

Appendix 2

Bristol City Council motion of commemoration

At a meeting of Bristol City Council held on 5th December 2006, the following motion was moved by Cllr Peter Hammond and agreed by the council:

"Council places on record its commitment to the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, which became law on the 25th March 1807. This commemoration should act as catalyst to invigorate and give focus to an agenda for change that improves the socio-economic and political position of black and minority ethnic people in general, and Afrikan and Afrikan Caribbean people, in particular, in Bristol.

The transatlantic slave trade was a holocaust committed upon Afrikan peoples and still impacts upon Afrikans and their descendants, wherever they live in the Diaspora and continues to blight the lives of Afrikans on the continent today.

Council, whilst recognising the role played by European abolitionists including those from Bristol also accords its full recognition to resistance by Afrikans themselves against the trade which led to its abolition.

Accordingly, we declare that Bristol's commemoration will place the interests of the Afrikan and Afrikan Caribbean communities at the centre of its efforts. Council therefore resolves to:-

(A) To continue to develop and support programmes and materials for Bristol schools (in a world history context) on the history and legacy of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism in Britain (incorporating an Afrikan perspective) and to include the contribution that the trade in Afrikan people made, and that their descendants continue to make, to the wealth and prosperity of Bristol.

(B) To develop programmes and support for Afrikan Caribbean and other Black and Minority Ethnic young people to improve their academic performance in Bristol schools and address the institutional reasons for under performance.

(C) Commemorate prominent Afrikan and Afrikan Caribbean people through street naming and public sculpture in Bristol, in consultation with local communities.

(D) Support the call for a national Afrikan Remembrance Day in August each year.

Council also acknowledges the wealth created and the part played by its merchants and others in their degradation of human beings for profit. We place on record our sincere regret at the actions of past Bristol citizens

engaged in the slave trade and the consequential crime against humanity (as defined by the United Nations) experienced by millions of Afrikans and their descendants as a result.

Council believes however, that the commemoration affords all of our community, the opportunity to move forward in a spirit of racial reconciliation and social justice. Council therefore, commits itself to ensuring that the programme being developed in Bristol, as part of Abolition 200, will focus on measures designed to be sustainable, long term, measurable and concrete, leading to real improvements in Bristol.

Council finally recognises that slavery continues to exist, whether in forms that resemble the transatlantic enslavement of Afrikans, or in more modern forms, which include the debt crisis in the developing world, unfair trade, exploitative labour, or international trafficking of women and children for the sex industry. Council therefore, resolves to take action where it can, to eradicate such practices and support their victims."