



The Women's Commission

Terms of Reference

September 2019

1. Purpose:

1.1. The Women's Commission is a City-wide partnership established to address multifaceted inequality faced by women and girls in the City of Bristol. Until women and girls are equal and women hold equal power in the City, the Women's Commission will work to redress this imbalance.

2. Aims:

2.1. To tackle barriers to equality faced by women and girls in every area of their lives

2.2. To progress the equal treatment of women and girls at a national and local level

2.3. To work towards the balanced participation of women and men in decision making in Bristol

2.4. To empower women and girls across sectors, institutions and organisations

3. Evidence-gathering:

3.1. To gather evidence on issues affecting women and the challenges they face

3.2. To work in multi-agency and stakeholder task groups to produce evidence based reports and recommendations on particular women's issues

4. Function:

4.1. To work in partnership with Bristol institutions and organizations to make a step change to how they will reduce discrimination and disadvantage experienced by women

4.2. To progress an action plan which works towards addressing priority actions underpinning the [European Charter of Equality¹ of women and men in Local Life](#)

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4.3. Continue to report to the Council of European Municipalities and Region on the [Charter](#)

5. Advice and guidance:

5.1. To provide advice and guidance on policy and practice City-wide to progress girls and women's rights

6. Operating Guidelines:

6.1. The Women's Commission is made up of commissioners with insight and interest in Women's and Human Rights and who have the ability, leverage, commitment, opportunity and influence to make changes in their sector, industry and institution or organisations.

6.2. This [Code of Conduct](#) is informed by the Cabinet Office Code of Conduct for board members of public bodies.

6.3. Commissioners will abide by the Public Sector Equality Duty and adhere to principles set out in the Equality Act 2010 to reduce discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between groups of people who are not from the same equality group.

7. Membership:

7.1. A formal annual review of membership to strengthen membership base, so remains contemporary

7.2. Chair of task group will sit on the Commission

7.3. Organisations and institutions will be asked to bear in mind the City's diversity when selecting representatives

7.4. Commissioners will send a deputy in their absence for five to six meetings per year

7.5. Commissioners are nominated to sit on their Commission by their organisation, or institution representatives are asked to name a consistent substitute to attend in their absence

7.6. The Commission welcomes positive action shadowing/placements to support women and girls into Leadership positions – *task group implementation*

7.7. The named representatives from the following institutions are currently represented on the Commission however this list is not definitive and may change through the year

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1. Avon and Somerset Constabulary
2. BBC rep required
3. Black South West Network - rep required
4. Bristol Community Health - rep required
5. Bristol City Council Councillors
6. Bristol City Council Senior leader
7. Bristol Fawcett
8. Bristol Head teachers
9. Bristol Women's Voice
10. Business West - rep required
11. CBI rep required
12. CCG – rep required
13. City of Bristol College
14. City Office - rep required
15. First Bus
16. Race Equality Commission - rep required
17. Trinity Mirror - rep required (Kate Wilson)
18. TUC
19. University Hospitals Bristol
20. University of Bristol - rep required
21. University West of England - rep required in December 2019
22. Voscur or sector lead
23. WECA
24. West of England Local Enterprise Partnership - new rep required
25. Youth Mayor or substitute youth Councillor

8. Frequency:

- 8.1. Commission meetings to take place every two months
- 8.2. Task group meetings to take place in between, and report to the Commission at least once per year on plans and outcomes

9. Task Groups:

- 9.1. Task groups as appropriate will focus on a particular task or area
- 9.2. Task groups will provide regular updates to Commission meetings
- 9.3. Task group reports will provide recommendations to form part of the action plan (the action plan is the mechanism by which the City demonstrates its progress on meeting the obligations of the Council for European Municipalities and Regions Charter)
- 9.4. Task groups will be required to seek majority decision from the Board if it wishes to spend from the Commission's budget

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Secretariat:

10. Support

- 10.1. The Commission's administration will be facilitated by Bristol City Council and reviewed annually
- 10.2. Once reviewed, an annual meeting between BCC and Chair and Cabinet member for women to be discussed early July 2020

11. Funding: 2019/2020

- 11.1. £5,000 is provided to the Women's Commission by Bristol City Council annually, on the understanding the Commission secures match funding in kind/ financial to progress their aims and objectives
- 11.2. Bristol City Council provides an additional £19,288 in kind funding to the Womens Commission

12. Governance:

- 12.1. The Commission will report on progress to Bristol City Council's Full Council annually
- 12.2. Once reviewed, an annual meeting between BCC and Chair and Cabinet member for women to be discussed early July 2019

13. Chair and Vice Chair

Chair

- 13.1. The Chair will oversee the activities of the Task Groups and strategic activities associated with tackling discrimination faced by women and girls in Bristol. Chair Commission meetings, and promote the work of the Commission.

Vice Chair Role

- 13.2. The Vice chair assists the chair in their daily duties, and will deputise in the absence of the Chair in activities associated with tackling discrimination faced by women and girls in Bristol.

14. Task Group Chair role:

- 14.1. Task group chairs will co-ordinate the activities of the task group including, awareness raising activities, progress the Commission's action plans, and will report back to the Commission at least once a year on progress.

15. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- 15.1. The election of Chair and Vice Chair to take place every three years. To be eligible for nomination for Chair and Vice Chair roles, the nominees

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must already be member of the Women's Commission and should be proposed and seconded by group members.

15.2. The election of Chair and Vice Chair will take place every 3 years commencing September 2019.

16. Communication protocol:

16.1. Matters arising and relevant information will be communicated to the Women's Commission by Commission support officers in good time for meetings. Task groups should use agreed identity and logos of Commission.

17. Knowledge Management:

17.1. Commission members will use SharePoint – (other options are available) - to share information in a timely fashion.

18. Decision Making:

18.1. Meetings of the Women's Commission there will be a quorate of eight members present when a key decision is made.

19. Budgets:

Budget spend is a key decision

19.1. The Commission will agree budget spend at the beginning of each financial year for projects and programmes, and will be agreed by consensus. Budgets are not devolved to task groups.

19.2. Decisions at Women's Commission will be based on a majority vote where there is no consensus. Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair will have a deciding vote.

20. ToR Review:

20.1. ToR will be reviewed every three years

N.B. Terms of Reference is to be used in conjunction with the code of practice

- Terms of Reference