

# THE BIRMINGHAM FAITH COVENANT

The Covenant is a joint commitment between faith communities and key statutory and voluntary sector organisations to a set of principles that guide engagement, aiming to improve collaborative partnerships and to promote open, practical working on all levels.

## OUR VISION STATEMENT:

*'Birmingham is a welcoming city, where everyone has an opportunity to contribute and benefit from its success. It is a safe and flourishing place to live, work and grow up in', Birmingham is a well-connected place where people from all backgrounds trust and support each other and can realise their full potential while exercising their rights and responsibilities'.*

## CONTEXT

**The Birmingham Faith Covenant ties into Birmingham Community Cohesion Strategy priorities of:**

understanding our city and communities, utilising a strategic partnership approach, Inclusive growth that benefits everyone, targeted and place-based activities, measuring and monitoring where we are making a difference and Identifying resources to trial innovations and the Everyone's Battle, Everyone's Business Strategy and associated action plan of work, facilitating the development and implementation of effective, evidence-based policy; specifically, Equality Objective 4:

*Deliver responsive services and customer care that is accessible and inclusive to individual's needs and respects faith, beliefs and cultural differences. Our policies and services must meet the changing needs of our diverse communities across all our neighbourhoods. We need to build a strong understanding of these needs, so that we target support and resources effectively. How we design and deliver our services needs to consider the faith and cultural identities of our diverse communities, and how these identities intersect across race, gender socioeconomic backgrounds, to deliver culturally informed services.*

## THE BIRMINGHAM FAITH COVENANT IS BUILT ON THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- Faith communities are free to practise their beliefs and religious observances without restriction, and to raise their voice in public debate and to be respected, within the framework of UK law.
- Public services and faith based social action should respect service users from all backgrounds, with no discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- The voice, participation and solutions that faith communities bring are important, and consultation should enable them to be brought to bear for the benefit of the wider community.

## THE BIRMINGHAM FAITH COVENANT ENTAILS THE FOLLOWING COMMITMENTS:

That key statutory and voluntary sector organisations welcome the involvement of faith groups and organisations that work with them in the delivery of services and social action on an equal basis with other groups. In addition, they commit to:

- Creation of a 'Faith Offer' with and for their organisation
- Building relationships and trust with faith based groups;
- Adopting appropriate strategies for the engagement of faith communities in decision making processes;

- Encouraging faith groups and their members to be involved in the reshaping and redesign of local services;
- Sharing training and learning opportunities between faith based communities and key statutory and voluntary sector organisations

That **Faith based organisations** commit to work actively with key statutory and voluntary sector organisations in the design and delivery of services to the public. In addition, they commit to:

- Seeking opportunities to bring people together to serve the community, particularly its poorest and most isolated members;
- Work in partnership to safeguard, support and protect children, families and the vulnerable;
- Serving equally all local residents seeking to access the public services they offer, irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Using resources provided for delivering a service wholly for that purpose, and not for any other;
- Ensuring excellence in child protection, health and safety, accountability and transparency;
- Responding to consultations where appropriate.
- Sharing training and learning opportunities between faith communities and key statutory and voluntary sector organisations

A future workplan for all signatory organisations and their representatives members of the **Birmingham Faith Covenant Partnership** will align with A bold, ambitious and confident vision for the city | Birmingham City Council and our Corporate Plan 2022 to 2026 that captures our strategic priorities and outcomes aimed at responding to the city's six grand challenges and opportunities; so it can best serve the city and citizens and achieve:

- A Prosperous Birmingham:** through a focus on inclusive economic growth, tackling unemployment, attracting inward investment, and maximising the benefits of the Commonwealth Games.
- An Inclusive Birmingham:** through a focus on tackling poverty and inequality, empowering citizens, promoting diversity and civic pride, and supporting and enabling all children and young people to thrive.
- A Safe Birmingham:** through a focus on making the city safer, safeguarding vulnerable citizens, increasing affordable housing, and tackling homelessness.
- A Healthy Birmingham:** through a focus on tackling health inequalities, encouraging physical activity and healthy living, supporting mental health, and improving outcomes for adults with disabilities and older people.
- A Green Birmingham:** through a focus on street cleanliness, improving air quality, continuing the route to net zero, and becoming a city of nature.

**BE BOLD  
BE BIRMINGHAM**

