

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment Summary

A full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment will be developed prior to, and inform, final decision making. The FEIA will be based on findings from the public consultation.

Equality Implications for Newport Centre

Key equality data

Considering Newport Centre user data gathered in 2019, the following summarises equality information that we know about people using current facilities:

A. Age

42% (Newport 20%) of Newport Centre Public Swimming Customers over the last 6 months have been from under 16s. 21% (Newport 18%) of customers over the same period of time were over the age of 65

B. Gender

Customer Swim data suggests that 56% of customers have been female, (50.8% Female) and 44% Male (49.2% Male). Newport Centre also host a number of swim classes that are predominantly aimed at women (e.g. aqua Zumba)

C. Disability

Data provided by Newport Live on this protected characteristic is limited to concession data only, and is therefore not Newport Centre specific, it should therefore be qualified with face-to-face consultation with appropriate stakeholders.

D. Race

The close proximity of Newport Centre to wards with the highest proportion of BAME people is important to consider (specifically Pillgwenlly, Stow Hill, Victoria, and St Julians).

While we have not seen ethnicity monitoring for all Newport Live customers at this time, concession data for all of Newport Live (not just Newport Centre), suggests that the number of concessions offered to customers who identify as BAME are over represented in the data, making up 12.5% of concessions, but only 10.6% of the population.

Customer data also suggests that the leisure centre is underutilised by BAME communities, despite Newport Centre's close proximity to areas with the highest proportion of BAME people (Pill, St Julian's, Victoria, Stow Hill)

Further Considerations

- It is clear that available demographic information is limited by current monitoring which only takes place when customers apply for a concession, and by the nature of the concession, which allows use of facilities across all Newport Live sites. Therefore robust consultation with Newport Centre users which monitors this information is recommended.
- The proposed changes will also have an impact on Newport Live staff at the current provision. An FEIA which considers the impact on these staff will also be required.

- The impact of COVID-19 has further exposed existing structural and social inequalities, some of which are relevant to this proposal, including poorer health and wellbeing levels amongst specific communities (disabled people, older people, LGBTQ+ people and BAME people). Opportunities should be taken throughout the development of this work to maximise the potential for inclusion of these groups.
- Similarly, people living in areas of socio-economic disadvantage – which are often close to the city centre – should be actively engaged throughout the process in order to consider opportunities for accessible provision

Wellbeing of Future Generations Implications

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 requires Local Authorities in Wales to meet a 'sustainable development' duty, based on 5 ways of working. With regards to the proposal for the redevelopment of Newport Centre the sustainable development implications are as follows:

A. Long Term and Prevention

The current Newport Centre is more than 35 years old and in need of significant investment. Its building and facilities are out-dated and do not meet modern standards, particularly in relation to accessibility for disabled people.

A modern city centre leisure facility would contribute hugely to regeneration supporting economic growth and job creation, balancing the city centre offer.

The use of the proposed brown-field site will help connect the city centre with the River-side area complementing existing developments like the University City Campus, the Riverfront Theatre and Friars Walk. The facility will also serve the growing visitor economy and increasing city centre residential units.

The proposed location is central and accessible by public transport and active travel route contributing to improved air quality and health benefits. A central location is potentially more accessible to people on lower incomes as they are more likely to be dependent on public transport links.

The investment in a high quality Council/Newport Live facility will sustain affordable access to leisure services for people on lower incomes, particularly in relation to swimming which in the private leisure market is often restricted to expensive membership packages. Newport Live facilities offer discounted membership packages for key equalities groups and people on low incomes.

Participation in sports and leisure has well documented to have preventative health benefits, and can improve physical and mental wellbeing.

B. Involvement

A communications and engagement plan has been developed to ensure local people are involved in developing the proposal. This will include engagement with current users of Newport Centre, residents from surrounding neighbourhoods and relevant equalities groups. The Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment will inform the engagement process and will be developed as the proposal progresses.

C. Integration

The proposal to develop a new city centre facility reflects an integrated mind-set – in terms of the potential health, social, economic and environmental wellbeing benefits such a development could deliver.

D. Collaboration

The Council delivers sports and leisure services in collaboration with Newport Live who as a leisure trust operate as a social enterprise with charitable status. A new city centre facility would play a key role in Newport's leisure market, and would provide services e.g. swimming, which are often not available through affordable private leisure providers.