**Equality in Procurement**

A public sector organisation’s procurement strategy and plan should include equality outcomes that will produce practical improvements in the life chances of people who experience discrimination and disadvantage and may help meet the organisation’s corporate objectives.

These equality outcomes will also support the organisations in achieving other community benefits and in fulfilling it’s Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010. While the organisation remains responsible for the PSED, the procurement process will ensure that organisations contracted to provide public services on its behalf also comply with the duty in relation to those services.

The PSED requires the organisation (and those providing services on its behalf) to have due regardto the need to:

* Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
* Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic: having due regard to the need to:
* Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
* Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people, and
* Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
* Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The organisation should consider the equality outcomes and PSED throughout the procurement cycle:

* Relevance and proportionality at every stage.
* Procurement Strategy plus policies and procedures that support the organisation’s equality duties.
* Building a business case for including equality requirements in procurement.
* Equality criteria in contract specifications and tender evaluation (including any positive action or reasonable adjustment requirements, delivery workforce requirements, monitoring and improving contract equality performance).
* Equality clauses in contract terms and conditions.
* Advertising and selection to promote diversity of tenderers.
* Assessing contractors’ technical capacity and ability through PQQs and supporting evidence.
* Equality components of Invitation To Tender (ITT). And their evaluation.
* Monitoring equality contract conditions and remedial action.
* Using lessons learned to improve equality outcomes in future procurement.

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