

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

[REDACTED]
(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA120620-4776

7 July 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 12 July 2020. Your request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked for:

I wish to make a Freedom of Information request, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, to ascertain the composition of the recently established Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm, and documentation of the decision-making process leading to its selection. It is essential that any such commission be truly reflective of the population it serves, particularly as the Mayor's announcement of the Commission contained thinly-veiled dissatisfaction with London's heritage. ("London is one of the most diverse cities in the world, with more than 300 languages spoken every day, yet statues, plaques and street names largely reflect Victorian Britain – as highlighted by recent Black Lives Matter protests"; <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-commission-to-review-diversity>). It would be disingenuous to suggest the Black Lives Matters movement sought to highlight the overrepresentation of Victorian luminaries in the structures of the city they were largely responsible for building, as opposed to highlighting the inequalities they are experiencing in the present day. Should we ever get around to building as many houses as London needs, perhaps you could consider naming the associated public realms after modern day luminaries, rather than try to re-name historical parts of the city. Please refrain from co-opting other peoples' battles to serve your own agenda.

Furthermore, I would like to obtain minutes of the discussions held by this Commission that concluded with the decision to remove the statue of Robert Milligan from West India Quay, with unerring haste, and without public consultation, on 9th June 2020, within 12 hours if the Commission being announced. Please reassure the community you serve that further decisions will follow due process, via public consultation, with opportunities for the public's views to be expressed.

Our response to your request is as follows:

The Mayor has asked Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries Justine Simons OBE and Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement Debbie Weekes-Bernard to bring together arts, community and council leaders across the capital to

create the new Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm. The Commission is in the early stages of being set up and the terms of reference for the Commission are being drafted and developed in consultation with councils, community groups and other key stakeholders. Therefore, we do not hold any minutes of meetings held yet.

The Mayor is committed to establishing a Commission that is diverse and representative of Londoners. There will be open call for up to 15 independent members of the Commission, working in partnership with councils, communities and stakeholders across the capital.

Requests for information pertaining to the removal of the Robert Milligan statue should be directed to Tower Hamlets Council who oversaw the removal.

<http://www.towerhamletsfoi.org.uk/default.asp>

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely



Information Governance Officer

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>