

Equality and Diversity Policy.

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of Pershore Town Council (PTC), its Members and Staff to meeting the public sector Equality Duty (PSED) or 'general equality duty', which came into force on 5th April 2011.¹ This duty tries to ensure that public bodies like PTC consider 'how different people will be affected by their activities' with the aim of delivering 'policies and services appropriate and accessible to all'.² It does this by integrating 'consideration of the advancement of equality into the day-to-day business of bodies' like PTC so that they might 'tackle systemic discrimination and disadvantage affecting people with particular protected characteristics'.³

The 'protected characteristics' covered by the PSED are:⁴

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Under this duty, PTC is obliged to have 'due regard' to the three aims of the general equality duty.⁵ These demand that we:⁶

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act,

Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

¹ Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), *Equality Act 2010: Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty (England)*, (January 2013), p. 12.

² Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), *Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty What Do I Need to Know? A Quick Start Guide For Public Sector Organisations*, (June 2011), p. 3.

³ EHRC, *Technical Guidance*, p. 17.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 15-16.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 19. Defined as having 'consciously consider[ed] the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty'.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 12.

1. Policy statement.

Pershore Town Council will not deny representation, information, facilities, services and employment to anyone on grounds of their protected characteristics. In so doing, it will take a proportionate approach to assessing the impact it has on equality, and will act accordingly.⁷

2. Equality Commitments.

In discharging its responsibilities, the Council is committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons.
- Treating people respectfully.
- Opposing unlawful discrimination of all kinds, harassment and victimization.
- Fulfilling the Council's legal obligations under equality legislation and associated codes of practice.
- Taking lawful affirmative and positive action where appropriate.

3. Implementation.

The Town Clerk has responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and will ensure that:

- It is communicated to, Members of the Town Council, its staff, and is available to members of the public.
- Other persons or organisations will comply with this policy in their dealings with PTC.

4. Monitoring & Review.

PTC will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of the Council's equal opportunities policy.

The effectiveness of this equal opportunities policy will be reviewed as required, and action taken where necessary.

In addition to the Council's internal procedures, any person has the right to pursue complaints of discrimination under the Equality Act (2010).

⁷ Equality and Human Rights Commission, *The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: England (and Non-Devolved Public Authorities in Scotland and Wales)*, (July 2014), p. 17.