

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Overview & Scrutiny Cabinet Council	Date:	January 10th, 2022 January 12th, 2022 January 27th, 2022
Subject:	Gloucester City Commission to Review Race Relations Final Report		
Report Of:	Leader of the Council		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
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Appendices:	1. Gloucester City Commission to Review Race Relations Final Report		

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report presents the work and findings of the Gloucester City Commission to Review Race Relations as set out in their final report, attached in Appendix 1. The commission reports back to Cabinet and Council with a set of recommendations that attempt to improve the lives of, and enhance opportunities for, Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities within the City.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the information contained in the report and make any recommendations to the Cabinet.
- 2.2 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** to
- (1) Note the breadth of work of the Commission and to thank Commissioners, partners, members of the community and individuals who contributed to the work.
 - (2) Take a lead role, working collaboratively with other public sector organisations, in implementing the four Calls to Action that the Commission considers must be delivered at a Gloucestershire system level, that is:
 - a. The establishment of an independent, permanent, funded and high-profile legacy institution for Gloucestershire

- b. Setting out a Gloucestershire wide vision for workforce equality in the public sector; putting in place measures to monitor workforce equality (including pay), and deliver some workforce equality initiatives at a county-wide level, most importantly a Gloucestershire 'stepping up' programme for aspiring leaders from racially minoritized backgrounds.
- c. Commit to putting in place measures and driving the required changes in culture and mindsets to ensure the collection and use of comprehensive and high-quality ethnicity data in planning and delivering public sector services, including commissioned services.
- d. Acknowledge the existence of racism, prejudice and micro-aggressions in Gloucester and Gloucestershire, and commit to and step up individual and organisational leadership to tackle these with confidence and clarity.

(3) Issue a publicly available progress report on the implementation of findings and calls to action resulting from the work of the Commission by 31 January 2023.

2.3 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** to endorse the report of the Gloucester City Commission to Review Race Relations and note the recommendations agreed by Cabinet.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 The murder of George Floyd on May 25th, 2020 by Minneapolis Police sparked international indignation and shone the light on the continued racism directed toward Black individuals across the United States of America. The cause and aftermath of George Floyd's death resulted in many communities not only in the United States of America but across the world, to reflect, gather and protest for the ending of systemic racism in our societies, but also to ensure justice is received for George Floyd and his family.

Gloucester City Council responded to the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement by unanimously voting through a council motion that had three distinct and separate actions for Council officers and staff to undertake. They were:

1. *Write to the American Ambassador on behalf of the City setting out our deep concerns and condemnation at the killing of George Floyd.*
2. *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.*
3. *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 further resolves 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.'

In response to part two of the motion, the Council established the Gloucester City Commission to Review Race Relations in November 2020, as an independent Commission chaired by Rupert Walters and supported by officers from Gloucester City Council. Commissioners were selected from key statutory organisations, the Voluntary and Commission Sector, Civil Society and more widely from Gloucester's communities. The included cross-party representation from Gloucester City Council.

The Commission delivered a work programme consisting of five 'Deep Dives' into Criminal Justice, Education, Workforce and Health. Each of these Deep Dive sessions explored a particular topic in depth, with input from partners and lived experiences. The Commission also launched a 'Call for Evidence', inviting residents or visitors to make representations on the state of race relations in Gloucester.

The report at Appendix 1 provides a detailed account of the work of the Commission. It reaches seven conclusions:

- (1) There are race inequalities in all areas we have examined; from the significantly higher prevalence of type 2 diabetes in people from racially minoritized groups, to Black children having poorer attainment at school. This is not new, and it has been acknowledged in numerous reports, including the recent report by the Director of Public Health in collaboration with Gloucestershire County Council's Black Workers Network.
- (2) Many people from racially minoritized groups experience racism, hatred or micro-aggressions every day. We consider this unacceptable in a modern open society, and something that must change. This should not happen in a City that claims to have good race relations. In our view, an absence of conflict does not imply that race relations are good, and the perception of the quality of race relations will be very different depending on the individual's ethnic background.
- (3) Public servants in Gloucester and Gloucestershire are aware of existing race inequalities and many work with positive intent to make changes. All of our deep dives were run in a collaborative way with buy in, and often a real desire amongst public sector Commissioners and senior managers to engage with the Commission in order to get insights, endorsement and challenges to the work they are doing. This is a good basis from which to achieve sustained change. However, urgency and sustained action is required to make the necessary changes, and these need to be designed

with and by those who experience racism and discrimination. This will require public servants to 'let go', think and work outside their comfort zones, make time for wide and purposeful engagement as opposed to one-off consultation, and be committed to genuine change. As Albert Einstein said: *'we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them'*.

- (4) The absence of a properly resourced, Black-led infrastructure institution is a significant gap. There is no single structure in Gloucestershire which has a mandate and is resourced to provide advocacy, knowledge, expertise and experience to reduce race inequality, who challenges those in power to fulfill their commitments, and provides a voice to those who experience discrimination. This is a big deficit which is recognised by racially minoritized people and communities, but also many Commissioners in the public sector. Several of our 'Deep Dives' highlighted the challenges Commissioners are facing to engage more comprehensively and systematically, particularly with the Black African and Eastern European communities, and younger people who are racially minoritized.
- (5) Having comprehensive and good quality ethnicity data in all public services (directly provided and commissioned) as well as workforce data, is fundamental to reducing race inequality. Without ethnicity data recording we don't understand current levels of inequality and what we need to do to change. We consider this to be a crucial building block in addressing structural racism in a systematic manner and fully support the conclusions and recommendations of the recent report of the Director of Public Health.
- (6) Ensuring people from racially minoritized communities are heard requires us to recognize the importance of putting in place the necessary infrastructure. The availability and quality of translation and interpretation services came up in several of our 'deep dives' and featured highly in the responses to the Call for Evidence. This has an important cultural dimension in appreciating and celebrating the diversity of languages that are spoken in Gloucester and Gloucestershire, and acknowledging the skills and competencies of people who are multi-lingual.
- (7) We need to showcase and celebrate the incredible diversity of talent, skills, experiences and passions of racially minoritized people in Gloucester and Gloucestershire. Engaging with cultural difference with curiosity, interest and kindness will go some way in combatting the fear of the unknown, lack of understanding and ignorance about racially minoritized people that leads to suspicion, rejection, and hatred. We acknowledge and welcome the efforts that exist, yet more must be done, and we consider that the media in Gloucestershire has a bigger role to play in promoting good race relations.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

- 4.1 The report and its conclusions set out a compelling case for change at various levels. Ensuring that all residents in Gloucestershire, regardless of race, are able to harness their skills, assets and passions so they can contribute to the economy and communities in Gloucestershire, will make the county more skilled, prosperous and a better place to live. Ensuring that public services, particularly in health, are culturally appropriate and meet the circumstances of diverse communities will result in better prevention, better health and wellbeing and the reduction of health inequalities that put pressure on a system that is already strained. Above all we have not only a legislative but also a moral obligation to tackle race inequality and promote good race relations for the benefits of all.

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 None arising from this report.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 No alternative options were considered.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 The City Council have shown leadership in establishing a Race Commission for the City. The report calls for this leadership to continue so that actions are taken to address the race inequality identified by the Commission in its work. It has been acknowledged that many of the areas the Commission considered lie outside the responsibilities of the City Council. Nonetheless they affect the lives of Gloucester residents and the City Council, in its role as leader of place and communities, has an opportunity and duty to influence partner organisations to implement the recommendations in the report.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 8.1 The work of the Commission has concluded.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 The structure, staffing and financial implications of setting up the proposed Gloucestershire wide legacy institution will need to be considered by all of the proposed partners to identify what elements are already covered by similar initiatives across the County. A partnership or similar structure will then be discussed with the finance and legal teams of the partners to ensure that it has a sustainable financial base and legal structure.

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

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 The report concludes that race inequalities exist in all areas the Commission reviewed and that many people from racially minoritized groups in Gloucester experience racism, hatred or micro-aggressions every day. The greatest risk is a lack of engagement or action from the Gloucestershire public sector system. This would perpetuate an existing sense of disengagement and disillusionment from racially marginalized communities, exacerbating existing inequalities with implications on well-being, health and community cohesion. The opportunities are to commit to tackling race inequalities through investment in much needed infrastructure, working collaboratively across the public sector and achieving economies of scale and scope in the process.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

12.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

13.0 Community Safety Implications

13.1 None arising from this report.

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

14.1 None arising from this report

Background Documents:

Report of the Gloucester City Commission to Review Race Relations