

Council

15 June 2020

Public Questions (2 total)

1.	Question from Brooke Fisher to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>After seeing the uncalled for and racist murder of George Floyd, we know that Gloucestershire is aware of what is going on.</p> <p>What are you doing to protect and show that the black people whom live in Cheltenham and Gloucestershire are safe, loved and equal ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How are you going to make a significant change ?• What are you doing to make sure black peoples voices are heard ?• How are you going to guarantee that black lives matter?• How are you going to make sure black people are safe ?• What are you doing to make sure that our police are not racist and biased?• What are you doing to make sure that those whom have been stopped, arrested, treated unfairly solely because of the colour of their skin are given justice ?• What is your plan of action when it comes to racism towards not only black people but people of colour ?
	Response from the Leader
	<p>Later on this agenda the Council will be debating the following motion which I support and hope will be agreed as it will help us answer the important questions raised.</p> <p>“Following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and other brutal activity, Cheltenham Borough Council puts on record its support for Black Lives Matter and its total opposition to any kind of racism.</p> <p>Cheltenham Borough Council believes in action, not just fine words. In conjunction with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cheltenham Borough Homes, Cheltenham Trust, Festivals and other partners, Cabinet is requested to look at holding a conference for Cheltenham’s BAME community organisations, to discuss how we might work closer together to challenge bias, both deliberate and unconscious, and racism in all its forms.</p> <p>To that end, Council also requests that all policies, the organisational structure, appointments process and working environment of the Council be interrogated by Cabinet to ensure they reflect the Council’s stance on these matters.</p> <p>Council would request the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cheltenham Borough Homes, Cheltenham Trust, Festivals and other partners to work together with the Council, to ensure that effective action is taken.</p> <p>In addition, Cabinet is asked to look at how we can support other councils in less diverse areas through the LGA, by means of exchange programmes and</p>

	<p>secondment schemes and, for members, unconscious bias training,</p> <p>Further, that Cheltenham's national representative on the Council of Europe, is requested to raise these issues at the Council of Europe; and the Cabinet member to raise issues through Council of European Municipalities and Regions in relation to local government and how, together, we can best fight bias, racism and brutality in all its forms and provide a voice to action, so that in deed and word, Black Lives Matter.”</p>
2.	Question from Dr Jermaine M Ravalier to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>In the light of the tearing down of the statue of Colston in Bristol, I would like to know whether there are any similar symbols of oppression in Cheltenham. Relatedly, what is the council doing to support black people in the Borough, and what plans do you have to further this support in the future?</p>
	Response from the Leader
	<p>I do not believe there are symbols of oppression in Cheltenham and no complaints have been received about statues here. However, the council is undertaking a review of public statues and monuments to ascertain if any might be considered controversial including consulting a local historian. To date we have considered 13 statues / monuments and feel that all are acceptable – though we will keep the situation under review in consultation with local groups.</p> <p>Out of the 13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three are mythological • Three are royalty • Two are war memorials • Three relate to famous local people – Gustav Holst, Edward Wilson, Captain Skillicorne • Two relate to other famous individuals - Major Charles Gordon & William Shakespeare <p>The Council always attempts to treat people equally in line with its policies on equality. However, it is important to ensure that is everyone’s experience and I support the motion later on the agenda that both confirms our support for Black Lives Matter while agreeing a policy review.</p>