

# Gloucester City Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>9 February 2022</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>The Gloucester City Monuments Review</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Leader of the Council</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Andrew Armstrong, City Archaeologist</b>		
	<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Andrew.armstrong@gloucester.gov.uk">Andrew.armstrong@gloucester.gov.uk</a>	<b>Tel: 39-6346</b>
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>A. Summary of Report Recommendations</b>		
	<b>B. Gloucester City Monuments Review Main Report</b>		
	<b>C. Approach to addressing Recommendations</b>		
	<b>D. Overview and Scrutiny Committee 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To agree the recommendations of the monuments review as summarised in Appendix A.
- 1.2 To provide the results of the monuments review (Appendix B).
- 1.3 To explain the rationale behind the recommendations outlined in Appendix A.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

(1) approval be given to implement the recommendations outlined in Appendix A.

### 3.0 Background and Key Issues

#### 3.1 The Gloucester City Monuments Review

- 3.1.1 Following a council motion passed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2020 it was resolved to:

*'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.'*

3.1.2 This was the third of three resolutions resulting from the motion. This cabinet briefing document is concerned with the report and recommendations produced in response to that resolution. The recommendations outlined in Appendix A have been informed by consultation with the Gloucester City Commission to Review Race Relations.

### **3.2 Methodology**

3.2.1 This was a partnership project co-ordinated by the City Council with support from stakeholders including Gloucestershire Archives, the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum, Gloucester Cathedral, the Canal and Rivers Trust, and the University of Gloucestershire. Much of the research for the project was undertaken by volunteers – for further details see section 8 of the main report (Appendix B).

### **3.3 Consultation**

3.3.1 The following consultations were undertaken as part of this project:

- The city council wrote to a number of stakeholder groups at the start of the project requesting support and feedback.
- The City Archaeologist attended a number of meetings with stakeholder groups during the project – including, for example, the Black Workers Network.
- There was a press release and local radio interviews about the project.
- The project included the creation of a short film commissioned by the University of Gloucestershire about the project shown at the Gloucester History Festival and soon to be available online.
- The project included the production of a series of short videos about some of the findings of the project with an invitation to the general public to comment.
- The Gloucester City Commission to Review Race Relations was consulted on the findings of the draft report – the recommendations of the commission have been integrated into the final report.

### **3.4 Results of the review**

3.4.1 The review identified at least 43 ‘heritage assets’ in Gloucester District linked to the slavery economy. These included monuments, buildings, place names and artefacts in the museum. (It should be noted at the time of writing that a review of artefacts held by the museum is ongoing so this figure will increase). These varied in terms of their connection to the slavery economy, the evidence available, their prominence and their effect as a memorial.

### **3.5 Rationale for specific recommendations**

3.5.1 The main report (Appendix B) has included options for each of the heritage assets identified. However, it was felt by the project steering group and the commission that many of the heritage assets identified did not warrant any action. Typical reasons for this would be:

- **The heritage asset relates to a national figure with no direct link to Gloucester – whose legacy is better addressed at more substantive**

**monuments elsewhere.** An example of this would be Thomas Picton, there is a Picton House in Gloucester, but his legacy is better addressed at more substantial sites linked to him elsewhere.

- **The heritage asset does little to glorify or commemorate an individual:** For example, Maitland House does little to glorify the individual concerned.
- **The link between the individual and the heritage asset is not readily apparent:** For example, Beaufort Buildings are not obviously linked to John Gladstone.
- **There is insufficient information to confirm a link between an individual and the slavery economy:** For example, Sir Thomas Rich was an investor in the East India Company – but it's unclear if he was involved in the slavery economy at that time.

3.5.2 The decision was made to focus on those heritage assets that:

- Have a direct link to Gloucester, its history and development; and
- Clearly commemorate or celebrate an individual with links to the slavery economy.

3.5.3 The specific recommendations in the report are therefore concerned with heritage assets linked to three specific individuals Samuel Baker, Thomas Phillpotts and George Whitefield. The remaining heritage assets are located within the Cathedral - which is the subject of a separate 'general recommendation'.

3.5.6 It should also be noted that many of the heritage assets identified are not in the ownership of the council but are owned or curated by partner stakeholders or private individuals – the recommendations have been worded with this in mind.

### **3.6 Rationale for general recommendations**

The general recommendations are outlined in section 7 of the main report (Appendix B). They are intended to address particular issues identified during the course of the project, for example, regarding future street names or heritage assets curated by a particular body or organisation. The approach in general has been about contextualising the city's heritage to include discussion/consideration of the slavery economy. So, in general, rather than removing a heritage asset, we move towards a place where its full history and context are discussed, understood and acknowledged. There's also an important focus on public consultation where a change is considered.

## **4.0 Social Value Considerations**

4.1 The following social value considerations have been identified:

- There is an opportunity as part of this project to better represent, commemorate and acknowledge the contribution of Gloucester's Black community.
- In terms of community need – it is important that changes to the management or presentation of a heritage asset are subject to a programme of public

engagement or consultation that includes the whole community and is undertaken in an inclusive and positive manner. The aim being ultimately to reaffirm shared values rather than cause division.

- There is an opportunity as a result of this project to educate and inform the people of Gloucester about the role and impact of historic slavery. Done well such a project could help promote empathy and understanding.

## **5.0 Environmental Implications**

5.1 No particular environmental implications have been identified.

## **6.0 Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 The main report lists a host of alternative approaches to the heritage assets identified. These range from 'no-action' through to the removal of some of those assets. These are outlined in section 9 of the report (Appendix B). It is felt that the approach outlined in Appendix A represents a reasonable approach that addresses Gloucester's historic links to the slavery economy, for the reasons outlined in section 3.4.

## **7.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 The approach proposed is in accordance with all the available policies and guidance and has been agreed with the commission. The approach focuses on Gloucester's history and seeks to address the city's particular links to the slavery economy. The approach is proportionate and achievable – with stakeholder support.

## **8.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

8.1 Should these recommendations be approved the following actions would need to be undertaken and new behaviours adopted:

Behaviours:

1. Consult publicly on any changes to the management or presentation of a heritage asset.
2. Review the background of new street names and monuments to avoid commemorating or memorialising a link to the slavery economy.
3. Seek opportunities to celebrate Gloucester's multicultural history.

Actions:

1. Consider undertaking a review of Gloucester's colonial or imperial legacies.
2. Initiate an education project to develop a specific education resource that can be used locally.
3. Create a permanent display at the museum of Gloucester from 2023.
4. Write to the Cathedral authorities encouraging them to identify and explain contested heritage assets within the cathedral.
5. Write to the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum welcoming their plans with regard to discussing historic slavery in that museum's displays.
6. Contact the Civic Trust to discuss updating public tours and blue plaques to include reference to the slavery economy where appropriate.

7. Engage with the owners of Baker's Quay to discuss options for the repurposing of the public space.
8. Develop new interpretation about Phillpotts Warehouse.
9. Contact the owners of the United Reformed Church to discuss interpretation/contextualisation.
10. Engage with Discover DeCrypt to produce educational resources and on-site displays that provide a full context to George Whitefield's life and works.
11. Consult on the renaming of the two existing Whitefield Street names.
12. Discuss the renaming of Whitefield House with the owners.
13. Identify budget and staff resource to progress these actions.

## **9.0 Financial Implications**

- 9.1 Some of the works listed above will require a budget – other works could be externally funded or joint funded. There will also be a requirement for officer time. The following suggested approach with regard to the recommendations is outlined in Appendix C:
- 9.2 It is estimated that a total budget of £30,000 to £40,000 would be needed to implement these recommendations over a three-year time scale. This assumes successful funding bids and the provision of officer time.

## **10.0 Legal Implications**

- 10.1 The majority of the sites or assets considered in this report are not in council ownership, the council is very much in the position of trying to provide leadership and support to partners.

## **11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

- 11.1 Risk 1 – Partners choose not to engage: a major risk is that the various owners or stakeholders will simply choose not to engage with the council regarding these issues.
- 11.2 Risk 2 – Public backlash: It is possible that some of the actions may be unpopular with a vocal element of the public. A possible example could be renaming street names.

## **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 The recommendations of the monuments review do not include the removal of any statues in the city centre nor any really high profile changes. The approach is more about retaining history and contextualising – which is unlikely to be controversial with the majority of people.

## **14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications**

- 14.1 The undertaking of a review of Gloucester's colonial or imperial legacies in-house at this point is not sustainable. Heritage team staff are already fully committed and the city council needs time following the completion of the monuments review to catch up on core duties.
- 14.2 Joint projects with partners and stakeholders will require staff time from the heritage team, possibly from planning and others. It's difficult at this stage to identify how much. Consideration will need to be given to the amount of resource required in progressing the actions and recommendations and from which department this should come from.

**15.0 Background Documents: None**