

EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Public Sector Equality Duty: reducing bureaucracy Policy Review

Cheshire Constabulary response to consultation

Proposed change to regulation	Cheshire Constabulary response
<p>Removal of requirements on public bodies to publish details of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- engagement they have undertaken when determining their policies- engagement they have undertaken when determining their equality objectives- equality analysis they have undertaken in reaching their policy decisions- information they considered when undertaking such analysis	<p>The Constabulary does not support this proposed amendment</p> <p>Whilst public bodies will still be held to account by the public it is difficult of determine how this scrutiny will take place as it more likely that a readily available document would be questioned as opposed to a question being submitted (presumably via a Freedom of Information request) to enquire as to the existence of such information.</p> <p>It would appear that the specific duties merely do away with the requirement to publish information rather than the requirement to carry out these activities it therefore seems a small step to the publication of information to explicitly demonstrate compliance and enable public scrutiny to take place.</p>

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<p>Change the wording from “Publish sufficient information to demonstrate its compliance...” to “Publish information to demonstrate its compliance...”</p>	<p>The Constabulary accepts this proposal</p>
<p>Amend the requirement from “Public authorities must prepare and publish objectives” to “Public authorities must prepare and publish one or more objectives”</p>	<p>The Constabulary accepts this proposal</p>
<p>Remove the requirement to set out how progress will be measured</p>	<p>The Constabulary does not support this proposed amendment.</p> <p>The removal of the requirement to set out how progress (against equality objective(s)) will be measured is at odds with the meaning of an objective.</p> <p>By definition an objective sets out a goal to be achieved and progress towards that goal, if progress is not measured how will achievement of the objective be recognised?</p> <p>The most commonly used model in relation to objective setting (SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timed) is widely acknowledged as identifying important steps to ensure the objective is achieved.</p> <p>Objectives may be set up to four years apart and many will</p>

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	<p>therefore be long term. The monitoring of progress towards the objective is critical, especially in terms of scrutiny as this will allow the public to question whether equality improvements are 'on target' even if the end result is still some way off.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>The Constabulary accepts this proposal</p>
<p>General comment/conclusion</p>	<p>It has been stated that the main themes of the new legislation are those of transparency, reduced bureaucracy and public scrutiny.</p> <p>The elimination of the requirement to publish information goes against all of these in that information (to be scrutinised) is not required to be made readily available.</p> <p>If the information is to be obtained by way of Freedom of Information requests then the bureaucracy in processing and responding to those requests will increase. However it will only increase if the public are of a mind to make such requests and if they are not, then the ideal of being held to account by the public will not be realised.</p>