

Meeting:	Cabinet	Date:	10 February 2021
Subject:	Equality and Diversity Update		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Liam Moran, Policy and Development Officer		
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Appendices:	1. Equalities Events Calendar 2020		
	2. Gloucester City Council's Statement on Black Lives Matter		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the work the council officers have undertaken regarding equalities, as well as the work the Equality and Diversity Working Group has completed this year.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that the work undertaken by council officers, the Equality and Diversity Working Group, elected members and council partners regarding equalities be welcomed.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Equality and Diversity has been a major focus throughout 2020, from the inequalities exacerbated by COVID-19 through its impacts on BAME communities, to the tragic extrajudicial killing of George Floyd. 2020 has shone a light on the inequalities that still exist within our society, and Gloucester City Council has taken many steps to address these inequalities.

3.2 Gloucester's Response to the Black Lives Matter Movement

- 3.3 Stemming from a council motion, Gloucester City Council took a range of action in response to the killing of George Floyd.

- 3.3.1 **Motion:** Set up a Commission with partner organisations in the City including the Police & Crime Commissioner, County Council, NHS, the Civic Trust and representatives of BAME community to review race relations in Gloucester with a view to producing recommendations to improve the lives of, and enhance opportunities for, BAME communities within the City.

Update: A commission to review race relations within Gloucester has been established and the chair of the independent commission, Rupert Walters, has

been announced. There are 17 commissioners from a range of backgrounds, including community representatives from Gloucester, and those from the fields of education, business, health and criminal justice to name a few. In order to ensure broad community representation, the Commissioners from communities across Gloucester were drawn from an initial expression of interest put out by the Council. The inaugural meeting of all commissioners was held on December 3rd 2020, and saw the Commission discussing the scope and focus of an initial 12-month work programme. Commissioners agreed to begin by collecting quantitative and qualitative evidence, including lived experiences, from partner organisations in the City. This evidence will be reviewed at the Commission's second meeting in mid-February 2021, at which the Commission will determine areas to focus on in greater depth. Potential areas of focus are likely to include organisational leadership/ workforce, education, health outcomes, and criminal justice.

3.3.2 Motion: Undertake a review of all monuments, statues and plaques including Bakers Quay within the City connected with the slave trade/ plantation ownership and for Cabinet and Scrutiny to consider its recommendations, taking advice from the Commission, and to review the way in which the contribution of minority communities is presented as part of the City's history, including at the Museum of Gloucester.

Update: The council has been approaching partner organisations and members of the public for assistance with the project. We've had a good response and held our first steering group meeting the week beginning December 7th, 2020. The steering group is made up of a local historian and representatives of the Gloucestershire Archives, the University of Gloucestershire, the Canal and Rivers Trust, the Cathedral and the City Council. We also have a number of local volunteers lined up and hope to be including students from the University in the research. We are still reaching out to the wider community for more volunteers and steering group members. Most recently we spoke on GFM and we hope to do so again soon. Whilst we plan to start research in earnest in January, we have already undertaken some research and have identified some heritage assets of note. The main risk associated with delivering the project on time at the moment are the restrictions associated with COVID – which are limiting our access to various archives. Despite this progress appears to be positive.

3.4 Beyond the council motion, Gloucester City Council has undertaken work to create a dedicated webpage displaying the City Council's response to the Black Lives Matter movement, including making the City Council's statement on Black Lives Matter (found in Appendix 2), and correspondence between the American Ambassador and the Council publicly available and easily accessible. The webpage can be found at: <https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/about-the-council/equality-and-cohesion/black-lives-matter/>

4.0 Equality and Diversity Working Group

4.1 The Equality and Diversity Working Group have met four times throughout 2020, undertaking and completing a large amount of work. The following are some highlights of the work undertaken.

4.1.1 *The McGregor-Smith Review*

An internal analysis and the development of a subsequent action plan surrounding Race in the Workplace: The McGregor-Smith Review, has been initiated with support from Senior Council Directors and Human Resources staff, with an Action Plan being presented to SMT early in the New Year. Actions and recommendations stemming from the review include improving the Council's recruitment practices and ensuring that senior members of staff have undergone cultural competency and personal bias training.

4.1.2 *EIA Re-launch*

Equality Impact Assessments have been re-launched and built into the policy review schedule, ensuring that applicable policies and strategies have EIAs completed. New guidance and template documents have been created to ensure consistency across the council. Completed EIAs are now loaded onto the Gloucester Intranet and stored in a "reference library" for other Heads of Service and Officers to read and review, to help guide them in the completion of their own EIAs. Policies or strategies identified within the Policy Framework as per the constitution will be reviewed as a group.

4.1.3 *Self-Assessment Against the Equality Framework for Local Government*

A self-assessment exercise will be undertaken in the Spring of 2021 to measure Gloucester City Council's action against the Equality Framework for Local Government, as set out by the Local Government Association. This self-assessment will be conducted through a survey completed by members of the Equality and Diversity Working Group and will help to form the basis of the 2021-2022 Action Plan for the group. Notable achievements from the 2019-2020 action plan include reducing the gender pay gap to 5.4% in 2019, increasing the number of staff attending the City and County Council Staff Networks, and making available trauma informed training as part of the GMT training programme.

4.1.4 *Re-launch and formalisation of the Equalities Events Calendar*

In the Autumn of 2020, a subgroup of members from the Equality and Diversity Working Group re-launched the Equalities Events Calendar. This calendar sets out the work undertaken by the Council to raise awareness of specific equalities events and initiatives within the community that the Council has signed up to. The calendar has been re-organised, and events split into three campaign levels. Despite the difficulties posed by the pandemic, successful events undertaken this year have included Gloucester's virtual Black History Month, Gloucestershire Pride, and Srebrenica Memorial Week, which saw the Mayor attend in person to lead a minute's silence. Appendix 1 features the full calendar of events for 2020, and the Council is planning to continue to support these events in 2021/22.

5.0 Social Value Considerations

5.1 None directly arising from this report

6.0 Environmental Implications

6.1 None directly arising from this report

7.0 Alternative Options Considered

7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty is a statutory duty.

8.0 Reasons for Recommendations

8.1 The recommendations should be resolved, and the work completed by council officers as well as the Equality and Diversity Working group be welcomed, in order to provide an update on equalities work within the council.

9.0 Future Work and Conclusions

9.1 A self-assessment exercise will be undertaken in the spring to measure Gloucester City Council's action against the Equality Framework for Local Government, as set out by the Local Government Association. This self-assessment will help form the basis of the 2021-2022 Action Plan for the group.

10.0 Financial Implications

10.1 None directly arising from this report

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.)

11.0 Legal Implications

11.1 None directly arising from this report

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation of this report.)

12.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

12.1 None directly arising from this report

13.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

13.1 None directly arising from this report

14.0 Community Safety Implications

14.1 None directly arising from this report

15.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

15.1 None directly arising from this report

Background Documents: None