



## Neighbourhood Plans and Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011. Under the PSED all public authorities are required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three requirements listed above as part of the process of decision-making and/or carrying out the function. Consideration of equality issues must therefore be taken into account when a public body is exercising its functions and reaching decisions.

The PSED applies to public authorities, who are defined and listed in the Act. These include district councils and parish/town councils.

Complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty is a legal obligation for public authorities and assessing the likely impact of policies and practice on equality is an important aspect for both compliance and demonstrating 'due regard'. However, the PSED does not define a process for assessing impact that public authorities should follow.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) can be used to assess the likely impact of policies on particular groups of people as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

If you are a town or parish council considering preparing a Neighbourhood Plan please get in touch with the Planning Policy team at Hart District Council [neighbourhoodplanning@hart.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodplanning@hart.gov.uk) to discuss how best to comply this requirement.