

Report to December Full Council 2023 - The Commission on Race Equality (CoRE)

1. **Museji Ahmed Takolia CBE** was appointed chair of the Commission on Race Equality (CoRE) in October 2021, and formally stood down on 18th October 2023. Therefore, there is not a current Chair in place for CoRE to be able to present a report to Full Council on this occasion. CoRE has ten commissioners covering key themes such as Education, Health and Wellbeing and the inclusive economy. **Margaret Simmons-Bird MBE** is the Vice Chair of CoRE with a remit on education.
2. **Margaret Simmons-Bird MBE** is the Co Chair of the Bristol Education & Skills Steering Group and a member of the Black Governs Network. In addition, she holds a number of Trust Board Directorships and several public facing roles and therefore does not feel able to take on the Chair of CoRE at this time alongside these existing commitments.
3. From July 2023, Black South West Network (BSWN) were no longer able to support CoRE in the capacity of secretariat. CoRE formally asked the Equalities Team to step in to support the programme of activity for 2023/4.
4. Following discussions with the Chair and Vice Chair, Mayor, and Deputy Mayor Asher Craig, it was decided not to appoint another Chair to the role. The remaining programme of commitments scheduled between now and May 2024 as outlined below will be developed by the existing commissioners with support from the Corporate Equalities Team. To successfully deliver planned activities, the Equalities Team will support the commission with the Vice Chair who will represent the voice of CoRE.
5. CoRE was set up by Mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees, in response to the Bristol Manifesto for Race Equality, to work collaboratively with key partners in addressing systemic and structural racial discrimination and injustice in the City of Bristol. Bristol has a long-standing history of challenging inequalities, and this is reflected in the core principles developed in memory of Batook Pandya, a founding member in the production of the Bristol's Manifesto for promoting Race equality. The Race Equality Manifesto underpinned the key principles of CoRE and the work stream with a focus on Education, Community and Engagement, Criminal Justice and Economy.
6. CoRE has played a valuable role in bringing together a wealth of experienced professionals in the areas of health, education, community engagement, economy, and enterprise across the city. They have been able to work

constructively and in collaboration with key partners to address racial injustice, ensure the lived experiences and voices of black and other minoritised voices are heard and represented in policy development and decisions that directly impact on these communities. However, post Covid and the ongoing challenges resulting from the cost of living crisis, there is need and an opportunity to review the effectiveness of this model, to reflect and draw on lessons learned over the last seven years of CoRE to plan a future that builds on the work of the Commission.

7. It is proposed that to build on the achievements of the Commission and to strengthen the impact on delivering an effective race equality strategy, CoRE is integrated into the One City structures multi-agency forums and race eco-system across Bristol. In the meantime CoRE will move away from hosting public meetings in favour of embedding the key aims and objectives of the commission into the eco-system of Race Equality groups across the City.
8. To facilitate this transition, it is recommended that Bristol City Council and its partners facilitate and support the implementation of the strategic work and recommendations of the Commission on Race Equality. In particular, the commissioners work being undertaken by the Economy, Jobs and Skills working group. The work on addressing the declining performance of Black and minoritised groups in public exams 2023 alongside their over - representation in school exclusions by the Education working group. Both pieces of work are of crucial importance in challenging racial inequalities and disparities in the City. It is also important that the work to plan for the future is given priority and resourced so that the gains made under CoRE are not lost.

9. *Commissioners*

Below is the list of current commissioners of Bristol's Commission on Race Equality at the date of this report being produced, along with their lead areas of work :-

Margaret Simmons-Bird	Education
Forward Maisokwadzo	Economy
Dr Marcus Walters	Economy
Abbigael Bainton	Education
Enitan Amorolaran	Without Portfolio
Dr Adeela Shafi	Without Portfolio
Dr Jane Khawaja	Economy
Fatima Ali	Education
Jendayi Serwah	Community Engagement
Euella Jackson	Health and Wellbeing

10. Programme of Activity for 2022/23

Economy

- The Economy, Jobs and Skills Task Group will lead a public session in January 2024 with a focus on social value, procurement and recruitment in the upcoming Temple Quarter development.
- As part of the One City Approach CoRE hopes to identify opportunities to spread the benefits of this programme to organisations that wouldn't traditionally bid for contracts. CoRE will work with the Task Group to explore inclusive growth which will seek to embed innovative approaches to ensure that Black and minoritised led businesses and the wider community benefit from development in Temple Quarter.

Education

- School exclusions and poor attainment is an area of contention for parents and families in Bristol. Black young men often find themselves in a pathway from School to Prison. Working with strategic partners CoRE will address the systemic issues that keep racially minoritised young people out of schools. CoRE will feed into the development of the Anti-Racist Strategy followed by developing an event to launch the strategy in 2024. CoRE will also seek to strengthen the relationship with the Black Governors Network to encourage volunteers to come forward to work with schools across the city.

Strategic Integration and future focus (Race Ecosystem)

- In March 2024 CoRE will carry out an evaluation of the commission, supported by BCC equalities team. An option at this stage could be that this takes the form an event engaging a range of the city's race focused strategic leaders and organisations and stakeholders to explore how the activities of the commission have impacted the city. This will also provide an opportunity to review effective models for tackling race inequality and to help inform the framework for the Committee model system of governance.
- Between November 2023 and May 2024, the Commissioners will consider the key priorities and outputs they wish to see delivered based on the capacity the Commission has along with the support available from partners.

Prepared on behalf of the Vice Chair of CoRE