

**COMMEMORATING THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND  
CELEBRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

**Recommendation**

1. That the Partnership endorses the overall arrangements proposed for the 2007 Commemoration and gives its views of the ingredients essential to its success.

**Background**

2. On March 25 1807 King George III signed the Abolition of the Slave Trade bill into law. Events marking the bicentenary of this Act will be taking place in Bristol, Hull, Liverpool and London and other major cities throughout 2007. Slavery itself within the British Empire was not abolished until 1838.
3. The Government has set up a national advisory group led by John Prescott (Deputy Prime Minister) which also includes Paul Goggins (Race Equality Minister) and David Lammy (Culture Minister). Paul Barnett, Bristol City Council's Head of Cultural Services, is a member of the advisory group along with representatives of the Commission for Racial Equality, National Maritime Museum, Hull, Heritage Lottery Fund, Amnesty International and Anti-Slavery International.
4. The Deputy Prime Minister has also made several visits to Bristol, in particular to St Pauls, to seek views and contributions from the community.
5. The Bristol Capital of Culture bid included the development of a programme of events in 2007 to 'Celebrate Diversity.' The Bristol Cultural Development Partnership had asked Bristol City Council to lead on these arrangements.

**Early progress**

6. A range of individuals and organisations have already engaged in preparations for 2007 and there is widespread commitment in the city to ensuring the success of the Commemorations. Our work must be strongly led and informed by the experience and views of BME communities.
7. City Council officers have undertaken some initial work and soundings and recommend that the Bristol Partnership assume overall responsibility for enabling and supporting the Commemorations.
8. This report sets out and seeks endorsement of the overall arrangements for enabling the Commemorations in the city and welcomes the views of the Partnership on the ingredients to ensure their success.

9. The proposals seeks to build upon the role of the Partnership in working in the interests of the whole City. Some individuals, communities and organisations will wish to work independently in commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

### **What the Commemorations and Celebrations should achieve**

10. The objectives proposed for 2007 in Bristol are as follows.
- (1) To raise awareness of Bristol's role in the slave trade through the commemoration of the bicentenary in a contemporary and relevant way for the benefit of all of Bristol's residents and businesses, and the Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) community in particular.
  - (2) To focus on sustainable improvements to life in Bristol, including:
    - promoting cultural and economic freedom
    - promoting fair-trade
    - raising awareness of modern day slavery and human rights issues.
  - (3) To celebrate Bristol as a vibrant, young and multi-cultural city and to promote racial equality and equal opportunities practice throughout the city.
  - (4) To promote Bristol as a visitor destination through a cultural programme of performing arts and heritage-themed events and exhibitions.
11. It is proposed that in Bristol we adopt the image of Olaudah Equiano (a leading Black abolitionist) as the logo for Abolition 200. This reflects the Culture Minister's ambition to recognise the contribution made by Black abolitionists.

### **Encouraging and supporting all those who wish to contribute to the Commemoration**

12. The following arrangements aim to ensure the Partnership is in the best possible position to:
- encourage and support all those who wish to contribute to the Commemoration, especially BME communities
  - capitalise on the diversity and creativity of the city by attracting a breadth and quality of contributions
  - have a lasting impact across all communities in the city
  - enable applications to national funding bodies to support activities

The arrangements aim to enable contributions across the city, not direct them.

## Theme Groups

13. It is proposed to establish the following theme groups, building on the work of the relevant Partnership Delivery Groups. The commentary under each heading aims to give an indication of the range of interests that could be embraced by each theme group:

### Communities (Safer Local Communities Group)

- BME communities and representation
- Geographic communities
- Voluntary and community sector
- Faith groups
- Charles Wesley tercentenary

### Businesses and Sponsorship (Economy Delivery Group)

- Business West and other business associations
- Social enterprise businesses
- Trade unions (including Black members' groups)
- Sub regional and regional bodies
- Funders (local/regional/national)

### Culture (Health & Wellbeing Delivery Group)

- Performing arts: drama, music and dance
- Museum and Art Gallery Exhibitions
- Heritage organisations
- Film and media
- Sport
- Individual creative producers
- Parks and open spaces

### Education and Young People (Children & Young People's Trust Partnership)

- Young Peoples Services and education outreach teams
- Schools and supplementary schools
- Further and Higher Education Colleges and Universities
- Young people's groups

14. It is envisaged that each theme group would be launched by organising and publicising a workshop which would aim to attract as many as possible of the interested individuals, groups or organisations. The basic proposition is that each theme group would be largely self organised but the aim would be that each one would:

- elect a committed and effective chair
- be assisted by neighbourhood renewal facilitators and officers from partner organisations and groups
- receive seed corn funding to allocate to the development of ideas and activities

- shape a programme collaboratively, stimulating and supporting those who wish to contribute
- eventually shape their theme's application to the national funding bodies
- nominate 2 people to join a citywide steering group for the Commemorations, also comprising councillors and officers from partner organisations.

### **Citywide Steering Group**

15. The citywide steering group would:
- coordinate the overall Commemoration programme and the funding bid to national bodies
  - oversee the development of the core civic programme including :
    - Civic events programme
    - Inter-city projects
    - Civic representation at national and international events
    - Public monument
    - Twinning initiatives
    - Lord Mayor's Office, council members and city MPs' involvement
    - Sub regional & regional bodies, other local authorities
  - facilitate links with the media and communication networks including:
    - Communication networks within and between theme groups and the citywide steering group
    - Broadcast media
    - Print media
    - Digital forums(a)
    - Bristol tourism partners
16. Abolition 200 will contribute dynamically to Bristol Partnership's strategic commitments to closing the gap between the most deprived communities in Bristol and the city as a whole, promoting equality and community cohesion, sustainable development and core work.

### **Funding**

17. Bristol City Council has agreed a contribution of £250k towards 2007. It is envisaged that this will lever funding from lottery funders and other institutions and sponsors to deliver the above objectives. Our aspiration is for an equivalent budget to Brunel 200 i.e. £2.5 million.
18. It is planned that an element of the budget will be used in the form of seed money to develop ideas and proposals. Project proposals will be scrutinised by the theme groups who will manage the development of projects. In addition, co-ordination and marketing costs will be met from the budget.

## Draft Timetable

19. So far the following actions are envisaged. This does not take into account the many plans and ideas already being discussed across the City.

April to June 2006	<b>Community consultation</b> Identifying and developing proposals brought forward by all of the theme groups.
April 2006 onwards	<b>Development of theme groups</b>
Early April 2006	<b>Meeting with regional lottery funders</b> To meet with regional representatives of Heritage Lottery Fund, the Big Lottery, the Arts Council of England, Awards for All, Sports England and other funders to ascertain how the bodies propose to distribute their grants and the common project themes that they will be seeking to support.
April 20 2006	<b>Conference at the Watershed</b> Abolition 200 will be launched with an information sharing half-day conference. Invited guests to include regional funders, theme groups' members and representatives from London, Liverpool and Hull.
May 2006	<b>Launch of web site</b> Abolition 200's website will be tendered to community organisations and businesses to design and plan content development. Applications will be encouraged from the BME community.
June/July 2006	<b>Business Plan submitted to lottery funders</b> In order to receive funding decisions before the end of the year, and to allow time for application development, funding bids will have to be submitted to regional funders by July at the latest.
June to Sept 2006	<b>Music event to publicly launch Abolition 200</b> A music of Black origin event, possibly at Colston Hall, will be used to bring Abolition 200's objective to celebrate cultural diversity to public consciousness.
July 30 2006	<b>Emancipation Day event</b> The third annual Emancipation Day event in Easton and citywide will mirror the slavery commemoration events that take place on the Caribbean Islands.
July to December 2006	<b>Finalisation of programme dependent on funders' decisions</b>
January 2007	<b>Launch of the Year with the Great Reading Adventure</b> Led by Bristol Cultural Development Partnership the fourth annual Great Reading Adventure (GRA) will have books by

Black authors as its key texts. The GRA will be a national project with ties to Liverpool and Hull.

February 2007

**Launch of the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum  
Abolition of the Slave Trade Bi-Centenary Exhibition**

This will be the prime exhibition in the City during 2007.

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Bristol City Council  
03.03.06

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