

Lincolnshire County Council RESPONSE to

Equality Act 2010 The public sector Equality Duty: reducing bureaucracy Policy review paper 17 March 2011 Published by the Government Equalities Office

Lincolnshire County Council is generally supportive of the changes proposed in the policy review paper. We welcome the emphasis on making sure that equality considerations are appropriately factored into the policies and practices of public bodies and shifting the focus of public bodies onto delivering equality improvements for their staff and service users. We feel the changes proposed will help to reduce the risk of public bodies feeling compelled to do more than is needed in collecting and publishing data.

We feel that any requirements to publish information in meeting the aims of the general duty should be focussed on improvements in peoples lives (both the public and staff) and how public bodies are delivering equal treatment and equal opportunities for all rather than publishing data about the make up of council staff and customers which in our view still emphasises bureaucratic processes.

With regard to the new draft regulations:-

We agree with all of the changes:-

- ❖ Changing the wording from: “Publish *sufficient* information to demonstrate its compliance...” to “Publish information to demonstrate its compliance”.
- ❖ Amending the requirement from “Public authorities must prepare and publish objectives” to “Public authorities must prepare and publish *one or more* objectives”.
- ❖ Removing the requirement to publish evidence of the analysis a public body undertook to establish whether its policies and practices had furthered the aims set out in section 149(1) of the Act, and remove the requirement to publish details of the information it considered when it undertook the analysis.
- ❖ Remove the requirement to publish details of the engagement the public authority undertook with persons whom it considered to have an interest in furthering the aims set out in section 149(1) of the Act, and details of the engagement it undertook when developing its equality objectives.
- ❖ Remove the requirement to set out how progress will be measured as we will measure progress as part of our performance management arrangements.
- ❖ Remove the requirement for public authorities to consider such matters as may be specified by a Minister of the Crown in a written statement to Parliament.

8th April 2011