maximise take-up and minimise the administrative burden for ratepayers and for local authority staff.
10. Local authorities are responsible for providing ratepayers with clear and accessible information on the details and administration of the scheme. If, for any reason, an authority is

unable to provide this relief to eligible ratepayers from 1 April 2020, consideration should be given to notifying eligible ratepayers that they qualify for the relief and that their bills will be recalculated.

Which properties will benefit from relief?

11. Properties that will benefit from this relief will be occupied retail, leisure and hospitality properties – such as shops, pubs and restaurants, gyms, performance venues and hotels across Wales. More detailed eligibility criteria and exceptions to the relief are set out in paragraphs 13 to 20.

12. Relief should be granted to each eligible business as a reduction to its rates bill based on occupation between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. It is recognised that there may be some instances where a local authority is retrospectively notified of a change of occupier. In such cases, if it is clear that the ratepayer was in occupation on or after the 1 April 2020, the local authority may use its discretion in awarding relief.

13. It is intended that, for the purposes of this scheme, retail properties such as, “shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments” will mean the following (subject to the other criteria in this guidance).

i. Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public

- Shops (such as florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off-licences, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc)
- Charity shops
- Opticians
- Pharmacies
- Post offices
- Furnishing shops or display rooms (such as carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
- Car or caravan showrooms
- Second hand car lots
- Markets
- Petrol stations
- Garden centres
- Art galleries (where art is for sale or hire)

ii. Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public

- Hair and beauty services
- Shoe repairs or key cutting
- Travel agents
- Ticket offices, eg. for theatre
- Dry cleaners
- Launderettes
- PC, TV or domestic appliance repair
- Funeral directors
- Photo processing
- DVD or video rentals
- Tool hire
- Car hire
- Cinemas
- Estate and letting agents

iii. Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of food and / or drink to visiting members of the public

- Restaurants
- Drive-through or drive-in restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sandwich shops
- Cafés
- Coffee shops
- Pubs
- Bars or Wine Bars

14. We consider assembly and leisure to mean:

i. Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of sport, leisure and facilities to visiting members of the public (including for the viewing of such activities) and for the assembly of visiting members of the public.

- Sports grounds and clubs,
- Sport and leisure facilities,
- Gyms
- Tourist attractions,
- Museums and art galleries,
- Stately homes and historic houses,
- Theatres,
- Live Music Venues
- Cinemas
- Nightclubs,

ii. Hereditaments that are being used for the assembly of visiting members of the public.

- Public halls,
- Clubhouses, clubs and institutions

15. We consider hotels, guest & boarding premises and self-catering accommodation to mean:

i. Hereditaments where the non-domestic part is being used for the provision of living accommodation as a business:

- Hotels, Guest and Boarding Houses,
- Holiday homes,
- Caravan parks and sites

Other considerations

16. To qualify for the relief, the hereditament should be wholly or mainly used for the qualifying purposes. In a similar way to other reliefs, this is a test on use rather than occupation. Therefore, hereditaments which are occupied but not wholly or mainly used for the qualifying purpose will not qualify for the relief. For the avoidance of doubt, hereditaments which closed temporarily due to the government's advice on Covid-19 should be treated as occupied for the purposes of this relief.

17. The above list is not intended to be exhaustive as it would be impossible to list all the many and varied retail, leisure and hospitality uses that exist. There will also be mixed uses.

However, it is intended to be a guide for local authorities as to the types of uses that the Welsh Government considers for this purpose to be eligible for relief. Local authorities should determine for themselves whether particular properties not listed are broadly similar in nature to those above and, if so, to consider them eligible for the relief. Conversely, properties that are not broadly similar in nature to those listed above should not be eligible for the relief.

18. As the grant of the relief is discretionary, local authorities may choose not to grant the relief if they consider that appropriate, for example where granting the relief would go against the local authority's wider objectives for the local area.

Types of hereditaments that are not considered to be eligible for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief

19. Any hereditament with a rateable value over £500,000.

20. The following list sets out the types of uses that the Welsh Government does not consider to be retail, leisure or hospitality use for the purpose of this relief and which would not be deemed eligible for the relief. However, it will be for local authorities to determine if hereditaments are similar in nature to those listed and if they would not be eligible for relief under the scheme.

i. Hereditaments that are being used wholly or mainly for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public

- Financial services (eg. banks, building societies, cash points, ATMs, bureaux de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawn brokers),
- Medical services (eg. vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors),
- Professional services (eg. solicitors, accountants, insurance agents, financial advisers, tutors),
- Post Office sorting offices
- Children's play centres
- Day nurseries
- Kennels and catteries
- Casino and gambling clubs
- Show homes and marketing suites
- Employment agencies

There are a number of further types of hereditament which the Welsh Government believes should not be eligible for the relief.

ii. Hereditaments that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public

If a hereditament is not usually reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public, it will be ineligible for relief under the scheme even if there is ancillary use of the hereditament that might be considered to fall within the descriptions in paragraphs 13 to

iii. Hereditaments that are not occupied

Properties that are not occupied on 1 April 2020 should be excluded from this relief. However, under the mandatory Empty Property Relief, empty properties will receive a 100% reduction in rates for the first three months (and in certain cases six) of being empty.

iv. Hereditaments that are owned, rented or managed by a local authority

Hereditaments owned, rented or managed by a local authority, such as visitor centres, tourist information shops and council-run coffee shops or gift shops attached to historic buildings, are exempt from this scheme.

How much relief will be available?

21. The total amount of government funded relief available for each property under this scheme for 2020-21 is 100% of the remaining bill, after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs funded by section 31 grants have been applied, excluding those where local authorities have used their wider discretionary relief.

Powers introduced by the Localism Act 2011 which are not funded by section 31 grants<sup>1</sup>. Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief should be applied against the net bill after other reliefs have been applied.

As required in the NDR3 guidance notes, the former categories of discretionary relief prior to the Localism Act 2011 (ie. charitable/CASC top-up) should be applied first in the sequence of discretionary reliefs and, therefore, before the retail, leisure and hospitality rates relief.

22. The eligibility for the relief and the relief itself will be assessed and calculated on a daily basis. The following formula should be used to determine the amount of relief to be granted for a particular hereditament in the financial year.

Amount of relief to be granted =  $V$ , where  $V$  is the daily charge for the hereditament for the chargeable day after the application of any mandatory relief and any other discretionary reliefs, excluding those where local authorities have used their discretionary relief powers introduced by the Localism Act 2011 which are not funded by section 31 grants.

23. This should be calculated ignoring any prior-year adjustments in liabilities which fall to be liable on the day.

24. Ratepayers who occupy more than one property will be entitled to Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief for each of their eligible properties.

25. Retail, leisure and hospitality properties which are excluded from Small Business Rates Relief due to the multiple occupation rule are eligible for this relief scheme.

Changes to existing hereditaments, including change in occupier

26. Empty properties becoming occupied after 1 April 2020 will qualify for this relief.

27. If there is a change in occupier part way through the financial year, after relief has already been provided to the hereditament, the new occupier will qualify for the relief on a pro-rata basis based on the remaining days of occupation using the formula in paragraph 22 of this guidance.

28. The discount should be applied on a day-to-day basis using the formula set out above. A new hereditament created as a result of a split or merger during the financial year, or where there is a change of use, should be considered afresh for the discount on that day.

State Aid

29. Whilst the UK left the EU on 31 January 2020, the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated by the UK Government and the EU provides that during a transition period State Aid rules will continue to apply as now and will be subject to control by the EU Commission as at present.

30. The UK Government has notified the EU of its intention to bring forward an immediate change to the UK's tax treatment of non-domestic property, in response to the ongoing Covid-19 emergency, and to seek clearance under Article 107(3)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Subject to this approval, the Expanded Retail Discount Scheme will become a notified state aid scheme. Once the notification has been approved by the European Commission, it will supersede the de minimis regulation as the appropriate cover for awarding the discount, meaning existing de Minimis limits will no longer restrict the provision of support.



# Report

## Council

---

### Part 1

**Date:** 29 September 2020

**Subject** **Report on Treasury Management covering the Financial Year 2019/20**

**Purpose** This report is to inform the Council of treasury activities undertaken for the financial year ending 31 March 2020.

**Author** Head of Finance / Assistant Head of Finance

**Ward** All

**Summary** In line with the agreed Treasury Management Strategy, the Council continues to be both a short-term investor of cash and borrower to manage day-to-day cash flows. Current forecasts indicate that in the future, temporary borrowing will continue to be required to fund normal day-to-day cash flow activities and longer-term borrowing will increase to fund new commitments in the current capital programme as well as the impact of reduced capacity for 'internal borrowing'.

During the financial year the Council's net borrowing increased by £17.2m from £136.6m at 31 March 2019 to £153.8m at 31 March 2020.

Investment value of £12.5m is above the £10m benchmark position, but at the end of March the Council undertook additional temporary borrowing to support the cash flow of providing grants to businesses affected by Covid-19.

All borrowing and investments undertaken during the financial year was expected and within the Council's agreed limits.

**Proposal** **To note and approve the report on treasury management activities for 2019/20 were in line with the agreed Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20.**

**Action by** Head of Finance / Assistant Head of Finance

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Treasury Advisors
- Head of Finance

**Signed**

## Background

1. In June 2009 the Authority adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2011 Edition (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management annual report after the end of each financial year.
2. Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year and, as a minimum, a semi-annual and annual treasury outturn report. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
3. The Authority has borrowed substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are therefore central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.
4. The 2019/20 Treasury Management Strategy was approved by the Council as part of the Capital Strategy in February 2019 and can be viewed via the following link  
<https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s17728/06%20Council%20Report%20Capital%20Strategy%20and%20Treasury%20Strategy%202020.pdf>
5. This report presents the following information:
  - details of capital financing, borrowing, debt rescheduling and investment transactions
  - reports on the risk implications of treasury decisions and transactions
  - details the outturn position on treasury management transactions in 2019/2020
  - confirms compliance with treasury limits set and Prudential code

## BORROWING STRATEGY / ACTIVITY

### Short and Long Term Borrowing

1. Whilst the Council has significant long-term borrowing requirements, the Council's current strategy of funding capital expenditure is through reducing investments ('internal borrowing') rather than undertaking new borrowing where it can i.e. we defer taking out new long term borrowing and fund capital expenditure from the Council's own cash resources – which it has because of its 'cash-backed' reserves and, to a lesser extent, day to day positive cash-flows, for as long as we can. The Council may undertake borrowing early if, there is the need for future borrowing and it feels it can minimise risk of future interest rate rises while providing value for money, this will be in line with advice from our treasury advisors.

By using this strategy the Council can also minimise cash holding at a time when counterparty risk remains relatively high, especially with the current economic implications during Covid-19. The interest rates achievable on the Council's investments are also significantly lower than the current rates payable on long-term borrowing and this remains the main reason for our current 'internally borrowed' strategy.

At 31 March, the level of internal borrowing was about £87m, mainly in relation to the Council's level of cash backed reserves. At current rates, this saves about £2.6m in interest costs annually compared to physically borrowing this level of cash. As the Council spends its reserves over the medium to long term (PFI reserves, Capital reserves, Invest to Save reserves in particular), then the internal borrowing will have to be replaced with actual external borrowing and this interest cost will be incurred.

2. Whilst the strategy minimises investment counterparty risk, the risk of interest rate exposure is increased as the current low longer term borrowing rates may rise in the future. The market position is being constantly monitored in order to minimise this risk.
3. On 14 March 2019, in line with advice from the Authority's treasury advisors, the Council undertook £40m of borrowing in advance of the re-financing of the £40m stock issue to be re-paid on 10 April 2019 (2019/20 financial year. This was to mitigate volatility of interest rate risk at the time of uncertain Brexit discussions. The level of borrowing undertaken was in line with the long-term liability projection and within budgets set for 2019/20 and the authorised limits for 2019/20.
4. As shown in Appendix B, as at 31 March 2020 the level of borrowing has decreased by £26.5m to £166.3m, but the level of investments has also decreased by £43.8m (including £33.5m held as cash and cash equivalents), meaning an increase in net borrowing of £17.2m during the financial year to £153.8m. An increase in net borrowing was anticipated during 2019/20 as per the capital programme, however the level of borrowing didn't increase to the level expected due to the large amount of slippage on the capital programme in 2019/20.
5. In regards to LOBOs, no loans were called during the period. All £30m outstanding is subject to potential change of interest rates by the lender (which would automatically trigger a right to the Council to repay these loans) prior to the end of this financial year. Should a change of interest rate be requested, then it will be considered in detail and a decision on how we proceed will be made in conjunction with our treasury advisors.

## **INVESTMENTS ACTIVITY / POSITION**

6. The Council's strategies in this area of Treasury Management are (i) to be a short term and relatively low value investor, consistent with the pursuit of an 'internal borrowing strategy' and (ii) investment priorities should follow the priorities of security, liquidity and yield, in that order.

The Council's strategy of being a short-term investor has been maintained, though the early borrowing of £40m in relation to the re-financing of the stock increased cash holdings temporarily for a few days at the beginning of the year, until the cash was used to repay/re-finance the stock issue on the 9<sup>th</sup> April.

Included within the investment figure on the 31 March 2020, is £12.5m cash and cash equivalent; this is due to £15m of short term borrowing taken out at the end of March 2020 to enable the Council to proceed quickly in the making of business grants in response to Covid-19 support, This was / will be repaid in June 2020.

It is anticipated that investments will reduce in 2020/21 until we reach the balance of £10m, which will be invested for compliance with MiFIDII. The balance of investments as at 31 March 2020 is £16.1m.

7. All investments are currently placed on a temporary basis and are placed in high security institutions, in line with our other strategy in this area, dealing with our investing priorities of (i) security (ii) liquidity and (iii) yield, in that order. At the 31 March 2020 £10m was placed with various local authorities, £2.5m with the Debt Management Office. The maximum maturity date of any of these investments held was 14 April 2020.
8. January 2018 saw the implementation in the UK of the second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II), where firms will be obliged to treat all local authorities as retail clients unless they opt up to professional client status and meet certain criteria. These criteria include holding a minimum of £10m investment balance and employing knowledgeable and experienced staff to carry out investment transactions. It is anticipated that our investment balances will remain at or above the minimum £10m.

9. The Council does not hold any long-term (more than 364 days) treasury investments as at 31 March 2020.

## **NON-TREASURY INVESTMENTS**

10. The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. This is replicated in the Investment Guidance issued by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) and Welsh Government, in which the definition of investments is further broadened to also include all such assets held partially for financial return.

The Authority also held such investments in:

- directly owned property such as office and commercial units of £10.8m
- loans to local businesses and landlords £3.3m
- shareholding in subsidiaries £0.3m

These investments generated £1.2m of investment income for the Authority after taking account of direct costs.

## **OTHER YEAR-END TREASURY MATTERS**

### **Economic background and Counter Party Update**

11. Appendix A outlines the underlying economic environment during the financial year, as provided by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors 'Arlingclose'.
12. As discussed previously in this report the Council does not have any long-term treasury investments, and the investments that it currently undertakes is mainly with other local authorities which are deemed very secure, therefore the risk is currently 'low'. There were no significant changes in credit ratings advised in the first half of the financial year that had implications for the approved lending list. The long-term rating of Santander UK, the Council's bankers, remains at A; above the Council's minimum level of A-.

### **Compliance with Prudential Indicators approved by Council**

13. The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using various indicators which can be found in Appendix B. The Authority has complied with the Prudential Indicators for 2019/20, set in February 2019 as part of the Treasury Management Strategy. Details of treasury-related Prudential Indicators can be found in Appendix B.

### **PWLB future lending terms**

14. Members will be aware that the PWLB increased interest rates on loans in the autumn of 2019 following concerns about the level of Local Government debt, in particular for commercial activities.

They have since started consultation on a proposed change in their lending criteria. Essentially, for service requirements, Councils will be able to borrow at cheaper rates compared to borrowing for purely income generating requirements e.g. buying commercial property. In addition, taking out PWLB loans for income generating activities could mean that no further borrowing from PWLB would be available for that financial year. Consultation has been hampered somewhat by the Covid-19 situation and extended but it seems likely that the criteria will be amended at some point over this financial year.

## Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Investment counterparty not repaying investments	High but depending on investment value	Low	The Council only invests with Institutions with very high credit scores. It employs advisors to monitor money market movements and changes to credit scores and acts immediately should things change adversely. The lower levels of funds available for investment will also alleviate the risk.	Members, Head of Finance, Treasury staff, based on advice from treasury advisors
Interest Rates moving adversely against expectations	Low	Low	Future expectations for higher short term rates are subdued. The Treasury strategy approved allows for the use of short term borrowing once investment funds are exhausted to take advantage of these low rates.	Head of Finance, Treasury staff, treasury advisors

\* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

It is the Council's policy to ensure that the security of the capital sums invested is fully recognised and has absolute priority. The Council follows the advice of the Welsh Governments that any investment decisions take account of security, liquidity and yield in that order.

## Options Available and considered

The Prudential Code and statute requires that, during and at the end of each financial year, reports on these matters are presented to Council for approval. Thus the Council is required to approve the report or not.

## Preferred Option and Why

To note and approve the report on treasury management activities for 2019/20 were in line with the agreed Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20.

## Comments of Chief Financial Officer

Decisions made on treasury matters will be made with a view to comply with the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators, taking advice, where needed, from our Treasury Advisers.

## Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no legal implications. The in year and annual treasury management report is consistent with relevant Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Guidance, Treasury Management principles and the Council's investment Strategy.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

There are no direct HR implications associated with the report.

The Council is required to approve a treasury management annual report at the end of each financial year. The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies to balance short-term needs with the needs to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs. As stated in this report, the Council continues to be both a short-term investor of cash and borrower to manage day-to-day cash flows but current forecasts indicate that in future temporary borrowing will continue to be required and longer-term borrowing will increase to fund the capital programme. This annual report fits in with the well-being goal of a Prosperous Wales.

## **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Leader of the Council, as lead member for strategic finance confirms she has been consulted on the report.

## **Local issues**

N/A

## **Scrutiny Committees**

N/A

## **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities. Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Act is not overly prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take to ensure due regard, although it does set out that due regard to advancing equality involves: removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

## **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

N/A

## **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

This report is a backwards looking report of the treasury management activities of the Council. It shows that we followed the treasury management strategy and the compliance with prudential code and treasury management indicators. This links into the long-term objectives of the authorities and ensures that the councils activities are carried out in an affordable, prudent and sustainable manner.

## **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

**Consultation**

N/A

**Background Papers**

Set out a list of any relevant background papers and whether they are available to the public.

Dated:

## APPENDIX A

### External Context

**Economic background:** The UK's exit from the European Union and future trading arrangements, had remained one of major influences on the UK economy and sentiment during 2019/20. The 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019 Brexit deadline was extended to 12<sup>th</sup> April, then to 31<sup>st</sup> October and finally to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Politics played a major role in financial markets over the period as the UK's tenuous progress negotiating its exit from the European Union together with its future trading arrangements drove volatility, particularly in foreign exchange markets. The outcome of December's General Election removed a lot of the uncertainty and looked set to provide a 'bounce' to confidence and activity.

The headline rate of UK Consumer Price Inflation fell to 1.7% y/y in February, below the Bank of England's target of 2%. Labour market data remained positive. The ILO unemployment rate was 3.9% in the three months to January 2020 while the employment rate hit a record high of 76.5%. The average annual growth rate for pay excluding bonuses was 3.1% in January 2020 and the same when bonuses were included, providing some evidence that a shortage of labour had been supporting wages.

GDP growth in Q4 2019 was reported as flat by the Office for National Statistics and service sector growth slowed and production and construction activity contracted on the back of what at the time were concerns over the impact of global trade tensions on economic activity. The annual rate of GDP growth remained below-trend at 1.1%.

Then coronavirus swiftly changed everything. COVID-19, which had first appeared in China in December 2019, started spreading across the globe causing plummeting sentiment and falls in financial markets not seen since the Global Financial Crisis as part of a flight to quality into sovereign debt and other perceived 'safe' assets.

In response to the spread of the virus and sharp increase in those infected, the government enforced lockdowns, central banks and governments around the world cut interest rates and introduced massive stimulus packages in an attempt to reduce some of the negative economic impact to domestic and global growth.

The Bank of England, which had held policy rates steady at 0.75% through most of 2019/20, moved in March to cut rates to 0.25% from 0.75% and then swiftly thereafter brought them down further to the record low of 0.1%. In conjunction with these cuts, the UK government introduced a number of measures to help businesses and households impacted by a series of ever-tightening social restrictions, culminating in pretty much the entire lockdown of the UK.

The US economy grew at an annualised rate of 2.1% in Q4 2019. After escalating trade wars and a protracted standoff, the signing of Phase 1 of the trade agreement between the US and China in January was initially positive for both economies, but COVID-19 severely impacted sentiment and production in both countries. Against a slowing economic outlook, the US Federal Reserve began cutting rates in August. Following a series of five cuts, the largest of which were in March 2020, the Fed Funds rate fell from of 2.5% to range of 0% - 0.25%. The US government also unleashed a raft of COVID-19 related measures and support for its economy including a \$2 trillion fiscal stimulus package. With interest rates already on (or below) the floor, the European Central Bank held its base rate at 0% and deposit rate at -0.5%.

**Financial markets:** Financial markets sold off sharply as the impact from the coronavirus worsened. After starting positively in 2020, the FTSE 100 fell over 30% at its worst point with stock markets in other countries seeing similar huge falls. In March sterling touch its lowest level against the dollar since 1985. The measures implemented by central banks and governments helped restore some confidence and financial markets have rebounded in recent weeks but remain extremely volatile. The flight to quality caused gilts yields to fall substantially. The 5-year benchmark falling from 0.75% in April 2019 to 0.26% on 31<sup>st</sup> March. The 10-year benchmark yield fell from 1% to 0.4%, the 20-year benchmark yield from 1.47% to 0.76% over the same period. 1-month, 3-month and 12-month bid rates averaged 0.61%, 0.72% and 0.88% respectively over the period.

Since the start of the calendar 2020, the yield on 2-year US treasuries had fallen from 1.573% to 0.20% and from 1.877% to 0.61% for 10-year treasuries. German bund yields remain negative.



**Credit review:** In Q4 2019 Fitch affirmed the UK's AA sovereign rating, removed it from Rating Watch Negative (RWN) and assigned a negative outlook. Fitch then affirmed UK banks' long-term ratings, removed the RWN and assigned a stable outlook. Standard & Poor's also affirmed the UK sovereign AA rating and revised the outlook to stable from negative. The Bank of England announced its latest stress tests results for the main seven UK banking groups. All seven passed on both a common equity Tier 1 (CET1) ratio and a leverage ratio basis. Under the test scenario the banks' aggregate level of CET1 capital would remain twice their level before the 2008 financial crisis.

After remaining flat in January and February and between a range of 30-55bps, Credit Default Swap spreads rose sharply in March as the potential impact of the coronavirus on bank balance sheets gave cause for concern. Spreads declined in late March and through to mid-April but remain above their initial 2020 levels. NatWest Markets Plc (non-ringfenced) remains the highest at 128bps and National Westminster Bank Plc (ringfenced) still the lowest at 56bps. The other main UK banks are between 65bps and 123bps, with the latter being the thinly traded and volatile Santander UK CDS.

While the UK and Non-UK banks on the Arlingclose counterparty list remain in a strong and well-capitalised position, the duration advice on all these banks was cut to 35 days in mid-March.

Fitch downgraded the UK sovereign rating to AA- in March which was followed by a number of actions on UK and Non-UK banks. This included revising the outlook on all banks on the counterparty list to negative, with the exception of Barclays Bank, Rabobank, Handelsbanken and Nordea Bank which were placed on Rating Watch Negative, as well as cutting Close Brothers long-term rating to A-. Having revised their outlooks to negative, Fitch upgraded the long-term ratings on Canadian and German banks but downgraded the long-term ratings for Australian banks. HSBC Bank and HSBC UK Bank, however, had their long-term ratings increased by Fitch to AA-.

## Appendix B

### Local Context

On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, the Authority had net borrowing of £153.8m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	<b>31.3.20 Actual £m</b>
General Fund CFR	280
Less: *Other debt liabilities	43
<b>Borrowing CFR</b>	<b>237</b>
Less: Usable reserves	(87)
Less: Working capital inc. non-treasury investments	4
<b>Net borrowing</b>	<b>154</b>

\* finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

The Authority pursued its strategy of keeping borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing, in order to reduce risk and keep interest costs low.

The treasury management position at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and the change during the year is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	<b>31.3.19 Balance £m</b>	<b>Movement £m</b>	<b>31.3.20 Balance £m</b>	<b>31.3.20 Rate %</b>
Long-term borrowing	149.3	1.3	150.6	3.6
Short-term borrowing	43.5	(43.5)	-	N/A
Cash and cash equivalents	-	15.7	15.7	2.1
<b>Total borrowing</b>	<b>192.8</b>	<b>(26.5)</b>	<b>166.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>
Long-term investments	-	-	-	-
Short-term investments	(10.3)	10.3	-	N/A
Cash and cash equivalents	(45.9)	33.5	(12.5)	0.8
<b>Total investments</b>	<b>(56.2)</b>	<b>43.8</b>	<b>(12.5)</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Net borrowing</b>	<b>136.6</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>153.8</b>	<b>N/A</b>

The table above shows significant movement in both the borrowing and investment levels of the Council, however overall the NET borrowing position for the Council has increased by £17.2m.

### Borrowing Update

On 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019 the PWLB raised the cost of certainty rate borrowing by 1% to 1.8% above UK gilt yields as HM Treasury was concerned about the overall level of local authority debt. PWLB borrowing remains available but the margin of 180bp above gilt yields appears relatively very expensive. Market alternatives are available and new products will be developed; however, the financial strength of individual authorities will be scrutinised by investors and commercial lenders.

The Chancellor's March 2020 Budget statement included significant changes to Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) policy and launched a wide-ranging consultation on the PWLB's future direction. Announcements included a reduction in the margin on new HRA loans to 0.80% above equivalent gilt yields, available from 12th March 2020 and £1.15bn of additional "infrastructure rate" funding at gilt yields plus 0.60% to support specific local authority infrastructure projects for England, Scotland and Wales for which there is a bidding process.

The consultation titled "Future Lending Terms" represents a frank, open and inclusive invitation, allowing key stakeholders to contribute to developing a system whereby PWLB loans can be made available at improved margins to support qualifying projects. It contains proposals on allowing authorities that are not involved in "debt for yield" activity to borrow at lower rates as well as stopping local authorities using PWLB loans to buy commercial assets primarily for yield without impeding their ability to pursue their core policy objectives of service delivery, housing, and regeneration. The consultation also broaches the possibility of slowing, or stopping, individual authorities from borrowing large sums in specific circumstances.

The consultation closes on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 with implementation of the new lending terms expected in the latter part of this calendar year or financial year beginning 2021/22.

### **Borrowing Strategy during the year**

At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 the Authority held £166.3m of loans, (a decrease of £41.5m to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years' capital programmes. Outstanding loans on 31<sup>st</sup> March are summarised in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Borrowing Position**

	<b>31.3.19 Balance £m</b>	<b>Net Movement £m</b>	<b>31.3.20 Balance £m</b>	<b>31.3.20 Weighted Average Rate %</b>	<b>31.3.20 Weighted Average Maturity (years)</b>
Public Works Loan Board	107.9	(2.2)	105.7	3.8	19.7
Banks (LOBO)	30.6	(0.6)	30.0	4.4	34.2
Stock Issue	40.0	(40.0)	-	-	-
Banks (fixed-term)	5.0	-	5.0	3.8	57.9
Local Authority (short-term)	-	-	15.0	2.1	0.0
Other inc. WG loans	6.0	3.9	9.9	-	8.8
Accrued interest	3.3	(2.6)	0.7	N/A	N/A
<b>Total borrowing</b>	<b>192.8</b>	<b>(41.5)</b>	<b>166.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>23.1</b>

The Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective.

In line with advice from the Authority's treasury advisors, a decision was made to undertake early borrowing for the re-finance of £40m debt maturing on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019. Borrowing of £40m was undertaken on 14<sup>th</sup> March on terms spanning from 20 years to 48 years to spread the maturity profile and risk. The interest rate of the new borrowing was fixed at 2.05-2.55%, compared to the maturing borrowing at 8.875%. A decision was made to undertake the borrowing early due to the growing uncertainty surrounding Brexit and the imminent deadline that was approaching, which could have led to Britain leaving the EU without a deal. The reduction in borrowing between years is largely in relation to the repayment of the maturing debt on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

The Authority has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme and an estimated borrowing requirement as determined by the Liability Benchmark which also takes into account usable reserves and working capital. Having

considered the appropriate duration and structure of the Authority's borrowing need based on realistic projections and reducing investments, the Authority only required to borrow an additional £2.7m longer-term loans related to specific projects from Welsh Government and Salix, details of which are below.

Long-dated Loans borrowed	Amount £m	Rate %	Period (Years)
Welsh Government Loan 1	2.0	0	3
Welsh Government Loan 2	0.6	0	15
Salix Loan	0.1	0	8
<b>Total borrowing</b>	<b>2.7</b>		

LOBO loans: The Authority continues to hold £30m of LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate as set dates, following which the Authority has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost. No banks exercised their option during the year.

### Other Debt Activity

After £0.8m repayment of prior years' Private Finance Initiative and finance leases liabilities, total debt other than borrowing stood at £42.4m on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, taking total debt to £208.7m.

### Treasury Investment Activity

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the year, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £12.5m and £69.0 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	31.3.19 Balance £m	Movement £m	31.03.20 Balance £m	31.03.20 Income Return %	31.03.20 Weighted average maturity Years
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	7.7	(7.7)	-	-	-
Government (incl. local authorities)	48.5	(36.0)	12.5	0.8	-
<b>Total investments</b>	<b>56.2</b>	<b>(43.7)</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>-</b>

Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

In the Treasury Management Strategy it was agreed that the Authority will move into higher risk/higher yield investments such as pooled funds. However, this has been delayed while the Authority reviewed its risk appetite. While an increased income target has been included in the 2020/21 budget, due to the current economic uncertainty surrounding Covid-19, the Authority has invested into secure institutions such as local authorities and Central Government.

In November 2019 the Welsh Government published new Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments to be effective from the 2020/21 financial year. This involves a complete re-write along the lines of the guidance issued last year by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for local authorities in England.

The definition of investments is widened to include “all of the financial and non-financial assets a local authority has invested money into primarily or partially for the purpose of generating a surplus including investment property” providing it has been made using the power to invest contained in the Local Government Act 2003. In addition, loans to wholly-owned companies or associates, to a joint venture, or to a third party count as investments, irrespective of the purpose or legal power used.

### **Non-Treasury Investments**

The definition of investments in CIPFA’s revised Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. This is replicated in the Investment Guidance issued by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s (MHCLG) and Welsh Government, in which the definition of investments is further broadened to also include all such assets held partially for financial return.

The Authority also held such investments in:

- directly owned property such as office and commercial units of £10.8m
- loans to local businesses and landlords £3.3m
- shareholding in subsidiaries £0.3m

These investments generated £1.2m of investment income for the Authority after taking account of direct costs.

### **Compliance**

The Head of Finance reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the year complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Authority’s approved Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in table 7 below.

Compliance with the authorised limit and operational boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 7 below.

**Table 7: Debt Limits**

	<b>2019/20 Maximum</b>	<b>31.3.20 Actual</b>	<b>2019/20 Operational Boundary</b>	<b>2019/20 Authorised Limit</b>	<b>Complied? Yes/No</b>
Borrowing	192.8	166.3	220	230	✓
PFI and Finance Leases	42	42	44	44	✓
<b>Total debt</b>	<b>234.8</b>	<b>208.3</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>✓</b>

**Table 8: Investment Limits**

	<b>2019/20 Maximum</b>	<b>31.3.20 Actual</b>	<b>2019/20 Limit</b>	<b>Complied? Yes/No</b>
Any single organisation, except the UK Central Government	£5m	0	£10m each	✓

*Above table only shows limits where the Council have invested money in during the year, excluding the UK Central Government.*

### **Treasury Management Indicators**

The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

**Interest Rate Exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interests was:

Interest rate risk indicator	31.3.20 Actual	2019/20 Limit	Complied?
Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	✓
Upper limit on variable interest rate exposure	0	50%	✓

**Maturity Structure of Borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

	31.03.20 Actual	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Complied
Under 12 months	9%	70%	0%	✓
12 months and within 24 months	2%	60%	0%	✓
24 months and within 5 years	6%	60%	0%	✓
5 years and within 10 years	19%	50%	0%	✓
10 years and within 20 years	18%	30%	0%	✓
20 years and within 30 years	14%	20%	0%	✓
30 years and within 40 years	19%	20%	0%	✓
40 years and within 50 years	8%	20%	0%	✓
50 years and above	6%	20%	0%	✓

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

**Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than a year:** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end were:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Actual principal invested beyond year end	0	0	0
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	10	10	10
Complied?	✓	✓	✓

## Other

**IFRS 16:** CIPFA/LASAAC has proposed delaying the implementation of the new IFRS 16 Leases accounting standard for a further year to 2021/22.

# Report

## Council

---

### Part 1

**Date:** 29 September 2020

**Subject** **Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024**

**Purpose** To present the council's draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and seek approval from Council. The Strategic Equality Plan is required to be published on the council's website in accordance with statutory deadlines.

**Author** Connected Communities Manager

**Ward** All

**Summary** Under the Equality Act (2010) the Council is required to publish a Strategic Equality Plan every 4 years, including a number of strategic equality objectives. Objectives should be based on local and national evidence of inequality, the authority's own equality data, and consultation undertaken with key stakeholders, including people that share protected characteristics. This is the third Strategic Equality Plan, and builds on progress already made, whilst taking a more outcome-focussed approach to delivery of clearly defined objectives. The statutory deadline for publishing of the Strategic Equality Plan is March 31st. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (regulatory body) have notified public sector bodies who are subject to regulations under the Equality Act 2010 that the publishing of a draft document is sufficient in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the council published a draft Strategic Equality Plan online on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

The council recognise that since March, the equality landscape has been impacted significantly by the Covid19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement. The Strategic Equality Plan is a long term, high level document which provides overarching objectives with sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing priorities. The delivery plan which underpins this Strategic document will reflect ongoing work relating to equality in these areas.

**Proposal** **To approve the attached Strategic Equality Plan.**

**Action by** Head of People and Business Change

**Timetable** Draft Strategic Equality Plan currently published to be updated and finalised immediately following Council approval.

**This report was prepared after consultation with:**  
Cabinet Member for Community and Resources  
Heads of Service  
Senior Leadership Team  
Overview and Management Scrutiny Committee  
The Council's Strategic Equalities Group  
Cabinet

## Background

### Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brought together and replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The Act includes a public sector equality duty (the general duty), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality which came into force on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

The aim of the general duty is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review. The general duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Act
2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
3. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

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

Listed bodies in Wales are also subject to the Act's specific duties, which are designed to support them meeting the general duty. The specific duties include the requirement for bodies to prepare and publish its equality objectives at least every four years, and the requirement to have a Strategic Equality Plan which sets out how these objectives will be met. Objectives must relate to all protected characteristics, and effective arrangements must be in place to monitor progress made against them.

Objectives should be developed through consideration of a listed body's work and activities, including employment, service delivery and policy development. This analysis should be informed by engagement with people that share protected characteristics, gathering and analysing information, and assessing equality impact. Engagement is a key opportunity to gather information about which areas of work may be of interest to people with particular protected characteristics.

### Development of objectives

The Council's draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 sets out six equality objectives, each with a number of related outcomes and key actions that will contribute to those outcomes. The objectives relate to Leadership and Governance, Access and Engagement, Representative Workforce, Community Cohesion, Learning Well and Independent Living.

These objectives were drafted considering broad themes that have already been identified across the council's existing strategic documents, such as the Well-Being and Corporate Plans, and key external documents like the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Is Wales Fairer?: The State of Human Rights and Equality' (2018) report, which provides a broad assessment of inequality in Wales.



The objectives were also aligned with Welsh Government's strategic equality work, considering documents including their Nation of Sanctuary Plan, Hate Crime Framework for Action, and Action on Disability framework.

Extensive stakeholder consultation has also informed the objectives, including surveys relating to:

- Public perception of equality in Newport
- Support for LGBTQ+ people in Newport
- Attitudes towards migration in Newport
- Making a complaint to the council

The council's equality objectives were also subject to a 6 week consultation period, providing opportunity for the public to consider our areas of proposed focus.

Specific engagement was undertaken with people that share protected characteristics through focus groups with:

- Newport Access Group
- Newport People First
- Newport BAME Forum
- Newport Youth Council
- LGBTQ+ young people

A Consultation Report will be published alongside the Strategic Equality Plan. This is attached at Appendix 1 and provides further detail on the methods and outcomes of engagement, links to wider council priorities, and how local and national evidence has informed the development of the objectives. An operational delivery plan will underpin the Strategic Equality Plan, setting out in detail the steps that will be taken to achieve the objectives. The delivery plan will be routinely reported on through the council's Strategic Equality Group (SEG), chaired by the Cabinet Member for Community and Resources and will also form the basis of the Strategic Equality Annual Report, received by Cabinet and Council.

The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 is attached to this report as Appendix 2.

## Financial Summary

The cost of implementing the Strategic Equality Plan and the equality objectives is met out of existing budgets by each relevant service area. A cost of approximately £3000 has been met by the Equality and Welsh language budget 19/20 for work to improve accessibility of the public facing Strategic Equality Plan.

	<b>Year 1 (Current) £</b>	<b>Year 2 £</b>	<b>Year 3 £</b>	<b>Ongoing £</b>	<b>Notes including budgets heads affected</b>
<b>Costs (Income)</b>					<b>Not applicable</b>
<b>Net Costs (Savings)</b>					
<b>Net Impact on Budget</b>					

## Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
That the Plan and its equality objectives are not implemented	M	M	Governance arrangements relating to delivery of the Strategic Equality Plan are being reviewed to ensure that actions are effectively progressed and monitored throughout the duration of the plan, particularly at an operational level	Heads of Service

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Council's commitments under the Equality Act and the Strategic Equality Plan are aligned to the Wellbeing Goals, in particular, working towards a more equal Wales, and a Wales of cohesive communities.

Previously, the council has included Welsh language as a specific equality objective within its Strategic Equality Plans. As separate, statutory, reporting processes are in place under the council's Welsh Language Standards, Welsh language will no longer feature in our Strategic Equality Plan.

## Options Available

- a) To approve the attached Strategic Equality Plan
- b) To not approve the attached and redraft

## Preferred Option and Why

Option a) is the preferred option, in order to ensure that the Council remains compliant with its statutory obligations.

## Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no adverse financial implications associated with the proposal to approve and publish the Strategic Equality Plan. The cost of implementing the SEP is met from existing budgets in service areas.

The Strategic Equality Plan and the general obligations and requirements under the Act are key issues in the planning and delivering of services and therefore a key consideration in the Council's financial planning and budgets. Established processes allows for this consideration and is reviewed regularly.

## Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the Council is required to publish a revised Strategic Equality Plan every 4 years. The general Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have due regard in the exercise of its functions, to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. Regulations made by the Welsh Ministers impose specific duties on local authorities in Wales for the purpose of enabling better performance of these general duties. These include the duty to publish objectives designed to enable the authority to perform the statutory duty, to publish a statement setting out steps taken or

intended steps in order to fulfil each objective and how long the authority will take in order to fulfil each objective. This Strategic Equality Plan supports Newport City Council in meeting these duties.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.

This Strategic Equality Plan represents another important step towards creating a fairer, more equal Newport. It builds on positive work already achieved under previous plans, and sets out clear objectives and outcomes for the next 4 years. The Plan also contributes to the delivery of the Council's wellbeing objectives and the national wellbeing goals.

## **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Equality Objectives in this Strategic Equality Plan are outcome focused. They reflect both the strategic priorities of the wider organisation and those of key partners, like the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Welsh Government. It is important to note however that they also reflect the concerns of the public, thanks to our wide and robust consultation process. The strategies have evolved significantly since our 2016-2020 plan. We worked in close partnership with service areas across the authority to develop well balanced priorities that are both inward-facing and externally focussed.

## **Local issues**

NA

## **Scrutiny Committees**

The draft Plan was reported to Overview and Management Scrutiny Committee in March 2019 and their comments informed amendments to the draft Strategic Equality Plan. Comments and responses are summarised below:

The current National Emergency relating to the Corona Virus has caused the Shut down of our major industries/services and other aspects of our economy and normal life. As a result of this, Local Government has been severely affected from a strategic planning and service delivery aspect.

a) What if any changes to the Councils published plan have been made or need to be made to take account of this unpredicted and monumental change? Or need to be made so that we can transition back to normality.

There are no changes to the Strategic Equality Plan proposed as a result of the Covid-19 crisis, however, operational plans which underpin its delivery may need to take into account delays, or address any pressing areas of inequality, for example, mitigating any resulting community tensions. Welsh Government have already agreed to some extended deadlines. It is recognised that Covid-19 is impacting disproportionately on many of our minority communities, and any learning from this will be reflected in our delivery plan which will evolve as necessary over the lifespan of the Strategic Plan.

b) Do our city goals need to be urgently realigned to take account of the current national situation and the wider aspects of recovery.

The Strategic Equality Plan details the strategic and policy framework within which the Council operates, and is designed to align with the Council's wider corporate priorities. The operational plan which will support its delivery will be reviewed following this period of emergency management and incorporate any immediate actions necessary to mitigate the impact of Covid19, but the overarching principles, and long term strategic objectives remain the same.

c) Devise and implement a method or means of measuring success of actions/ activities against the various stated areas of focus/goals. If it can be measured it can be managed to completion. Each activity/area of focus needs to have a recognised owner, this is for accountability and reporting purposes.

As outlined in the Strategic Equality Plan, an operational delivery plan will set out in detail steps that will be taken to achieve the Strategic Equality Objectives. This will include clear timescales, action owners and performance indicators. The Plan also sets out the aim to work towards mainstreaming equality delivery through service area plans, resulting in better performance management as part of the corporate process. A published annual report on progress against Strategic Equality Objectives is a statutory requirement under the Equality Act 2010.

7) Project milestones and reporting of activity milestones need to be agreed and published for each team or area of activity.

As above.

8) There needs to be one overall project manager/owner identified and tasked with performance management of the various programmes of work encompassed by the scope of work.

As above.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

Strategic Equality Plans are required by law in order to contribute towards the reduction of inequalities and set out priorities which impact positively on people that share protected characteristics. An Equality Impact Assessment which has been carried out on our draft Strategic Equality Plan is attached at Appendix 3.

### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

This Strategic Equality Plan sets out a specific objective focussed on improving equality for vulnerable learners. This objective will be achieved through delivery of the council's Learn Well education strategy. Pupil voice is at the heart of this work, and ongoing consultation and engagement with children ensures their participation in decisions that affect them.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015, which came into force in April 2016, places an obligation on Local Authorities to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Strategic Equality Plan represents much of the work that the authority undertakes to fulfil our Wellbeing objectives to work towards 'a more Equal Wales' and a 'Wales of Cohesive Communities', drawing on much of the research undertaken by the Equality and Human Rights Commission into fairness and inequalities in Wales.

The Strategic Equality Plan and its objectives aim to influence the way that the Council makes decisions that have a long term impact on communities, and engages and consults with diverse and seldom heard groups to ensure they are able to influence the design of service delivery. Early intervention to address issues such as hate crime and the risk of radicalisation prevent escalation of issues which may threaten community cohesion, and collaboration with key partners in the delivery of our Equality Plan ensures an effective, holistic approach. The Strategic Equality Plan is influenced by national research, local data, and engagement with people in Newport that share protected characteristics.

### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Not applicable

### **Background Papers**

Strategic Equality Plan 2016-20

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/NCC-Strategic-Equality-Plan-and-Equality-Objectives-2016-1.1-Eng.pdf>

Strategic Equality Plan Annual Reports

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/en/Council-Democracy/Equalities-the-Welsh-language/Equalities.aspx>

Equality Act 2010 and guidance for Local Authorities in Wales  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Draft published Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24  
<https://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/SEP-2020-1.0-English.pdf>

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn



# Consultation: Strategic Equality Objectives

---

## ABOUT OUR CONSULTATION

This consultation report is about the council's proposed "Strategic Equality Plan". Under the Equality Act (2010), local authorities in Wales must publish a Strategic Equality Plan that sets out objectives and priorities it wants to achieve over a four year period. These priorities are called "Equality Objectives".

This document introduces Newport City Council's Equality Objectives and describes the consultation process that we undertook to identify them.

## OUR EQUALITY DUTIES

### THE GENERAL DUTY

**When making decisions and delivering services we must have due regard to:**

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing 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).
- Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When thinking about how to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant 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 also have to particularly think about how it will tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

### THE SPECIFIC DUTIES

The Equality Act provides a power to make regulations imposing duties on public bodies to support better performance of the general duty; these are known as the Specific Public Sector Equality Duties and are different in England, Scotland and Wales. The Specific Duties underpin the General Duty and have been developed around four main principles:

1. Use of evidence
2. Consultation and Involvement
3. Transparency
4. Leadership

### WHO IS PROTECTED UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT 2010?

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their protected characteristic. 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.

The law is designed to protect them, they are:

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



## 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 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, and how we can support staff to achieve their potential.

### 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

### 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 of pupils.

### 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 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.

## OUR CONSULTATION

We engaged with the public in two ways, through a number of online public consultation exercises, and a series of focus groups targeted at specific groups that were likely to have an interest in the development of our Strategic Equality Plan.

**Focus groups:** We mapped a number of groups across protected characteristics to ensure there was good qualitative representation in the development of our strategy. Over the period of consultation we engaged with the following groups:

- Newport Access Group
- Newport People First
- Newport BAME Forum
- Newport Fairness Commission
- Newport Youth Council
- Newport City Council Strategic Equality Group

In addition to this, a number of organisations with specific interests in equality and diversity (such as Welsh Government's Equality partners) were also consulted with. These organisations were:

- Woman's Equality Network
- Chwarae Teg

**Online consultation:** This ran over a 5 week period and was promoted on social media, specifically the council's Facebook and Twitter pages. Through this consultation process, any member of the public could contribute views on the authority's equality objectives.

In total, 33 of people responded to our dedicated SEP online consultation.

**Bus WiFi Consultations:** We are able to ask a series of questions before giving access to members of the public to free Wi-Fi on Newport buses. The responses received on a number of themed surveys were used to identify meaningful key actions within the Strategic Equality Plan and further shape our equality objectives.

SEP Bus Wifi: In total 2765 people responded to our bus Wi-Fi survey on the strategic equality plan. This survey focused on how we demonstrate leadership on equality issues and how inclusive we seem as an employer. These responses helped to shape our equality objective on Leadership, Governance and Involvement and Representative Workforce in particular.

LGBTQ+ Bus Wifi Survey: In total 2036 people responded to our bus Wi-Fi survey on LGBTQ+ issues in Newport. Of these, 397 identified as LGBTQ+. These responses helped shape our fifth Equality Objective "Learn Well".

Migration Bus Wifi survey: In total 851 people responded to our survey on migration within Newport. This helped inform our Community Cohesion equality objective.

In total the council received 5652 responses to Bus Wifi surveys.

## OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

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

We started by looking at broad themes that have already been identified across the council's existing strategic documents, including our Well-Being and Corporate Plans. These plans already identify some key areas of work that we should be focussing on, based on existing research and an understanding of national and local need.

In addition, we also considered key external documents like the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Is Wales Fairer?: The State of Human Rights and Equality' (2018) report, which provides a broad assessment of inequality in Wales. We also mapped our draft Equality Objectives against Welsh Government's strategic equality work, considering documents like their Nation of Sanctuary Plan, Hate Crime Framework for Action, and Action on Disability framework.

Key themes identified are presented within the Policy Matrix below:

	EHRC*	NCC Well Being Plan	NCC Corporate Plan	Welsh Government
Indicator				
Leadership, Governance and Involvement	X	X	X	X
Customer Services & Access	X		X	
Representative Workforce	X	X		X
Community Cohesion	X	X	X	X
Learn Well	X	X	X	X
Living Independently	X	X		X

\*Equality and Human Rights Commission, Regulatory Body

## LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE & INVOLVEMENT

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

The role positive leadership, clear governance and active involvement plays in promoting the equalities agenda comes across strongly in a number of key policy documents. **Welsh Government’s** own draft Strategic Equality Plan highlights the not only its aim of making Wales (and the Welsh Public Sector) a world leader in the field of gender equality, but more widely the central role that equalities plays in its vision for Wales.

**The EHRC Is Wales Fairer? Review** highlights that the important role of strong leadership in embedding the principles of equality within an organisation whilst also acknowledging that “participation of communities in decision making is important to enable people to influence those decisions that affect them in different areas of life” (2019, p.101).

**Newport’s Well-being Plan** identifies engagement with local people as being key to the development and delivery of appropriate services and acknowledges the important role of gathering accurate customer intelligence in identifying different outcomes between different sections of the city’s population (2017, p.29).

This commitment to listening to the needs of the people of Newport is also echoed within our **Corporate Plan 2017-2022** which identifies key organisational design principles relevant to this draft Equality Objective, namely **Enabling and Capacity Building**, **Citizen Role**, and being **Evidence-based**. These principles ensure that services and decisions are shaped by the voices and experiences of citizens who are representative of our diverse city.

**Our consultation feedback** broadly suggested that we have scope to improve on how we promote and show leadership in the field of equality. Within our online survey, 78.1% of respondents stated that they agreed with this Equality Objective.

Specific concerns about a lack of leadership ranged from the council not being visible enough marking key dates in the equalities calendar, to a perceived lack of an online presence, particularly when countering hate speech online. There was also reference, particularly within our survey responses, to the idea that Newport City Council was not an employer that welcomed diversity, and too often simply paid “lip service” to the agenda.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE AND ACCESS

**“Newport City Council is accessible to our diverse communities, providing a service that is both inclusive and considerate of individual need”**

Over 73,000 people visit the Civic Centre and Information Station annually, accessing a huge number of different services. Over the course of the lifespan of our Equality Strategy, we will increasingly look to move towards new ways of engaging with the public, including further digitalisation of services and the establishment of Neighbourhood Hubs across the city. It is essential that we consider the impact of these changes on all of our communities, and that we work towards a service that is accessible to everyone.

**Our Corporate Plan 2017-2022** outlines a number of aspirations for improving customer services over the next few years, including improving online access to council services and embedding our Neighbourhood Hubs across the city.

**The EHRC’s Is Wales Fairer Review: 2018** includes access to services as a key equality indicator, cutting across a number of themes including access to culture, leisure and sport. The report also details barriers that may be faced by particular communities in accessing services, including fear of discrimination and poor accessibility.

Work on this objective will focus on those communities that may be disproportionately impacted by these barriers.

**Our consultation feedback** painted a mixed picture in terms of how people felt about the responsiveness of frontline council services to specific needs. Some of our feedback suggested that services were good at responding to specific customer needs and that these services had also significantly improved over the past few years. However, it was clear that some groups had also experienced what they felt was a very poor customer service, and that council services often struggled to be responsive to people's needs. This experience was often linked to frontline staff not being able to access interpreter services (including BSL) and hearing loops. It was also raised that frontline staff should be provided with mandatory disability awareness training.

This Equality Objective was popular among survey respondents, with 81.3% of people stating that they agreed with the proposed draft objective.

## REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE

**“Newport City Council has a workforce that is representative of the demographic of the city and a workplace with an inclusive culture which recruits, develops and retains diverse staff”**

Delivering a representative workforce is a continuation from our previous Strategic Equality Plan, and represents an ongoing piece of work that will continue to develop with the evolution of the city. Having a representative workforce is key to ensuring the public has trust in us, and that we have at our disposal the diversity of ideas, skills, and experience necessary to meet the needs of the city.

At present, 4.4% of our employees identify as being from a BAME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) background, compared to census figures of around 10% for the city of Newport. Women are over-represented in the workforce at around 76%, however our [gender pay gap report](#) suggests that we have a gender pay gap of around 4.8%. In addition to this, only 1% of our employees identify as being disabled. We recognise that there is more to be done, in improving the quality of demographic data we collect about our staff, how we use this to inform our work and attracting, recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.

**The EHRC's 2018 Review** highlights workforce diversity as an important theme, and states that improved levels of workforce diversity should be pursued more robustly (EHRC 2018, p.31). The review also makes clear that this move towards more diverse workforces should be more inclusive, identifying concerns that “disabled people are less likely than non-disabled people to work in managerial or professional occupations which tend to have high pay” (EHRC, Page 29), and that BAME young people are underrepresented in apprenticeship schemes. This is echoed by **Newport's Well-being Plan** which highlights the important role that representative workforces have to play in making the city and the council feel inclusive of different groups (NWBP 2019, 13).

**Welsh Government's Equality and Inclusion** programme also engages with the issue of representation in the workforce, with a number of organisations funded through Welsh Government's Equality and Inclusion Programme having launched initiatives aimed at increasing participation from underrepresented groups. Welsh Government's draft equality objective 8 also aspires to “the Welsh public sector leading the way as exemplar inclusive and diverse organisations and employers”.

**Our consultation feedback** was supportive of this proposed draft objective, with 66% of respondents to our dedicated SEP online survey stating that they agreed with the Equality Objective. There was frequent acknowledgement across all consultation formats that this objective linked closely with the need to provide stronger visible leadership in the field of equalities, as discussed in Equality Objective 1; Leadership, Governance and Involvement.

Statements from supporting consultation exercises, suggested that non-white British survey respondents were 8% less likely to believe that they could enjoy a successful career at Newport City Council. Within these survey response comments relating to a lack of opportunity for external candidates were also frequently raised.

Within our online survey, 65.6% of respondents stated that they agreed with this draft objective.

## 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”**

Creating and supporting cohesive communities remains a priority for us, particularly as we continue to experience the effects of the decision to leave the European Union, and see threats to cohesion continue to grow, including levels of hate crime across Wales.

Newport has a rich history of migration and we continue to welcome newcomers to the city, however we are also aware of the importance of effective integration which places responsibilities both on new arrivals and receiving communities. We also need to support those EU nationals living in Newport to continue to do so post-Brexit, ensuring everyone living in Newport feels a sense of belonging and common sense of purpose.

The **EHRC Review** highlights the significance of Hate Crime across England and Wales, identifying Ethnicity and Religion as the motivations for most Hate Crimes, and an increasing trend in Hate Crimes motivated by sexual orientation, transgender identity and disability (2017, p.93-94). Hate crime in Newport continues to rise annually, although we know that this is still under reported by many communities, particularly LGBTQ+ and disabled people.

This theme also has strong links to **Newport’s Well-being Plan** and to the overarching Well-being Goals of “A Wales of cohesive communities” and “A more equal Wales”. This objective supports the authority’s key priority areas identified within the **Corporate Plan**, specifically those which commit to delivering “**Resilient Communities**” and a “**Thriving City**”.

This draft objective is also linked to **Welsh Government’s own strategic priorities**, specifically their draft Equality Objectives 5 and 6 which make clear commitments to improving community cohesion through the “elimination of identity-based abuse, harassment, hate crime and bullying” and the establishment of “A Wales of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal”.

**Our consultation feedback** was supportive of this proposed draft objective, with 64.5% of respondents to our dedicated SEP online survey stating that they agreed with the Equality Objective.

## LEARNING WELL

**“Newport City Council supports the well-being and attainment of all our pupils, addressing any disparity in achievement of vulnerable learners”**

This proposed Equality Objectives acknowledges the key role that education has to play in removing barriers and delivering opportunities to enable all our children and young people to reach their potential.

Our Education Services ‘Learn Well Plan 2019-2022’ sets out ambitions for all those working within Education Services in Newport to improve the well-being of pupils in our schools in ways that reflect the council’s well-being objectives. Our work under this objective will align closely with the Learn Well Plan, which has a particular focus on the educational outcomes of vulnerable learners.

**The EHRC review** supports a focus on vulnerable learners, highlighting the disparity in exclusion rates across different groups (2018, p.15). The report also identifies a number of issues relating to disparities in educational attainment.

Education services play a key role in delivering all of **Newport's Wellbeing Plan** objectives, but most relevant is our commitment to ensure that "people have skills and opportunities to find suitable work and contribute to sustainable economic growth". (NWBP Page 13). Our **Corporate Plan** also identifies that "integration, good education and employment opportunities will help maintain cohesive communities" (CP Page 42).

**Our consultation feedback** was supportive of this proposed draft objective, with 67.8% of respondents to our dedicated SEP online survey stating that they agreed with the Equality Objective.

Comments from this survey and others conducted as part of the consultation highlighted the importance of education generally, and a concern about the implication of diminishing school budgets. The responses also suggested that more need to be done to support potentially marginalised pupils in schools.

## LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

### **"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 authority 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.

**The EHRC review** identifies this area as an area that the public sector in Wales should focus on, stating that "Everyone should have the freedom to enjoy an adequate standard of living, with independence and security, and to be cared for and supported when necessary" (2018, p.46). The review goes on to highlight a number of key challenges within this area such as limited adapted housing provision, poor equalities monitoring data and an increased prevalence of poverty, which impacts on young people and disabled people most acutely.

This Equality Objective also relates to one of the 5 "Cross-Cutting Interventions" that appear in Newport's **Well-being Plan**. The plan highlights the importance of establishing a clear 'Newport Offer' that puts forward a complete package (of what?) that includes accessible housing (2018, p.14). This Equality Objective also relates to a number of other Newport City Council policy documents, particularly the council's 2017 **Independent Living Strategy** which looks to give people in Newport more choice and control over their living situation.

This Equality Objective also links to a number of key themes within Welsh Government's Equality and Inclusion work stream. Within their strategy on "[The Right to Independent Living](#)", Welsh Government stress that the public sector in Wales should have the "Social Model of Disability" at the heart of their approach to designing public services, and that all people should have the same **freedom, dignity, choice and control** at home, work, in education and in the community (2019, p.6).

**Our consultation feedback** was supportive of this proposed draft objective, with 77.4% of respondents to our dedicated SEP online survey stating that they agreed with the Equality Objective.

Comments from the survey highlighted general concerns around the prevalence of homelessness in Newport, particularly within the city centre, and an increased need for older people to receive support to access financial support and benefits. However it was clear in our focus groups that respondents were keen to ensure that "Living independently" did not mean living in isolation, and that being an active member of the community was very important.

## CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

**Question 1: Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 1 (Leadership, Governance and Involvement) that the authority has set out?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 2 (Customer Service and Access) that the authority has set out?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 3 (Representative Workforce) that the authority has set out?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 4: Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 4 (Community Cohesion) that the authority has set out?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 5: Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 5 (Learn Well) that the authority has set out?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 6: Do you agree with the proposed draft Equality Objective 6 (Independent Living) that the authority has set out?**

Yes ☐ No ☐



If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 7: Do you think there are any areas of inequality that are not addressed by draft Equality Objectives and that are of particular importance to you?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, what? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 8: We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposed Strategic Equality Objectives would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How might we build momentum and increase any positive impact of these effects, or where you think there might be negative effects, what can we do to mitigate them?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 9: We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn



# 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

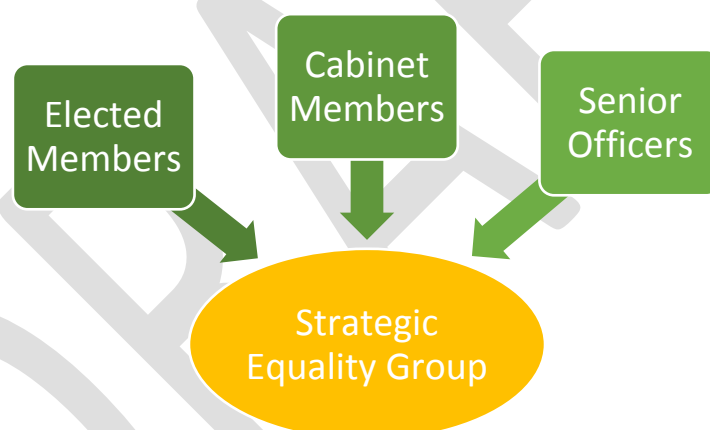
Under the Equality Act (2010), local authorities in Wales must publish a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) that sets out the objectives it wants to achieve over a four year period. These priorities are called “Equality Objectives”.

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 at least annually.



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<br>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'.

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 2

### CUSTOMER SERVICE AND ACCESS

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

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

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

## 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 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

Providing new properties by working in partnership with registered social landlords

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

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”**

<b>Outcome 1: People are empowered to live in their own accommodation for longer</b>
--

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.

<b>Outcome 2: People are empowered to play an active role in their local communities</b>
--

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

<b>Outcome 3: The city is responsive to the accommodation needs of victims of domestic abuse</b>
--

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

<b>Which protected characteristics will these outcomes most benefit?</b>
--

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>)

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn

# Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment (FEIA)

Version 3.6 May 2017

The purpose of this assessment is to provide balanced information to support decision making and to promote better ways of working in line with equalities (Equalities Act 2010), Welsh language promotion (The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), sustainable development (Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015), and the four parameters of debate about fairness identified by the Newport Fairness Commission (NFC Full Report to Council 2013).

**Completed by:** Joseph Lewis

**Role:** Equalities Officer

**Head of Service:** Rhys Cornwall

**Date:** [Click here to enter a date.](#)

**I confirm that the above Head of Service has agreed the content of this assessment**

**Yes / No**

**When you complete this FEIA, it is your responsibility to submit it to**  
[impact.assessments@newport.gov.uk](mailto:impact.assessments@newport.gov.uk)

## **1. Name and description of the policy / proposal being assessed. Outline the policy's purpose.**

Strategic Equality Plan: 2020 -2024

The purpose of this plan is to establish strategic equality objectives for Newport City Council that will extend over a four-year period.

## **2. Outline how you have/ will involve stakeholders who will be affected by the policy/proposal**

The authority engaged with the public in two ways, a number of online public consultation exercises coupled with a series of focus groups targeted at specific groups that were likely to have an interest in the development of the plan.

**Focus groups:** The authority mapped a number of groups across protected characteristics to ensure they had good qualitative representation in the development of the strategy. Over the period of consultation the authority engaged with the following groups:

- Newport Access Group
- Newport People First
- Newport BAME Forum
- Newport Fairness Commission
- Newport Youth Council
- Newport City Council Strategic Equality Group

In addition to this, a number of organisations with specific interests in equality and diversity (such as Welsh Government's Community Cohesion Partners) were also consulted with, however this was done over email. These organisations were:

- Woman's Equality Network
- Chwarae Teg

**Online consultation:** This was administered over a 5 week period and was promoted on social media, specifically the council's Facebook and Twitter pages. Through this consultation process, any member of the public could contribute their thoughts to the authority's equality objectives.

In total 33 people responded to our dedicated SEP online consultation.

**Bus WiFi Consultations:** The authority is able to ask a series of questions before giving access to members of the public to free WiFi. The length of time these surveys run for varies. The responses received on these surveys were used to identify meaningful key actions within the Strategic Equality Plan and validate its equality objectives.

SEP Bus Wifi: In total 2765 people responded to our bus Wi-Fi survey on the strategic equality plan. This survey focused on the leadership that council shows on equality issues and how inclusive the authority seems as an employer. These responses helped shape our Equality Objectives on Leadership, Governance and Involvement and Representative Workforce in particular.

LGBTQ+ Bus Wifi Survey: In total 2036 people responded to our bus Wi-Fi survey on LGBTQ+ issues in Newport. Of these 397 identified as LGBT. This helped shape our fifth Equality Objective "Learn Well".

Migration Bus Wifi survey: In total 851 people responded to our survey on migration within Newport. This helped inform our Community Cohesion Equality Objective in particular.

In total the council received 5652 responses to Bus Wifi surveys.

### **3. What information/evidence do you have on stakeholders? e.g. views, needs, service usage etc. Please include all the evidence you consider relevant.**

This plan has been developed using the following data sets:

- Ward Profiles
- HR ITrent Data
- Strategic Equality Plan Annual Reports: 2018-19
- Newport's Well-being plan
- Customer Data (Customer Relationship Management System)
- Consultation data listen in section 2.

This plan has also been developed using key documents:

- Is Wales Fairer: The State of Equality and Human Rights in 2018.
- Action on Disability: The Right to Independent Living Framework and action plan
- Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Objectives 2020 – 2024

## 4. Equalities and Welsh language impact

Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: 1. Promote equal opportunity 2. Promote community cohesion 3. Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with explicit benefits to both younger people and older people identified throughout the plan.</p> <p>The strategy recognises explicit benefits to this protected characteristic within <b>five of our six</b> equality objectives.</p> <p>Equality objective 5 and 6 are closely aligned with a number of the authority's strategic documents focussed on the protected characteristic of age. Namely the authority's "Education Learn Well Strategy", which focuses on younger people, and the authority's "Independent Living Strategy", which has a greater emphasis on older people.</p> <p>Further operational outcomes, in line with statutory obligations to uphold the general duty of the equality act, will be identified over the course of the strategy and developed within the operational action plans of each objective.</p>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with explicit benefits identified in <b>five of our six</b> equality objectives within the strategy.</p> <p>Benefits identified around the development of the authority's Customer Service provision including the commitment to greater partnership working with Newport Live in the area of disability sport is a particular highlight that will facilitate both greater opportunity to access council services and wider recreational activities within the city.</p> <p>Further operational outcomes, in line with statutory obligations to uphold the general duty of the equality act, will be identified over the course of the strategy and developed within the operational action plans of each objective.</p> <p>It has also been agreed that progress against the authority's School Accessibility Strategy will be reported on as part of this plan's annual report, ensuring congruence across equality related agendas and giving the Accessibility Strategy a strengthened</p>



Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote equal opportunity</li> <li>Promote community cohesion</li> <li>Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?</li> </ol>
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
				platform to highlight areas of achievement and required development.
<b>Gender reassignment/transgender</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with explicit benefits against this characteristic identified in <b>five of our six</b> equality objectives within the strategy.</p> <p>The commitments made within the strategy to develop a 'Transitioning at work' policy, to improve the monitoring of staff equality data and develop a corporately supported LGBTQ+ staff network are all tangible examples of how this strategy will help meet the duties laid out in the Equality Act.</p> <p>Further operational outcomes, in line with statutory obligations to uphold the general duty of the equality act, will be identified over the course of the strategy and developed within the operational action plans of each objective.</p>
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with benefits against this characteristic identified in <b>two of our six</b> equality objectives within the strategy.</p> <p>This strategy's commitment to improve the awareness of our staff of equality related issues through training, and improving the governance and engagement process that surrounds equality related issues, will positively impact how we are able to consider and address issues that relate to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>As is the case with all other protected characteristics, further operational outcomes, in line with statutory obligations to uphold the general duty of the equality act, will be identified over the course of the strategy and developed within the operational action plans of each objective.</p>
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with benefits against this characteristic identified in <b>two of our six</b> equality objectives within the strategy.</p> <p>This strategy's commitment to improve the awareness of our staff of equality related issues through training and improving the governance and engagement process that surrounds equality related issues, will impact positively on how we are able to</p>



Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote equal opportunity</li> <li>Promote community cohesion</li> <li>Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?</li> </ol>
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
				<p>consider and deal with issues that relate to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>However, as is the case with all other protected characteristics, further operational outcomes, in line with statutory obligations to uphold the general duty of the equality act, will be identified over the course of the strategy and developed within the operational action plans of each objective.</p>
<b>Race</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with benefits against this characteristic identified in <b>all</b> equality objectives within the strategy.</p> <p>This strategy's commitment to improve the awareness of our staff of equality related issues through training and improving the governance and engagement process that surrounds equality related issues, will improve how we are able to consider and deal with issues that relate to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Commitments made in Equality Objective 4 which relate improving community cohesion are also particularly relevant to this protected characteristic, including the development of an integration strategy for Newport, and work to address community tensions and hate speech.</p> <p>The commitments made within Equality Objective 3; Representative Workforce represent the most explicit commitments to improving workforce diversity to date, with commitments to extend the pay gap analysis that is already being taken on Gender to other characteristics and the move to a blind application process being a particular highlight.</p>
<b>Religion or Belief or non-belief</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with benefits against this characteristic identified in <b>four of our six</b> equality objectives within the strategy.</p> <p>This strategy's commitment to improve the awareness of our staff of equality related issues through training and improving the governance and engagement process that surrounds equality related issues, will improve how we are able to consider and deal with issues that relate to this protected characteristic.</p>


Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote equal opportunity</li> <li>Promote community cohesion</li> <li>Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?</li> </ol>
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
<b>Sex/ Gender Identity</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with benefits against this characteristic identified in <b>four of our six</b> equality objectives within the strategy.</p> <p>This strategy's commitment to improve the awareness of our staff of equality related issues through training and improving the governance and engagement process that surrounds equality related issues, will improve how we are able to consider and deal with issues that relate to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>In addition to this, specific actions relating to domestic abuse demonstrates the authority's ongoing commitment to addressing this issue.</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This plan will have a positive impact against this protected characteristic, with benefits against this characteristic identified in <b>five of our six</b> equality objectives within the strategy.</p> <p>As well as our commitment to improve the awareness of our staff of equality related issues through training and the improvements that we will make to our governance and engagement processes, this protected characteristic will also benefit from the development of action plans and commitments within wider objectives.</p> <p>For example, the commitment to work with the NCC Youth Council and local people to establish a safe space for LGBTQ+ people is a particular highlight. Objective 5 (Learn Well) also focusses specifically on vulnerable learners, which is a term inclusive of LGBTQ+ pupils who may be more vulnerable to issues including identity based bullying.</p>
<b>Welsh Language</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>It is not anticipated that this plan will have a significant impact, either positively or negatively. Welsh Language featured as an equality objective within the previous Strategic Equality Plan. However this plan pre-dated the authority's first 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy, as such, content which previously featured within the Strategic Equality Plan, now reports into the authority's Welsh Language Implementation Group and is featured within the Welsh Language Annual Report.</p>



## How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable development principle in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? Describe how.
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term needs</p>	<p>This strategy has been developed in line with the statutory cycles (every four years) established within the Equality Act 2010. However, the objectives and commitments made within this strategy represent a positive and ambitious step in improving corporate diversity and the responsiveness of our services to an ever increasingly diverse city demographic.</p> <p>The objectives and commitments themselves balance the short term demand of needing to better communicate what the authority is doing to improve equality and diversity, both corporately and in terms of service provision, with the delivery of medium to long-term financially sustainable services. This has been achieved through the integration of equality objectives with various service area priorities, exploiting opportunities to maximise impact where those priorities intersect most explicitly with the equality agenda.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together to deliver objectives</p>	<p>In developing both the objectives and the various commitments which feature within the Strategy, the Connected Communities Team worked closely with teams and service areas from across the authority, establishing areas where their work agendas intersected most explicitly with the equalities agenda. Using this as our starting point, we were able to coproduce objectives which struck a balance between being both achievable and ambitious. The Team also actively engaged equality networks and organisations, as well as people that share protected characteristics, to ensure objectives and actions are reflective of local need. Proposals to establish both internal and external reference groups will ensure the ongoing involvement of people that share protected characteristics in delivering objectives.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? Describe how.
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The authority engaged with the public in two ways, an online public consultation and a series of focus groups targeted at specific groups that were likely to have a specific interest in the development of the plan.</p> <p><b>Online consultation:</b> This was administered over a 5 week period and was promoted on social media, specifically the council's Facebook and Twitter pages. Through this consultation process, any member of the public could contribute their thoughts to the authority's equality objectives.</p> <p><b>Focus groups:</b> The authority mapped a number of groups across protected characteristics to ensure they had good qualitative representation in the development of the strategy. Over the period of consultation the authority engaged with the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Newport Access Group</li> <li>- Newport People First</li> <li>- Newport BAME Forum</li> <li>- Newport Fairness Commission</li> <li>- Newport Youth Council</li> <li>- Woman's Equality Network</li> <li>- Chwarae Teg</li> <li>- Newport City Council Strategic Equality Group</li> </ul> <p>In addition to this organisations with specific interests in equality and diversity (such as Welsh Government's Equality partners) will also be engaged via the Strategic Equality Group, the authority's working group which supports delivery of the current plan.</p>
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>This plan represents a positive step forward for the authority and an evolution of its previous Strategic Equality Plans. The plan has looked to establish tangible outcomes that will help demonstrate to the public that Newport City Council takes seriously the obligations it has under the Equality Act.</p> <p>It also takes steps, particularly within corporately focused objectives, to improve diversity within the organisation (bringing it more into line with the city's demographic), and within its governance processes (by improving the skills of elected members and reducing opportunity for unconscious bias).</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? Describe how.
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p><b><u>A Resilient Wales</u></b> This strategy can be seen to contribute to this objective through the alignment of Equality Objectives with Service Area and specific team objectives. This has helped ensure that the commitments and themes we are working towards are both practical and achievable within the strategy's life cycle but also ambitious.</p> <p><b><u>A More Equal Wales</u></b> This strategy has been developed in close conjunction with many of the wider equality priorities set by Welsh Government at a national level, and reflects many of the strategic priorities which feature in the EHRC's "Is Wales Fairer" review.</p> <p><b><u>A Wales of more cohesive communities</u></b> This strategy strongly reflects the priorities for delivery within the Welsh Government's Community Cohesion programme (most explicitly within Equality Objective 4: Community Cohesion).</p> <p><b><u>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language</u></b> This strategy makes a number of commitments make explicit the authority's commitment to being a leader in Equalities, and also makes clear that it will champion key dates in the equalities calendar.</p>

## 5 Will the proposal/policy have a disproportionate impact on a specific geographical area of Newport?

This strategy looks to improve council performance on equality related issues and the responsiveness of its services to the needs of diverse or marginalised groups. As the strategy's equality objectives are organised around the protected characteristics that are set out within the Equality Act, it is reasonable to conclude that this policy will be most impactful in areas which have the highest proportion of those characteristics, for example, within wards that have a higher BAME population like Pillgwenlly, Stow Hill and Victoria. However, the nature of any disproportionate geographical impact will be positive, given that people that share protected characteristics are likely to face disadvantage and/or structural inequalities which the plan seeks to address.

## 6 Taking this assessment as a whole, what could be done to mitigate any negative impacts of your policy and better contribute to positive impacts?

## 7 Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing

Following the publication of this strategy, we will establish and agree action plans with Equality Objective leads. These action plans will be reviewed quarterly to evaluate progress and identify actions.

Progress on actions will then be discussed at the council's Strategic Equality Group, a member led group which supports work in relation to Equality and Diversity related issues across the city.

In line with statutory requirements, this plan and all of its objectives will also be subject to a full annual report, subject to review by our Oversight, Scrutiny and Management Committee and presented at Cabinet and full Council for approval.

## **8 Involvement**

The strategy will be published online following its agreement by Cabinet and Council. Once agreed, the authority will publicise the publication of the strategy. Those groups who participated within the consultation exercise that informed the strategy will be contacted directly and informed of both the publication of the document and about the ways in which their comments informed the strategy.

## **9 Summary of Impact (for inclusion in any report)**

**Equality Act 2010 AND Welsh Language**

**Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**