Consultation:Draft Strategic Equality Objectives

# about this consultation

This consultation 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 draft Equality Objectives and outlines how we’ve identified them. It then asks a number of questions about how you (a member of the public) feel about 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 draft Equality Objectives

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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

## 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.

## 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 Equality Objectives**

This section explains how we have developed our draft Equality Objectives.

We have done this by looking at broad themes that have already been identified across the council’s existing strategic documents, this includes our Well-Being and Corporate Plans. These plans already identify some key areas of work based on existing research and an understanding of national and local need.

In addition, we have 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 have 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\* Indicator | NCC Well Being Plan | NCC Corporate Plan | Welsh Government |
| 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 Equalities 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 it 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 withinthe authority’s **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.

## 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.

**The authority’s** **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 establishing our Neighbourhood Hubs.

**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.

## 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](https://view.pagetiger.com/Newport-City-Demo-Theme/genderpaygap2019) 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, both in improving the quality of demographic data we collect about our staff, and how we use this to inform our work.

**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 to 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”.

## 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 the authority, 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’skey 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”.

## 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). The authority’s **Corporate Plan** also identifies that “integration, good education and employment opportunities will help maintain cohesive communities” (CP Page 42).

## 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 one where the public sector in Wales should focus, 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](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-09/action-on-disability-the-right-to-independent-living-framework-and-action-plan.pdf)”, 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).

# 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:**

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