

Full Council

10th November 2020



Report of: Professor Olivette Otele, Chair of Bristol Commission on Race Equality (CoRE)

Title: CoRE Annual Report 2019-2020

Ward: City-wide

Presenting Report: Sado Jirde, Director of Black South West Network (BSWN),
CoRE Secretariat

Recommendation

For Bristol City Council to:

- Note report and contribution to policy locally and nationally
- Continue supporting implementation of the strategic work and recommendations of the Commission on Race Equality
- Support the work of CoRE

Summary

This Annual Report of CoRE summarises the activities of the Commission in two parts:

- Part 1 – Activities undertaken between November 2019 and June 2020, before reset of CoRE
- Part 2 – Activities undertaken between July and October 2020 by CoRE Independent Chair and BSWN, the Secretariat

The significant issues in the report are:

The report will provide progress against milestones within Education and Criminal Justice work streams, and its objective is to tackle systemic racial inequality, and outline CoRE's direction for 2020/21.





1. Relevant action plans, policy and strategy

- One City Plan
- Bristol City Council Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth Strategy
- House of Commons Women's & Equalities Committee: Coronavirus (Covid-19-) Inquiry
- Bristol City Council's Equality and Inclusion Policy and Strategy 2018-2023
- Bristol City Council's 'Advancing Equality and Inclusion' new actions 2020/21
- Transforming Race and Equality at Bristol City Council (BCC) - conclusions and recommendations June 2020

2. Consultation

Internal: This report was informed in consultation with Deputy Mayor Asher Craig, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities & Public Health Communities and Public Health BCC, Hilda Bertie, Head of Equality and Inclusion BCC and Cherene Whitfield, Equalities Officer BCC. The secretariat, Black South West Network (BSWN), has further contributed to Planning and direction for 2020/21.

External: Participants and contributors to the work of CoRE include local strategic groups and bodies such as the Race in Education Group (REEG), Bristol One Curriculum Project, and the Local Lammy Review Group. Several recommendations for future activities of the Commission, as part of this report, were conducted during a series of 5 cross-sectoral community consultations.

3. Context

Part 1: Activities undertaken between November 2019 and June 2020, before reset of CoRE format

CoRE has been set up by Bristol's Mayor, Marvin Rees, in response to the Bristol Manifesto for Race Equality, to look at race and ethnicity discrimination in Bristol. Bristol has a long-standing history of challenging inequality and this is reflected in the core principles developed in memory of Batook Pandya, as a precursor to Bristol's Manifesto for promoting race equality. The Commission's focus included to:

- work with Bristol's communities and organisations to improve and prioritise race equality to achieve an inclusive, cohesive, thriving and representative city
- guide Bristol's policy and strategy developers to make sure race equality is included in all of their work
- hold public, private and voluntary sectors to account in relation to race equality to uphold the Bristol Race Equality manifesto
- report on progress on race equality and the general impact of inequality and discrimination on the Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities of Bristol

This work was undertaken by a dedicated cohort of Commissioners who included:

- Sandra Gordon
- Vernon Dowdy
- Sandra Meadows (MBE)
- Maya Mate-Kole
- Cllr Asher Craig
- Ann DeGraft-Johnson
- Esther Deans (MBE)
- Sumita Hutchinson



- Alex Raikes (MBE)

CoRE would like to thank the Commissioners for their dedicated work during their tenure.

Update on activities since last report

Criminal Justice work stream - Lead: Maya Kate Cole

Objective 1: To see an increase in the diversity and race equality within the Criminal Justice System workforce

- Avon & Somerset Lammy Review subgroup includes a focus on BAME representation amongst the workforce and experiences of the criminal justice system which CoRE is a member of.

Objective 2: To raise awareness and understanding of rights and responsibilities relating to Stop and Search within the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic **communities**

- A Rights and Responsibilities Workshop was delivered to community members as part of the **'It Takes A Village'** event, there is ongoing liaison with Avon & Somerset Constabulary with a plan to deliver further training to local community practitioners.
- In addition to this we have ongoing consultation with Avon & Somerset Constabulary relating to their community engagement strategy and building relationships with Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities and young people, including understanding their rights. We continue to signpost community members and practitioners to specialist support and national training such as London's Legal Life Line webinars and app.

Objective 3: To encourage and support community action to address serious youth violence in addition to delivering community workshops raising awareness and equipping family members to support young people affected by youth crime.

- In Dec 2019 we delivered the final **'It Takes A Village'** event of the year, providing Black and dual heritage young people, families and community members the opportunity to meet a range of specialist support services for young people affected by serious violence, street conflict and offending locally. We also presented support available for parent and carers and hosted a national youth violence expert to deliver training to equip family members with an enhanced understanding of serious youth violence, the causes and what action can be taken. The event was also featured in the [Bristol Evening Post](#).
- The event included an opportunity for attendees to provide feedback for Safer Options Serious Violence Strategy and to learn about the work undertaken by Avon and Somerset Constabulary and The Lammy review subgroup.
- Parenting groups had already been established independent of CoRE, and this support was delivered through use of the train the trainer model with parents and carers. We continue to work with Safer Options to input learning from our previous events and operational planning.

Objective 4: To engage with Black, Asian Minority Ethnic young people regarding the criminal justice system, gathering their views to inform future areas of work for the task group and encouraging a youth led response and action.



- A small focused **'It Takes a Village'** workshop was facilitated for Black, Asian Minority Ethnic young people involved in street conflict and youth offending in February.
- Young people shared their perspective as well as solutions to these issues which we have shared with Safer Options and ["The Call In"](#) to inform service delivery.
- We were also able to facilitate a consultation with young people regarding Safer Options Serious Violence Strategy, whereby they reviewed the draft action plan and learning in order to provide feedback and a youth perspective.
- This work stream directly contributes toward the [Lammy Review Bristol priorities](#).

Objective 5: To ensure Black, Asian Minority Ethnic representation within strategic groups/boards and governance structures relating to criminal justice within the city

- Currently CoRE is represented within the Lammy Review subgroup; leading the youth justice task group, Community Safety, Women's Independent Advisory Group and Strategic Independent Advisory group.

Education work stream - Lead: Esther Deans

- **One Bristol Curriculum (OBC) (JUNE 2019)** – Race Equality Education Group (REEG) became aware of this project in 2019 after it was set up in response to the Runnymede Trust Report on Bristol 2017. The (OBC) project aims to provide a proactive response to the Runnymede Trust report 2017 which ranked Bristol as the 3rd worst in educational achievement. It addresses the lack of Black, Asian Minority Ethnic teachers and responds to Black Life Matters (BLM) more effectively, the approach is rather than just trying to get people to understand BLM, but to get them to do something about BLM that has a lasting qualitative and quantitative impact.
- In its first phase, the OBC is focused on Black, Asian Minority Ethnic issues to support curriculum and attainment. OBC has combined education and community work to allow a re-interpretation of the curriculum to include those communities that have so far not been included. This in line with National Curriculum and does not need any government change for schools to adopt. It is intended to provide off the peg and editable resources to support schools to make this change, along with support and guidance.
- So far OBC has run a pilot through 17 schools in Bristol, including working in South Bristol and has been received positively. OBC has a list of schools and teachers who would like to work with /use OBC materials. OBC has acquired a website that has been created and is in the process of construction to house all materials. OBC has a prestigious Steering Committee with Chief Executive Officers' (CEO)'s whose cluster schools will also adopt OBC. OBC are working with other organisations that are happy to house educational resources with OBC to increase their resource bank. OBC have also held preliminary discussions on collaborative work with schools to grow this resource bank to create a set of shared resources.
- REEG has supported OBC in developing the offer and planning a way forward. OBC now have teachers and community projects signed up to this exciting venture. There has been national interest in the project, as other areas are also prioritising this type of work. This also sends a clear message to communities requesting change (this has come from all over Bristol, including South Bristol) that we are listening and responding.



The COVID-19 pandemic response (March 2020)

- Supporting schools - REEG was quick to respond by meeting to capture a picture of needs of schools and sending appropriate materials into schools to support young people. BCC's Equality Teaching and Learning Consultant collated useful resources and best practice resources were sent to schools.
- REEG also worked with education and community groups to put banks of resources onto BCC website for teachers, parents and young people. We were able to collate a wide range of resources across the curriculum. We included the latest government resources, as well as a list of websites offering free resources to young people (such as Carol Vorderman's Maths Factor which is usually £4.99 pcm but was free over this time period) – to give extra support to parents and pupils struggling with home schooling.
- Working with others -Black, Asian Minority Ethnic community issues of those most affected was highlighted, and many groups worked together to direct best practice and advice to schools on latest government guidelines. Information and government consultation details were sent out. We also used our local community radio to support people who were home schooling by offering advice and resources on Ujima radio.
- We were also able to listen to Black, Asian Minority Ethnic teachers and bring their concerns on returning to work to the group for discussion, so that Black, Asian Minority Ethnic teachers could feel reassured and listened to. We provided a rapid response to support schools in times of unusual circumstances, providing a bank of resources for schools, parents and pupils.

The Black Lives Matter issues were also quickly responded to (June 2020).

- In terms of schools, this was again quickly captured through REEG and Learning City and resources gathered and sent to schools. In partnership with the BCC's Equality Teaching and Learning Consultant, good practice template letters and documentation was collated for schools and head teachers. The subsequent toppling of the Colston statue further ignited the need for events and reassure young people who were coping with this in isolation rather than within schools. In addition, concern over some pushback came through with regard to racist rhetoric in opposition of BLM movement and protests.
- All resources were directed through the BCC education department to make it easier for schools to access, and not to overload them. SARI has provided school education packs to schools, with follow up resources. These materials were also able to sit on the BCC website for schools, parents and teachers to reference/access. This also included rapid response and reassurance for schools to offer support and guidance.
- The CORE/REEG Learning City webpage enables people in the city to have clearer understanding of support and resources available with one place where they can find support for the educational needs of their children, as well as receiving social support within communities.
- Support for Black, Asian Minority Ethnic pupils and parents within community groups e.g. 'Black Boys Can', 'Going for Gold', through knowing where and when these projects are taking place and how to get in contact, rather than relying on word of



mouth. The initiatives above are aimed at raising aspirations and attainment, which can further be monitored through our databases.

- **Connecting people/connecting communities** – REEG have worked hard to listen to educational groups across all key stages, including further education, as well as connecting with communities. REEG are proud to have addressed all issues on education raised at the '**It Takes A Village**' meeting organised by CoRE.
- We had the ability to respond appropriately to community groups showing that we are listening and working on educational shift in Bristol. This allowed further positive feedback.
- CORE/REEG is committed to raising education for **ALL students** through its work with the **ONE CITY PLAN** and engages with all communities across the City including support for South Bristol and its particular context.
- REEG has worked on improving engagement from schools, community and parents. Representation on the REEG board, particularly for schools and settings, needs to be developed.

Part 2: Activities undertaken between July and October 2020 by CoRE Independent Chair and Black South West Network, the Secretariat

- On the 26th of May 2020, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor announced the appointment of Professor [Olivette Otele](#) as the new Chair of CoRE. Professor Otele is Professor of History of Slavery at University of Bristol and has taken up her role leading the Commission from 1st June 2020.
- The need for this Commission is long-standing but now, as we move into a new era of post Covid-19, CoRE can play a critical role in furthering race equality in Bristol. Today, the current awareness of the impact of Covid-19 on Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities, the global reaction to the death of George Floyd, and the toppling of the statue of Colston provides a context in which recognition of racial injustice is at its highest for many years.
- Given the complexities of the environment within which race equality work is required, and the reality that racial inequality has systemic, structural, and individualised day-to-day manifestations, a structure is required that encompasses these aspects effectively and coherently. CoRE is not a delivery agency; rather it should provide a powerful, robust and authoritative voice for tackling structural inequality in Bristol. The key overarching objectives of the Commission should therefore be focused on scrutiny, accountability, policy development, and influence at the highest level.

The key functions of the Commission have therefore been reframed to include:

- Increase the power, representation and influence of Black, Asian Minority Ethnic people in the City and work collaboratively with partners to effect change, where necessary, across the region and sub-region.
- Ensure the effective engagement of Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities in the city
- Provide challenge to public, private and voluntary institutions and organisations in relation to race equality.
- Engage with policy and strategy developers to inform processes to ensure that race equality is embedded into planning, delivery and outcomes.



- Engage with organisations and institutions (regardless of their geographical coverage) whose operations impact directly on the Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities of Bristol.
- Provide independent scrutiny, including through collaboration with The Bristol Strategic Race Equality Leaders Group, Learning City Partnership, One City Partnership Boards, HR Race Strategic Leaders Group and Bristol Equality Charter Network.
- Progress a strategic action plan to be reviewed annually.

Appointment of Secretariat

- In order to fulfil its key functions, CoRE requires administrative and co-ordination support. From 1st July 2020, the role of the Commission's Secretariat has been overseen by BSWN
- As an infrastructure organisation, BSWN's function is to work with the organisations supporting the Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities in Bristol to develop their work, business models, and impact, as well as creating mechanisms, platforms and spaces in which we and they can inform and influence policy and strategy across the region.
- BSWN's over-arching strategic intent is to build dynamic, independent, and strong Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities, businesses and organizations that are empowered to flourish while challenging systemic barriers and forging a true path for themselves. BSWN's work falls into three broad areas - Cross-sector Enterprise and Innovation; Cultural Inclusion; Research and Knowledge – with scrutiny and accountability and Representation and Power as over-arching themes that cut through all our work. All areas of our work are all inter-related, inter-connected and work in unison to further our strategic intent.
- The organisation's research function and relationships with the University of Bristol, the University of the West of England, Exeter University and Bath Spa University generates academically robust data to inform policy and has the capacity to undertake further research into racial inequality in the region.
- BSWN's policy development function provides knowledge and experience in translating research, data, and consultation into effective policy recommendations and implementation approaches. The organisation's multiple networks provide a conduit between the Commission and the Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities of Bristol to both hear their voices and communicate directly with them.
- BSWN works to further the work of the CoRE through its core functions and to ensure that investment into race equality work is at an appropriate level to affect fundamental structural and systemic change in Bristol.

Key activities: July-October 2020

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Magistrates recruitment campaign

- We held a 2nd successful recruitment campaign via webinar with nearly 200 attendees, 98% indicated that they would be pursuing an application to become a magistrate. The awareness raising event; explained the process of becoming a magistrate, the audience had a chance to ask existing magistrates questions, and the Court and Tribunal Service were able to dispel any myths associated when being a magistrate. We also offered a support service after the event for those who wanted help to write their application, or had additional questions.



Conducting Community Consultations

- From July 2020 through September 2020, in partnership with BSWN, CoRE hosted five consultations attended by nearly 120 members of Bristol's Black and Minority Ethnic community, including key leaders in the business, voluntary, education, youth-development, and faith-based sectors.
- The consultations were hosted virtually and recorded, apart from facilitated breakout group discussions, which were summarised for the larger group after reconvening. CoRE's Chair, Olivette Otele, and Bristol Deputy Mayor, Cllr Asher Craig, participated in all five consultations.
- The consultations led to incredibly rich dialogues that included thoughtful questions, feedback, and recommendations will be used together with statistical data to decide which areas to address. The five key priorities for Bristol's Black and Minority Ethnic communities were identified as:
 - **Education** – particularly low expectations and few opportunities of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students, lack of recruitment and retention of Black, Asian Minority Ethnic teachers, discriminatory school exclusions, lack of parent/student advocacy
 - **Health with particular reference to Mental Health concerns** – impact of Covid-19 on mental health and well-being, lack of services and interventions to improve mental health and well-being, and physical health in the context of socio-economic inequalities in communities.
 - **Economic Opportunities including Employment and Business Impacts** – unemployment, discriminatory recruitment and retention practices, lack of career progression, inequitable access to funding and resources, lack of investment and support for local business owners, and then Covid-19's impact on job losses and loss of income for local businesses
 - **Improving Neighbourhoods and Community Environments** - Lack of knowledge or access to resources and negative interactions with the police, criminal justice system, unaffordable housing, increasing rates of domestic violence, negative impacts of gentrification, language barriers facing migrants with inadequate language support services.
- CoRE has received a warm and appreciative reception from Bristol's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community. With these five consultations meetings, CoRE now has clear evidence that this city initiative is essential, and there is a sense of urgency to achieve the Commission's objectives.

Recruitment of new Commissioner Cohort

- During August 2020, the role of Commissioners was advertised in a city-wide campaign, attracting significant interest and amount of applications. We have now successfully recruited 14 Commissioners, bringing forward a wide range of skills, expertise and perspectives to the task of tackling systemic racism: Newly appointed Commissioners from September 2020 are:



- Athimalaipet Vaidyanathan Ramanan, Consultant Paediatric Rheumatologist at the Bristol Royal Hospital for Children
- Zahra Kosar, Mental Health Coordinator at Bristol Somali Resource Centre
- Margaret Simmons-Bird, Education Consultant & Executive Lead for School Improvement at Wellsway Multi Academy Trust
- Marie-Annick Gournet, Senior Lecturer and Director of Part-time Programmes at University of Bristol
- Fatima Ali, Teacher at Cabot Primary School
- Jane Khawaja, Head of Research Development at University of Bristol
- Clayton Planter, Creative Director of Street2Boardroom
- Zain Shaffi, Investment Consultant and Lead in Black, Asian Minority Ethnic Financial Inclusion CSR Group at Hargreaves Lansdown
- Forward Maisokwadzo, Inclusion Advisor to the Mayor's Office
- Euella Jackson, Engagement Producer and Talent Manager at Rising Arts Agency
- Maya Mate-Kole, Senior Service Coordinator at Golden Key Partnership Programme
- Marcus Walters, Senior Associate at Burges Salmon LLP
- Jendayi Serwah, Convenor of the Afrikan ConneXions Consortium
- Pravanya Pillay, Outreach and Engagement Lead at Babbasa

The Commission intend to deliver improved outcomes in the City, bringing together our collective skills and abilities, knowledge and influence to activate its scrutiny and accountability functions, in a framework that measures change.

Policy Contribution

- CoRE submitted a [response to Annual Progress report on Equality and Inclusion 2019-2020](#), which confirmed that the Council's high aspirations around equality, diversity and inclusion have not been adequately reflected in practice. This submission included a call to other public sector organisations, business, voluntary and community sector and the wider city to undertake a similar exercise in reviewing their organisations in terms of ethnicity pay gaps and Black, Asian Minority and Ethnic experiences.
- In partnership with BSWN, CoRE further prepared a [joint submission to the House of Commons Women & Equalities Committee's Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) Inquiry](#). This submission draws chiefly on 2 research reports: Impact of Covid-19- on Black, Asian Minority Ethnic -led Businesses, Organisations & Communities and The Impact of Covid-19 on Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities carried out by BSWN and Applied Research Collaboration West respectively, reflecting on the Bristol and South West region and local impact.



Immediate next steps: November 2020 – January 2021

- a consultant will be reviewing the community consultation report and facilitating commissioner involvement in the process to help consider the priorities and begin the process of building a strategic plan from that process
- map the race equality ecosystem in Bristol and South West, identifying existing data and its limitations, Race Equality Action Plans, initiatives and interventions already in place or underway, financial commitments made and scope of their goals and ambitions
- commission a baseline study that can focus the key priority areas recommended by the community and considered by Commissioners
- develop a strategic plan that identifies key priorities for Year 1 in the context of Covid-19 and BLM
- establish a more robust relationship with the One City Boards over the coming weeks so the whole commission can influence policy, recovery plans, etc

5. Other Options Considered - None

6. Risk Assessment - None

7. Summary of Equality Impact

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

CoRE’s key objective lies in addressing racial inequality however we recognise that many of the challenges are cross-sectional and impact communities based on multiple characteristics. The following key requirements have been addressed accordingly:

- a) To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The reviewed key functions of CoRE (page 7 of this report) ensure that advancing equal access to opportunity for local Black, Asian Minority Ethnic communities is at the heart of its purpose.

- b) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

Through events and meetings such as the series of 5 community consultations conducted this summer, CoRE strives to encourage cross-sectoral and city-wide input into the work of the commission and facilitate conversation and networking between business owners, community organisations, and local community members of all backgrounds.

8. Revenue – CoRE request the council to continue with the annual funding of £5,000 for the Commission’s function and core activities, as well as use of Main Hall for events as appropriate post-Covid-19.