

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 14<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2021

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 2<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER, 2020

**“C356        REVIEW OF STATUES, MONUMENTS, STREET NAMES AND BUILDING NAMES (L/PR) (SCRUTINY – LEARNING AND CULTURE) –**

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek Cabinet approval to instigate the next phase of work to review statues, monuments, street names and building names to ensure they were representative of local people’s values and those of a modern, inclusive Council.

The report set out proposals for reviewing statues, monuments, street names and building names in the Vale of Glamorgan, in light of the current concerns on the interpretation of some of the names associated some statutes, monuments, street names and buildings. It was proposed that all Town and Community Councils, as well as the public, be invited to make representations for commemorations that should be reviewed to ensure they were appropriate.

It was also proposed that representations would be sought from those in under-represented groups who may have an opinion on the review and may also wish to make commemoration proposals.

In addition, it was also proposed that a Panel be established to review the representations received, to be made up of Elected Members, an officer from the Council's Strategic Leadership Group and external representatives appointed by the Cabinet. The recommendations of the Panel would be reported to Cabinet for consideration in due course.

The Leader referred to representations made by Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson which would be addressed as part of some amendments to the recommendations to the report, including representation regarding Welsh language, Welsh history and Welsh culture, which had always been intended but not implicitly stated in the report.

The report proposed that the representations from various partners be invited by the end of December 2020 to make submissions, however the Leader suggested this could be extended to 31 January, 2021 to capture comments, given current issues arising from COVID-19.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration added this was a complex topic and that it was right to be addressed at this time but felt there was a broader aspect as people in the Vale needed to feel that they belonged and were valued within their community. People had stated that the lights in the shelters at Barry Island and on Hood Road were important as they were used to mark special days and reassured people that they were part of the community. It would not be

possible to meet this year for Remembrance Day, but the lights could be turned red in support and would take a place among the Sense of Place work that went on across the Vale. It would also be important to address people who possibly had not been commemorated but who were important and had made a difference to their community, nationally or internationally. Thought would clearly need to be given to place or street names that had possible cause for consideration or needed clarification as to why no changes would be required or justified and could only be done in consultation with the affected communities.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report, the issues and implications contained therein and with amendments to Recommendations (3), (4) and (5) of the report subsequently

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T contents of the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the approach to establishing a review as described in the report, through the establishment of a Panel comprising of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Member Equality Champion, the Member LGBT Champion, an officer from the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and one representative from local history societies and one representative from the Vale of Glamorgan Stand Up to Racism organisation be endorsed.
- (3) T H A T, in pursuance of Recommendation (2), the Terms of Reference for the Proposed Panel be drafted, and reported to Cabinet for approval, prior to the first meeting of the Panel, with the Terms of Reference setting out membership of the same as well as the intention to receive evidence and input from residents of the Vale of Glamorgan, various representatives and organisations with an interest in the history, culture and language of the Vale of Glamorgan and its communities.
- (4) T H A T the report be sent to all Town and Community Councils and to the next Community Liaison Committee for their consideration and involvement as described in the report.
- (5) T H A T this report and the future report on the Terms of Reference be referred to Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) Following consideration of the overview of the work being undertaken in this arena.
- (2) To enable a review to be established and conducted
- (3) To allow the Panel to commence work with appropriate Terms of Reference in place.

- (4) To enable Town and Community Councils and Community Liaison Committee consider their involvement in the review.
- (5) To allow Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee to consider the report.”

Attached as Appendix – Report to Cabinet: 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 02 November 2020</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Review of Statues, Monuments, Street Names and Building Names
Purpose of Report:	To seek Cabinet approval to instigate the next phase of work to review statues, monuments, street names and building names to ensure they are representative of local people's values and those of a modern, inclusive Council.
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Managing Director
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Cabinet Member Champion for Equalities Strategic Leadership Team
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This report sets out proposals for reviewing statues, monuments, street names and building names in the Vale of Glamorgan, in light of the current concerns on the interpretation of some of the names associated some statutes, monuments, street names and buildings. It is proposed that all town and community councils, as well as the public, are invited to make representations for commemorations that should be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate.</li> <li>• It is also proposed that representations will be sought from those in underrepresented groups who may have an opinion on the review and may also wish to make commemoration proposals.</li> <li>• In addition, it is also proposed that a panel be established to review the representations received, to be made up of elected members, an officer from the Council's Strategic Leadership Group and external representatives appointed by the Cabinet. The recommendations of the panel would be reported to Cabinet for consideration in due course.</li> </ul>	

## **Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that Cabinet notes the contents of this report.
2. It is recommended that Cabinet endorses the approach to establishing a review as described in this report, through the establishment of a Panel comprising of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Member Equality Champion, the Member LGBT Champion, an officer from the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and one representative from local history societies and one representative from the Vale of Glamorgan Stand Up to Racism organisation.
3. That, in advance of the first panel meeting, as recommended in recommendation 2, delegated authority be granted to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader to draft and agree a Terms of reference for the Panel, which terms of reference should set out membership of the same.
4. It is recommended that this report be sent to all Town & Community Councils for their consideration and involvement as described in this report.
5. It is recommended that an update is provided to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee (Learning and Culture) in due course.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. To provide Cabinet with an overview of the work being undertaken in this arena.
2. To enable a review to be established and conducted
3. To allow the Panel to commence work.
4. To enable Town & Community Councils to consider their involvement in the review.
5. To provide Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee (Learning and Culture) with an update as matters progress.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council has a long history of progressing the equality agenda. A new Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-2024 has been adopted this year to provide a framework within which to take forward positive action in line with the duties of the Equality Act and to influence the work of the Council across all of its services. In addition, the Council is proactive in promoting the equality agenda through its sense of place initiatives, promotion of the Arts and through commemorating particular events at particular times of the year.
- 1.2 Earlier in 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement brought to the world's attention important issues relating to on-going racism that exists in the world . The Strategic Equality Plan contains details of the anti-racism actions which are underway or planned. However, it is clear that more needs to be done to tackle racism.

- 1.3** One important issue that was raised during the Black Lives Matter movement related to how commemorations of history should now be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate to the current time.
- 1.4** In June, the Leader of the Council indicated the need to begin work to proactively review all statues and commemorations, including street names, public buildings and plaques, in the Vale of Glamorgan. This work will be to ensure statues and commemorations on public land, as well as the names of streets and buildings to be reviewed are representative of local people's values and those of a modern, inclusive Council.
- 1.5** In July 2020, the First Minister announced an audit of public monuments, street and building names associated with the history of black communities in Wales, saying "it is time that we properly reflected on the representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic lives in the heritage of Wales. We need to re-examine the way some of our public monuments and buildings are valued and consider what they say about us, our society today and our shared history".
- 1.6** In line with this announcement, a Welsh Government task and finish group has been established, led by Gaynor Legall. Work has been undertaken during the summer on the first phase of the national task and finish group's work and a report is anticipated in the coming weeks. The second phase of the work will involve consideration of addressing any concerns arising from the audit.
- 1.7** This report sets out a proposal for progressing a local review of statues, monuments, street names and building names within the Vale of Glamorgan and seeks approval to engage our communities in this important area.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1** The Council will continue to contribute to the work of the national task and finish group established by Welsh Government. However, it is also important that action is taken locally and with as wide a range of people involved as possible.
- 2.2** The Black Lives Matter movement has rightly prompted people to consider the appropriateness of commemoration or acknowledgment of people and events from history and their relevance to today. This is particularly the case where links to the intolerable slave trade exist. As well as reviewing the appropriateness of these commemoration or acknowledgments, we should consider the positive recognition of people from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds, as well as other underrepresented groups have had too, as an important part of celebrating the diverse community which exists within the Vale of Glamorgan and across Wales.
- 2.3** It is therefore proposed that a review of statues, monuments, street names and building names will be undertaken both from an historic perspective (to ascertain any causes for concern) but also inviting consideration for future recognition of individuals or events that celebrate diversity and important events in our recent history.

- 2.4** To enable the review to reach across the whole of the Vale of Glamorgan, the Council will seek to work with Town and Community Councils to source information to inform the review. All Town and Community Councils will be invited to identify commemorations of historical figures which may be the cause of concern, views on how these concerns should be addressed, and to identify people from underrepresented backgrounds or elsewhere to commemorate in the future. The Council will also invite representations from the public via social media.
- 2.5** It is proposed that the representations from the public and Town and Community Councils be invited by the end of December 2020 to make submissions. Upon receipt, a panel will review the findings to determine the action that should be taken. Actions that could be progressed could well include the removal or retention of any statues or commemorations and potential re-naming of any streets or public buildings alongside the identification of any issues that require additional information/education. Proposed actions will be informed by the representations made to the panel. It is not the purpose of this Cabinet report to make specific recommendations relating to any particular or specific cases, as that would be premature and would pre-empt the work of the Panel and future consideration of Cabinet.
- 2.6** In order for proper and informed consideration to be given to such important matters, it is proposed that a panel will be established to review the representations received. It is proposed that the Panel comprises the Leader, and the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Member Equality Champion, the Member LGBT Champion, an officer from the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and a representative from local history societies and Vale of Glamorgan Stand Up to Racism.
- 2.7** Prior to the first panel meeting, Cabinet is requested to delegate authority to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader to draft and agree a terms of reference for the Panel, which will set out membership of the same.
- 2.8** Upon conclusion of the review, the panel's recommendations on potential action to be taken will be reported to Cabinet for consideration and decision, with updates provided by Cabinet to the Scrutiny Committee (Learning and Culture) in due course.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The proposals contained in this report are consistent with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan objectives which are framed in the context of the Council's four new well-being objectives. These objectives complement each other and will collectively deliver the Council's local well-being outcomes and the seven national well-being goals.

## **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 4.1** There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The findings of the review panel's work may require financial resources to deliver and consideration of any implications will be given by Cabinet in due course.

### **Employment**

- 4.2** There are no direct employment implications arising from this report.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.3** There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the Equalities Act (2010) and specific duties to Wales as described in the Strategic Equality Plan.
- 4.4** In parallel with the work described in the report above, work to develop an Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken. This will be an important basis for considering the findings of any representations received, in conjunction with the equalities information contained in the Strategic Equality Plan.

## **5. Background Papers**

[Statement from the Leader of the Council, June 2020](#)

[Statement from the First Minister, July 2020](#)

[Vale of Glamorgan Council Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#)