

THE
STAFF
COLLEGE

PUBLIC SECTOR LEADERSHIP FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

LEADING IN COLOUR

The fierce urgency of **NOW**



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Looking YOU in the eyes

‘Leading in Colour – the fierce urgency of NOW’

is aimed at white leaders across the public sector, and in particular, at Chief Executives, Council Leaders, Partnership Boards and their teams. **It’s designed to be both an urgent call for action and a helpful resource to support you to become and stay an inclusive, culturally competent leader in a fairer workplace, as well as an active contributor towards creating fairer communities. It provides the context, the inescapable evidence and the tools to help you initiate deep-rooted and sustained change for colleagues and for communities.**

This publication offers you insights and learning on understanding and combatting inequality, recognises the context of Black Lives Matter

‘It’s in your hands to make a better world for all who live in it’²

**Black the political and inclusive definition.*

(BLM) and highlights what we know so far about the impact of COVID-19 on existing inequalities experienced by Black^{1*} people. It shares the voices and views of Black staff and provides an overview of multi-dimensional racism on the lived experiences of families and communities.

It constructively challenges you to consider and act on all forms of racism in your workplace and across the communities you support and serve. Recognise your own instincts to resist or minimise concepts. Stay with troubling feelings as you explore your thinking. Use them to galvanise your leadership action. We offer practical support, strategies and resources to you, a white leader, to help you act on uncomfortable truths and lead enduring, inclusive change.

So read, reflect, own and step up to the plate to lead and champion your organisation and your communities to become and stay inclusive, diverse and fair, right now.

What's in this publication for you?

Wherever you lead, the brief context '*Looking you in the eyes*' highlights the urgency of coming off the touchline and leading the action to combat racism within the workplace and for local people now.

Subsequent sections bring together interconnected issues and ideas in one place, with direct questions throughout to challenge and channel your thinking and action:

- ✓ **'Why you and why now?':** Sets out a direct and personal challenge to you
- ✓ **'Do you know what your Black staff are saying – are you listening?':** Offers an approach to hearing staff voices and views
- ✓ **'Uncomfortable Truths – what we know now: COVID-19, Racial Inequality and Hatred':** Provides emerging learning from what's happening right now
- ✓ **'Seeing the whole picture – using what we know (and can't unknow) differently':** Gives insights into understanding and addressing the local impact of multi-dimensional racism
- ✓ **'Compounding and multiplying inequality – opportunity for change you can lead and deliver':** Suggests using Cultural Competence as a way to tackle entrenched, everyday racism and promote and embed learning within service design and delivery
- ✓ **'Starting with self – what's it like to be a white leader?':** Why this is so upfront, so personal and so urgent
- ✓ **'Becoming and staying inclusive, diverse and fair':** Sets out the moral imperative and organisational benefits of promoting and sustaining a diverse environment and an inclusive culture, and the steps you can take to achieve both
- ✓ **'Courageous Conversations':** A powerful tool to initiate irreversible change organisationally, across partnerships and within communities
- ✓ **'What actions and risks am I prepared to take personally to create and sustain fairer workplaces and fairer communities?':** A call to action for you to reflect on and respond to in your local context, now
- ✓ **Resources to help:**
 - **Conversations** to support leaders in this work
 - **Assurances** local leaders might wish to seek
 - **Glossary** of words and phrases in this space
 - **A curated resource** of key blogs, books and podcasts for you to draw on
- ✓ **And the last word:** an end note and thank you from Jo Davidson, Principal of The Staff College to encourage and challenge you to start Leading in Colour **NOW!**

So, read, reflect, be supported and challenged into action, recognising the fierce urgency of NOW!



Why you and why now?

***'If you want your team to stand up for inclusion,
you need to stand up'³***

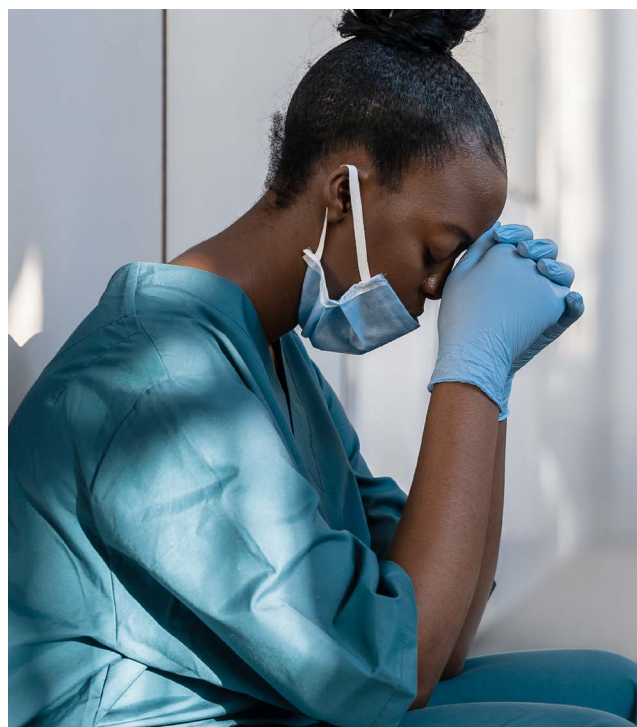
Right now, it's a time of heightened focus on racism in society and a recognition of the need to tackle deep-rooted and long-standing inequalities. BLM, a global response to the murder of George Floyd, intensified and highlighted the strength and depth of feelings about the impact of inequalities, white privilege and multi-dimensional racism on Black people's lived experiences. **However, there's a track record of many 'moments' not seized, many waves uncaught and many batons dropped, so how best can you make a real and enduring difference this time?** It's important to acknowledge and own the impact this inaction, your inaction, has on Black colleagues and Black people living, learning, working, growing up and growing older within your communities.

COVID-19 means uncertain times for all of us. In complex and uncertain times doing nothing is not an option, neither is sitting back and waiting for 'as was' to reappear. The reality of the pandemic has been stark for many Black families, key workers, those living with disabilities and older people. The health impact has hit them disproportionately hard on top of the existing pervasive and cumulative inequalities experienced by their communities. However, tackling COVID-19 has brought rich and immediate learning in many areas both about what matters and what works. We can't unknow what we know but the trick and wisdom is now to use it differently and better to create sustainable change.

Among others, The Staff College, Skills for Care and the King's Fund have listened to staff voices and views. Feedback from The Staff College Black and Asian Leadership Initiative (BALI) participants is overwhelmingly positive about the support, agency and strategies on offer to them, but a common theme is while feeling personally energised, hopeful, skilled and ready to help effect change and improvement, the reality is a return to a workplace or partnership forum that remains stubbornly and inherently racist and dominated by 'snowy white peaks.'⁴

Many express doubts that they will ever see change in their lifetimes.

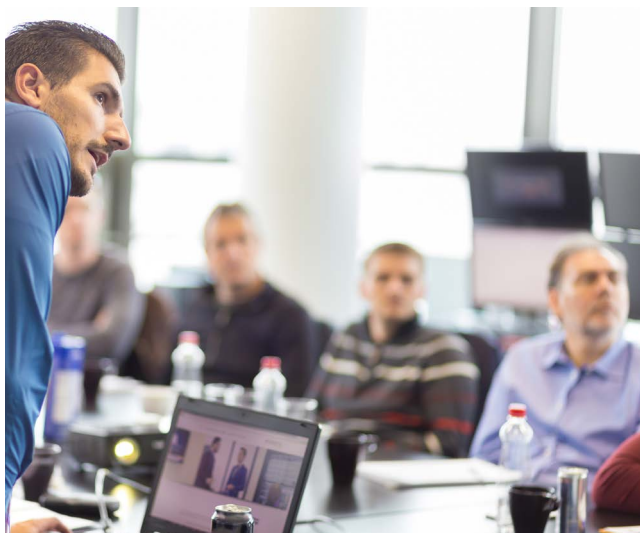
Those feelings and doubts are echoed in the work Skills for Care has undertaken to look into the issues facing their Black workforce and those they care for. Black staff highlighted racism, progression and representation and health issues as major challenges and many expressed concerns about the lack of organisational acceptance, recognition, respect and being valued.⁵



The King's Fund has been both listening to staff and charting race inequalities in the NHS workforce and vividly captures the consequences of racial discrimination in the workplace:

'feeling isolated, misunderstood, undermined and ignored, among other things.'⁶

The Interim NHS People Plan⁷ recognised the NHS 'shortcomings' in inclusion and diversity and the subsequent 2020/21 'We are the NHS: People Plan – action for us all'⁸ highlights the importance of a 'culture of belonging and trust' and identifies the biggest challenge is to practise inclusive



leadership every day and at every level, and *‘take considered, personal and sustained action to improve the working lives of our NHS people and the diverse communities we serve.’*

Staff look to their leaders to lead the charge and champion the change towards fairer workplaces and fairer communities. The reality and disappointment for many is that this doesn’t seem to be a corporate priority and, for them, it feels like their top leaders are missing from the debate and its ensuing action.

Truly inclusive leadership is never going to be easy, comfortable or simple. It’s definitely not a quick fix but a long and important haul. There is no anti-racism satnav to sort out a straightforward fast track route to a final destination. Neither is it just about collecting more data – there are plenty of statistics, signposted in later sections, on the multi-dimensional consequences of racial prejudice and structural inequalities across employment, health, education, criminal justice and moreover, scant evidence of co-engagement in developing place-based metrics that matter and using them to take resolute action and effect long-term systemic change.

Neither is it about adding a sympathetic slogan to twitter feeds, writing a blog or two, putting up

supportive posters, setting up an initiative and then watching from the side-lines or inviting Black colleagues to make it happen and then stepping back. The starting point and the staying point is upfront and personal. As James Baldwin, the writer and civil rights campaigner, put it:

‘Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.’⁹

In 2020, ‘The Colour of Power’¹⁰ offered a graphic snapshot of those who hold political, public and third sector top jobs. It vividly highlights that **most senior public sector leaders are white so how do white leaders explore and acknowledge their own values, beliefs and attitudes and how these implicitly or explicitly impact on their anti-racism leadership?** Scrolling through the mostly male and pale faces and facts evokes a visceral reaction – but does it then just fade away? As your top team comes together for their regular meetings, what does your collective photo-shot say about its diversity?

So it is unambiguously about you, this is your work and this is your work now. It’s hard work, but necessary urgent, vital, painful and powerful leadership work. There’s a dearth of proven interventions and it demands concerted leadership effort and personal action across the public sector. As uncomfortable as it is for white leaders, it is critical they consider the lived daily experiences of racism their staff have had for years. Black staff have no choice about comfort. **This is work where leaders, particularly white leaders, can’t be in the commentary box or on the side lines. You have to be on the pitch, staying out there and leading from the front, where you’re likely to be leading without knowing the answers or even the questions to ask.** As Winona Laduke highlights:

‘There’s no social change fairy. There is only change made by the hands of individuals.’¹¹



Do you know what your Black staff are saying – are you listening?

‘I noticed how people stood up a little straighter, saw themselves differently, when they learned that their voices mattered’¹²

What are you hearing from your Black colleagues? We have lots of feedback from Black staff about their experiences and feelings about culture and practices across the public sector which disadvantage and disempower them, their views about approaches to change and their perspectives on white leadership.

There are many ways you can listen to Black staff – one simple way is to discuss a shared text – a book club approach.

In the context of the killing of George Floyd, the global protests associated with BLM, the uncomfortable truths about racism in the UK that followed and the emerging learning about the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black communities, The Staff College held a Summer 2020 ‘Blue Sky Thinking’ festival. Two of the ‘Blue Sky’ book clubs explored Black leadership and cultural competence each

focusing on a think piece, one session sharing reflections on ‘Leadership Imbalance: Black and Asian leaders missing in action’¹³ and the other on the interlinked ‘Cultural Competence – Promoting leadership and organisational change’.¹⁴

The first book club looked at the challenges faced by talented Black leaders in getting recruited, then surviving and thriving once they arrive. Black leaders talked about having additional, often unwelcomed, racial equality expectations thrust upon them, leading to the assumption that they are a Black leader, rather than a leader who happens to be Black. Selection and Recruitment processes within organisations continue to sieve out rather than include in, and staying there, once you get there, remains a challenge. Black staff at all levels consistently and persistently feature

disproportionately in grievance and disciplinary procedures. Our book club conversations were rich and insightful, informed by unfolding events.

Book clubs are a powerful way of having courageous conversations (more about these later) and worth the time to read and reflect together and really hear what staff, your staff, are saying right now to you about their experiences. So, are you listening...and really hearing?

This is what we heard from BALI participants:

*'Little has changed between
then and now'*

*'As a black leader, whether you want it or
not, you have a mantle placed on you
...a black tax'*

'Change won't happen for my generation'

***'When you walk into a panel that doesn't
look like you, your confidence goes'***

'Councils recruit in their mirror image'

*'How diverse is their 'go to'
recruitment agency?'*

***'We gave a number of challenges to our
Chief Executive... he just gave them back
to the Senior Leadership Team'***

*'As a BAME member it's very difficult to
bring my whole self to work'*

*'C19 has given me a bit of a window into
my staff, I know more about
them than ever before'*

'Who do I look up to? Who do I relate to?'

*'Who are the fire starters for us?
...We just don't have a script
in terms of what it looks and feels like'*

***'I've got a very white Chief Executive,
he might learn from me as much
as I could from him'***

Do you recognise some or all of this about the organisation you lead? What resonates for you? How are you planning to respond? What will you do? And how will you and your Black colleagues know positive change is happening for them?

The second book club looked at the systemic issues in promoting culturally competent leadership and organisational change. We heard:

***'As a white leader I feel these issues really
acutely, how can I get past that point?
How can I have that conversation?'***

*'We had an anti-racism event 5 years ago,
and now post BLM we're having another...'*

*'My biggest challenge is identifying the
intangible barriers and grasping them'*

***'I'm a white manager and I want my
culturally mixed team to speak up and
speak out. How do I give people the platform
to raise their issues and concerns?'***

*'I know sometimes I'm only hearing a small
group prepared to share their views'*

***'In our council we're ending the 'nice
words, good intentions' era as we're not
seeing significant change or structural
difference...we know it's our problem,
we can't 'other' it and we're stopping
saying 'hard to reach'.***

*'What do councils who better support the
communities they serve actually look like?'*

*'I want to see change, but I can't visualise it.
Why don't they share their vision?'*

***'As a white person how can I
challenge more?'***

*'Although our politicians reflect our
community, we're 'white on top'*

*'The data doesn't lie...we're a black and
brown borough'*

'How can we ignite the conversations?'

***'We've all got a contribution to make...
Let us in'***



We were hearing that white and Black Leaders are simultaneously more aware of the issues and more afraid of saying and doing the ‘wrong’ things, albeit for different reasons and with different consequences.

Issues emerging from our listening and learning included the need to understand how to create a safe space for sharing and facing up to uncomfortable truths.

How do you lead and grow a culture which prioritises understanding current realities, rather than one that may be prizing a colour blind status quo? Our follow up? Writing and sharing this piece! So what will yours be?

The King’s Fund findings from their learning and research were similar, including the need for safe spaces as *‘high-stakes moments often involve discomfort and challenge.’*¹⁵ So that the Fund can strengthen its focus on addressing racism, both in the health and care system and

within its own organisation it is sharing widely tools and resources which *‘support senior leaders to enquire and listen, to find solutions ‘with’ rather than ‘for’ and to share their power,’*¹⁶ understanding that to come together across hierarchy and have honest dialogue where *‘it feels safe to be authentic and vulnerable is crucial to ...transformation.’*¹⁷

Skills for Care decided to put equity, diversity and inclusion at the centre of their work, with a commitment to articulate what that means in practice in the spirit of *‘actions speak louder than words’*. In particular one priority action has been to listen to what newly qualified social workers are telling them about experiences in their first supported year of practice. As well as some examples of proactive efforts to address inequalities, such as positive leadership to consider and promote white ‘allyship’ for Black staff, they heard that, for many workers, issues were dealt with reactively and *‘responses tended to be more process driven and procedural.’*¹⁸ Another insight from listening to staff early on in their careers was that although there were

organisational equality and diversity policies these didn't translate easily into day-to-day practice: *'Supervision is a bit reactive rather than proactive, it gives a focused opportunity to say if something has happened, but nothing that keeps the issues highlighted'.....'equality is raised in supervision, but feels more of a tick box.'*

Skills for Care also did what many organisations do and launched a survey. The response¹⁹ they received was loud and clear with significant concerns expressed about experiences of racism and discrimination at work. They are now working to address what they heard to embrace diversity and embed improvements. One of their recent blogs featured Clenton Farquharson, MBE, where he made the painfully true point that ***'people confuse racism with racial abuse; racial taunts and jibes rather than as an institutional problem.'***²⁰

More recently GatenbySanderson, as part of their work in supporting The Staff College's UPON aspirant leaders programme, undertook research to look into the opportunities and barriers to increasing ethnically diverse leadership in children's services. Their report 'Breaking through the Mistrust'²¹ underlines the significant gaps between *'the perception that stakeholders have of what employees from ethnically diverse communities experience in the workplace, compared to the reality of what they live through'* and emphasised the importance of *'better embedding diversity and inclusion in training programmes and in ongoing conversation in the workplace, particularly in regard to inclusive leadership and anti-racism.'*

What resonates powerfully from all these voices is everyone's core need and entitlement to acceptance and agency, to belief and belonging, and to connectivity and contribution. These are not there for many Black workers much of the time.

What does your preferred future inclusive organisation look like? Does everyone you lead know about and actively work together to achieve your goal?

- **How will it feel to the colleagues that work with and for you along the way to getting to that preferred future? What will be changing for the communities you serve and support? How will you be contributing to achieving a just society?**
- **Are you sure you've identified any dissonance and disconnect between organisational rhetoric and everyday reality?**
- **What will you do next? By when?**
- **What impact and difference will it make?**
- **How will you and others know?**

***'To be known. To be heard.
To have one's unique identity
recognised and seen as
worthy. It was a universal
human desire.'***²²



Uncomfortable Truths – what we know now: COVID-19, Racial Inequality and Hatred

‘Black colleagues have lost their lives in greater numbers than any other group’²³

Arguably, one of the most overused phrases in 2020 was ‘unprecedented’. However, it is hard to find ways to express the cumulative impact of all that has happened to date. On top of the histories that have created significant issues of inequality for our Black key workers, families and communities, COVID-19 has intensified social and health inequalities, with different sets of challenges for those from diverse cultures. The King’s Fund in their report updated in April 2021 highlight that *‘the virus has taken a disproportionate toll on groups already facing the poorest health outcomes’* and record the ‘higher rates of mortality within ethnic minority communities’ alongside the structural disadvantages they already face. They cautioned that *‘...economic and social consequences of measures to contain the virus risk worsening these inequalities.’²⁴*

Numerous reports were released in 2020 and 2021 highlighting the increased risks identified and experienced by Black groups from all cultures. These include Public Health England ‘Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups’,²⁵ the ‘NHS People Plan’²⁶ which highlighted that, as the largest employer of Black people in the country, they recognised the stark fact that ***‘there is an association between belonging to some ethnic groups and the likelihood of testing positive and dying of COVID-19’.***



Additional reports examining the differing outcomes for Black communities of COVID-19 have been published, including two reports, one by SAGE (The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies)²⁷ and the other from the JCVI (The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation)²⁸ at the end of December 2020. Significantly each of those reports highlighted structural racism amongst the many factors that are playing a role in the impact of COVID-19 on those communities from different cultures, with different languages and of different religions than their white peers. The SAGE report sets out a helpful **‘Conceptual Model to understand COVID-19 ethnic inequalities’** which outlines that *‘The differences for understanding COVID-19 between ethnic groups could occur at multiple points from exposure to the virus, through infection to the development of severe disease.’²⁹*

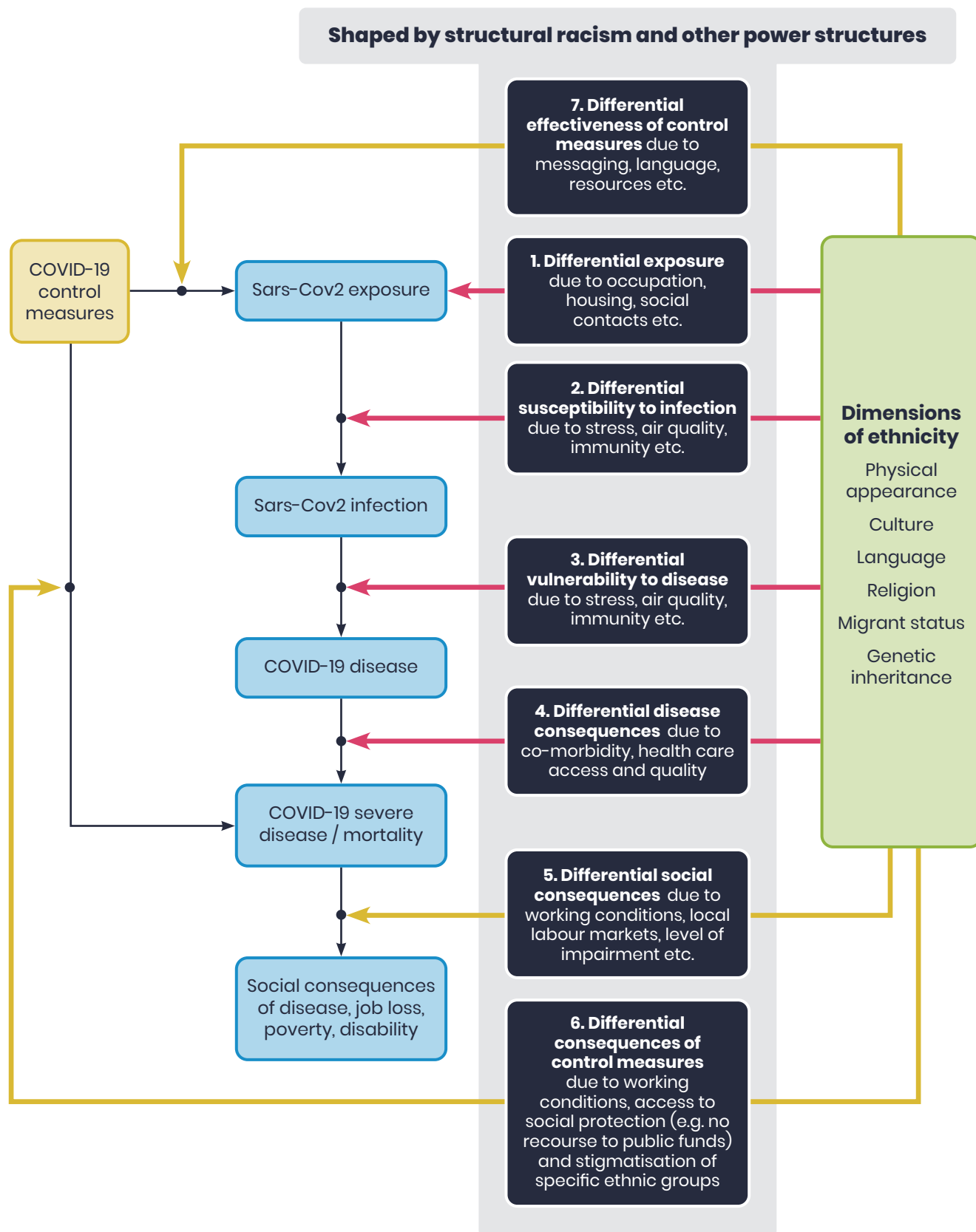


Figure 1: A framework for understanding ethnic inequalities in COVID-19, adapted from Diderichsen et al (6).

Ethnic inequalities can arise through seven different pathways, with pathways 1-4 impacting on the direct health impacts of COVID-19 disease. Differential effectiveness of COVID-19 control measures (7) is the focus of another SAGE subgroup paper; Differential social consequences of experiencing disease (5) and Differential consequences of pandemic control measures (6) are outside the scope of this paper but are under-researched areas. The main text summarises epidemiological evidence related to pathways 1-4. Note that the total burden of ethnic inequalities in COVID-19 harms (e.g. deaths) is likely to reflect causes that occur along pathways 1-4 plus 7 cumulatively. COVID-19 control measures (7) include all government, public health and health system responses taken to control the pandemic. Each of the pathways reflects potential targets for intervention to reduce ethnic inequalities in health.



To fully understand the various factors affecting Pathways 1-3 more research information is needed. Additional research has been commissioned by the Government through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and a range of research studies have commenced which are reporting this year and in 2022 on issues relating to racial disparities.³⁰ The SAGE Ethnicity Sub-group considers the research and reasons for racial disparities and in March 2021 their report 'Interpreting differential health outcomes among minority ethnic groups in wave 1 and wave 2'³¹ stated *'It is clear from ONS quantitative studies that all minority ethnic groups in the UK have been at a higher risk of mortality through the COVID-19 pandemic...[and] data on wave 2 (1st September 2020 – 31st January 2021) shows a particular intensity in this pattern of differential mortality among Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups'*.

Although The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED) report³² did not focus in detail on COVID-19 in their report they highlighted that *'Black African men were almost 3.4 times more likely to die than White British men, with Black Caribbean and South Asian people also being at higher risk of death'*.³³ The newer ONS data examined by the SAGE Ethnicity sub-group in March, identified qualitative and sociological evidence that suggests the mortality rates in Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups in wave 2

are due to the amplifying intersection of health inequities, disadvantages associated with occupation and household circumstances, barriers to accessing health care and potential influence of policy and practice on COVID-19 health seeking behaviour.³⁴ For those communities in particular they also recognise that ***'...press and political coverage has often singled out multi-generational households in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods as a particular source of transmission. This has fuelled social division, hostility and stress for groups such as Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities'***.³⁵ In their view *'It is essential that the public environment changes...if COVID-19 becomes endemic in a local area, public communications and media should clearly state this is due to the structural driver of socio-economic disadvantage, and supportive messages should be given to avoid compounding stigma and exclusion, and thereby worsening health outcomes from COVID-19.'* They also highlight the need to move away from the language of *'hard to reach groups'* and consider why certain groups may find it difficult to protect themselves from COVID-19 exposure. Importantly they recognise that research highlight stress and stigma as factors that can suppress the immune response exacerbating the risk of disease consequences. Given the issues above relating to the social stigma, division and hostility towards different communities during the second wave, figures from the Home Office published in The House of Commons Library Briefing paper³⁶ on hate crime statistics under COVID-19 restrictions, showed an increase in June and July 2020 with the June figure increasing by one third. The CRED report identified that on average there are 142 racially motivated hate crimes per day and acknowledge that tackling issues of racial or religious hate crimes within communities needs to be addressed but although recognising that *'these crimes cause serious and lasting trauma in people's lives.'*³⁷

The CRED report ultimately concluded that **'...it is impossible to drive the overall figure down to zero – sadly certain types of people are what they are.'**³⁷

In our view this underlines the need for greater cultural competence and inclusive leadership resulting in positive changes in attitudes, behaviours and actions. CRED also fails to recognise the real and present threats identified by the Security Service, MI5.

In late 2020,³⁸ MI5 Director General, Ken McCallum spoke to journalists for the first time since taking up his post. He set out the extraordinary context facing the UK: COVID-19; how MI5 has supported the efforts to fight the pandemic and recognition that although lockdown halted some physical threats, it also saw an increase in cyber threats both from within the UK and from outside of the UK. From his perspective the *'threat landscape never stands still.'*³⁹

From that landscape he outlined three areas: Northern Ireland, Islamic extremist terrorism and Right-Wing extremist terrorism. Speaking about the last two, he was clear that by volume Islamic terrorism remains the largest threat, but went on to highlight the 'sadly rising threat of Right-Wing Terrorism' and outlined how MI5 are tackling it:



*'We operate entirely the same system as on Islamist extremist terrorism, with cases pursued by the same counter-terrorist professionals within the same part of the MI5/police machine, operating to the same thresholds, prioritised on the basis of threat and risk rather than ideology. This threat is not, today, on the same scale as Islamist extremist terrorism. But it is growing: 8 of the 27 late-stage terrorist attack plots in Great Britain disrupted by MI5 and CT Policing since 2017, have been right wing extremist.'*⁴⁰

Ken McCallum went on to talk about how MI5 are creating an inclusive culture through employing a diverse rich mix of staff that enjoy working together *'...giving of our best and able to be our full selves, high on commitment, low on ego.'*⁴¹

In considering issues of terrorism, grooming and recruiting followers, it is essential we are not blind to this rising right-wing threat. Watching the reactions to the Global protests calling for racial equality, was both inspiring and worrying.

Violence by anyone is wrong and simply unacceptable. The attempts to obfuscate and deflect issues to avoid considering inherent inequalities that people face day in and day out rose.

The space around recognising structural racism in the UK is a contested one with divisive discourse around people being 'too woke' and 'Wokedom rules'. These narratives, many played out through social media, are designed to shift attention away from the issues at the heart of racism. Indeed, there are now UK organisations who, for a membership fee, might offer help *'If you find yourself being targeted by a digital outrage mob on social media for having exercised your legal right to free speech, we may mobilise an army of supporters.'*⁴² This rhetoric is unhelpful.

So in relation to these uncomfortable truths how are you demonstrating compassionate, inclusive leadership:

- **Behind every statistic is a human story, the story perhaps of one of your colleagues or one of your residents – how are you planning to use the emerging learning from COVID-19 and the broader inequalities Black communities are facing in place-based discussions and plans?**
- **Are you confident that previous local reviews, reports and commissions on inequalities in your area haven't been undermined or put aside?**
- **Is your Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)⁴³ changing to reflect what you now know so far about how COVID-19 has intensified social and health inequalities for Black families locally?**
- **We are hearing from many Black staff that they are experiencing the inequalities of COVID-19 first-hand, with significant family losses. How are you hearing from your Black staff and what action will you take forward?**
- **How are you looking after at risk staff, prioritising their physical and psychological safety, as well as looking out for and addressing the impact on local communities?**
- **What more can and should you be doing with and through partners – are there opportunities to maximise the potential of Integrated Care Systems here?**

Martin Luther King Jnr gave a speech in 1965 entitled 'Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution'.⁴⁴ He talked about the then increasing global recognition of racism and inequality, '*the distinctive feature of the present revolution is that it is worldwide*', one cannot fail but to make a parallel with the global responses to BLM protests in 2020 and the storming of Capitol Hill in January 2021. He ended his speech by warning about inaction:

'If you go home, sit down and do nothing about the revolution which we are witnessing you will be the victims of a dangerous optimism'

Seeing the whole picture – using what we know (and can't unknow) differently

***'Race is always with me'*⁴⁵**

Being on the balcony and seeing the bigger picture is always critical to leading effectively. But waiting for a perfect image isn't an option – there will always be more data emerging, the picture may be incomplete but there's enough insight and testimony from lived experience of your staff and your residents, together with partnership evidence and national statistics, to enable you to act on the multi-dimensional aspects of how racism affects your staff and your communities. **Do you know what life is like for those you support, serve and employ?**

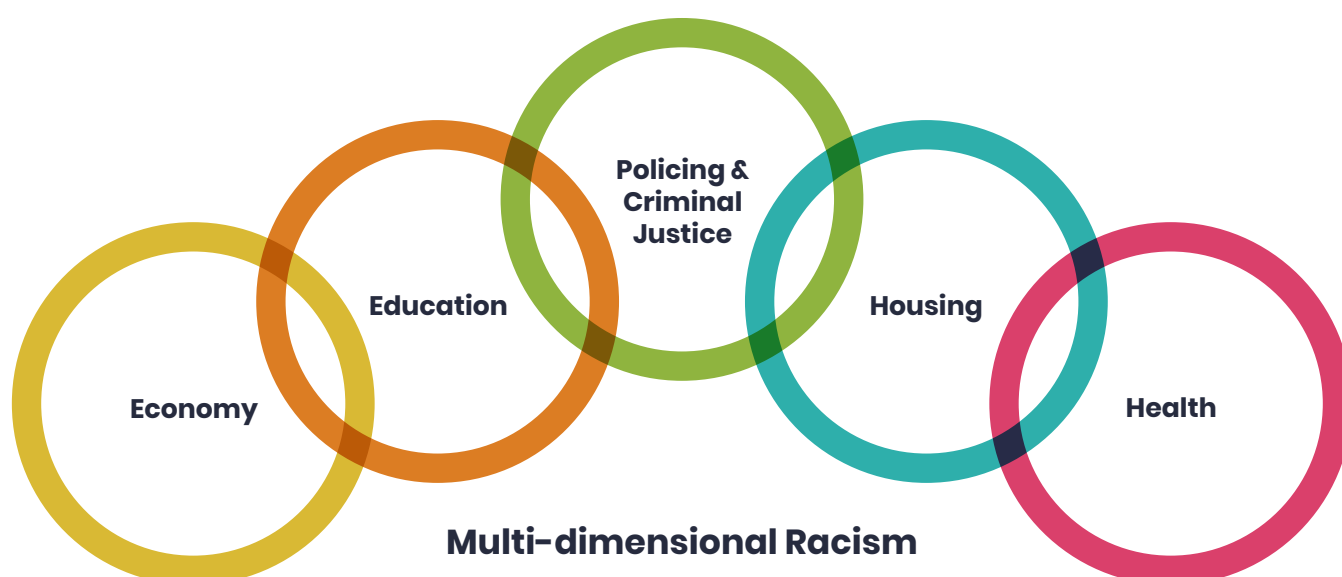
In parts of the UK there are fewer Black communities than the national average, in some organisations this leads to a view that there is 'no problem here'. For example, ONS data for the South West region shows that 4.3% (215,000) of those living there are Black, Asian or of dual heritage.⁴⁶ A number of reports have been conducted into their experiences of racism.

As one report highlighted that *'Rurality can mask the impact of social exclusion and racism among small scattered BME populations'*.⁴⁷

In March 2021, using DfE data on exclusions (2018/9) The Guardian⁴⁸ highlighted the inequalities in such areas in relation to the exclusion of Black Caribbean children, in some, rates were as high as 12.4% compared to 2.4% of their white peers. Be under no illusion, racism occurs in all regions, we have included some of their stories in the resources.

Seeing issues in isolation means failing to see the whole pernicious picture of how racism becomes compounded by so many aspects of life. To explore this further we highlight just three key inequalities running across the following five areas: Economy, Education, Policing and Criminal Justice, Housing and Health.⁴⁹

What would your local information tell you? What are you doing, in place-based partnerships, to tackle issues effectively and secure sustainable change?



- Of the bottom 40% of National incomes, almost half are from Black, Asian or Other Ethnic Groups. These groups are most likely to be in persistent poverty.
- Black African and Bangladeshi communities have 10p for every £1 of white British wealth and are therefore 10 times more likely to be unable to cope with the economic costs of COVID-19.⁵⁰
- October 2020 post-furlough figures show Black groups' unemployment rose by 22% compared to the overall 7% rise, it also showed those in areas of deprivation and on insecure contracts were more affected.⁵¹
- Children receiving Free School Meals (FSM) have lower attainment overall, with the biggest gap for Gypsy, Roma or Irish Traveller backgrounds, Black children are more likely to be eligible for FSM than some of their peers.
- Racial disparities in school exclusions is a complex area, however the latest DfE data highlights that Black and dual heritage children from Caribbean communities are more likely to be excluded than their peers, receiving twice the rate of both fixed term and permanent exclusions than their peers.⁵² If excluded at the age of 12, Black children are 5 times more likely to end up within the Adult prison population than their white peers.⁵³
- Children excluded by schools for a fixed term are more likely at the age of 18/19 to be unemployed.
- White children committed 61% of all serious offences but only accounted for 51% of children in custody.⁵⁴ Black children are still more likely to be arrested, more likely to be held in custody on remand, receive generally harsher penalties and children from BAME backgrounds now make up more than half of all children in custody.⁵⁵
- Inequality in Stop and Search powers remains and, during COVID-19 members of Black communities both male and female, were 6 times more likely to be stopped under those powers than their white peers.
- The Law Society highlighted that some of the COVID-19 measures have had unintended but nevertheless disproportionate impacts on vulnerable groups, causing hardship for the people affected by them. This includes access to legal advice and representation for those living in institutionalised settings such as mental health units, immigration detention centres, youth offender institutions and prisons and access to services and safeguards.⁵⁶
- BAME households have the highest housing footprint within the privately rented sector and social housing compared with their white peers. Insecure tenures and ending of Covid-19 restrictions on evictions are likely to affect particularly those in the privately rented sector. Overcrowding also disproportionately affects 30% of the Bangladeshi community and 2% of their white peers.
- Average household income (less housing costs) is divided into five groups (quintiles); over 50% of BAME households fell into the lowest two quintiles whereas 42% of their white peers are represented in the two highest quintiles.
- ONS figures⁵⁷ for the multiple deprivation index show that 44% BAME groups (including mixed groups) are living in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods compared to 9% of their white peers (including White Irish and White Other).

Economy

Education

Policing & Criminal Justice

Housing

- Maternity⁵⁸: Black women are over 4 times more at risk of dying during pregnancy than their white peers, for white women there is an 8 in 100,000 risk of death, for Black women that increases to 34 per 100,000, with an overall tendency suggesting that the inequality gap is increasing.
- Health inequalities and quality-of-life for those aged over 65 is poorest amongst Pakistani, Arab, Gypsy, Roma or Irish traveller backgrounds.
- Black adults are more likely to have experienced mental health issues including anxiety and depression in the last week and Black men are both more likely to be sectioned under the Mental Health Act and more likely to pass through a criminal pathway than their white peers.

Multi-dimensional racism exacerbates individual inequality and intensifies the burden on diverse communities. Tackling these issues requires corporate leadership and concerted action with your partners and perseverance.

There is a dismal and discernible pattern in relation to national reviews, reports and commissions on racial inequalities. In spite of their often grand titles and stated intentions, their impact is invariably undermined by some well-worn strategies, including:

- Refusing absolutely to identify systematic structural racism as being at the root of race inequality
- Having someone lead or block the process, preferably a Black person, perpetuating inaccurately the view that all Black people are a homogeneous group
- Undermining the findings by attacking the process, usually on the basis of lack of 'objective evidence'
- Identifying no real solutions, electing instead to simply describe the plight of Black communities in line with the narratives that are already deeply embedded in the collective psyche, by certain newspapers and think tanks about race.

The CRED report is no exception and it's fair to say there has been animated discussion about both its findings, its silences and its sources. For example, Professor Sir Michael Marmot



indicated that the 'CRED had cited his 2010 study but did not consider the 2020 update or the subsequent study he led on structural factors behind varying COVID outcomes.'⁵⁹ **What is critical, however, is that throughout 2021 and beyond, multi-dimensional racism is the stark reality, the very personal reality for residents who are living, learning, working, growing up and growing older in your communities.**

What's your local bigger picture:

- **Do you know what life is like for those you support, serve and employ?**
- **What is your local multi-dimensional information telling you?**
- **What are you doing, in place-based partnerships, to tackle issues effectively and secure sustainable change?**



Compounding and multiplying inequality – opportunity for change you can lead and deliver

...‘how you could build power not by putting others down but by lifting them up’⁶⁰

These are just a glimpse of the inequalities across those five dimensions and the portrait they paint is stark. Black groups, and different cultural groups under that heading, experience multiple inequalities that serve to compound their very different outcomes when compared to the outcomes of their white peers. There are of course others including gender, disability, class, LGBTQi+ that can add to their inequalities. Kimberlé Crenshaw, coined the phrase ‘Intersectionality’ in the 1960’s and still writes powerfully today about its relevance. You can read more in Resource 4.

COVID-19 and the global outcry for racial equality provides leaders with another opportunity to tackle these and other forms of entrenched, everyday racism. Process discrimination, racist attitudes and behaviours discriminate daily on communities, individuals and staff working in the public sector.

‘Each story, taken in isolation, may seem trivial. But it’s the cumulative effect that wears us down.’⁶¹

Local Councils and their partners vary in the amount of data they collect and what is done differently as a result. Chief Executives are well placed to convene and lead partnership



discussion on the benefits of having a comprehensive set of indices highlighting within their organisations and their communities those with the most compounded impact, recognising that ‘statistics don’t capture what it feels like to be the only black team member’.⁶² As national bodies change shape and focus, for example, The National Institute for Health Protection replacing Public Health England, it is critical that the data and analysis of COVID-19 on the on-going health and well-being needs of communities is available to support local authorities and developing Integrated Care Systems in their commissioning so that inequality gaps do not widen further.

The Multiple Deprivation and Poverty Indices do not comprehensively highlight the totality of racial inequality faced by many of your communities and a multi-dimensional racism index that allows this comprehensive picture to be seen and used to change those inequalities is sorely needed. The COVID-19 pandemic has gathered the worlds’ experts together and capitalising on those links could speed up any future developments.

In the meantime, it's about working with the information that we already have and using it to look at the interplay between the dimensions, at a local place-based level, in order to tackle both individual and local community consequences. Co-produced scenario planning to decide what a local preferred inclusive future looks like offers real opportunities to agree accountability and assurance approaches informed by local communities. The metrics that matter to residents may augment some of the indicators collected through the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)⁶³ or similar organisational equality audits and any assurance arrangements need to consider the direct link between asking and answering 'how well?' and 'what difference?' to making that inclusive future a lived reality for local people now and generations to come.

*'I don't think a day goes by that I'm not reminded that I'm black.'*⁶⁴

The Public Services Committee, recognised that the *'...coronavirus outbreak requires a fundamental rethink of how public services respond to the needs of the communities that they serve'*⁶⁵ and that the *'...pandemic has already encouraged radical thinking in some areas of public policy.'* They recognise that *'schemes have involved collaboration among community groups; the voluntary sector; the private sector; NHS and social care providers; the police; and local authorities and other services, to ensure that the needs of local communities are met.'*⁶⁶

Recognising that responding to the pandemic is still ongoing, what's your local learning from newly evolving partnerships? As a recent CCN publication⁶⁷ highlighted:

'A clear and unified place-based strategy will be important to driving local recovery strategies.'

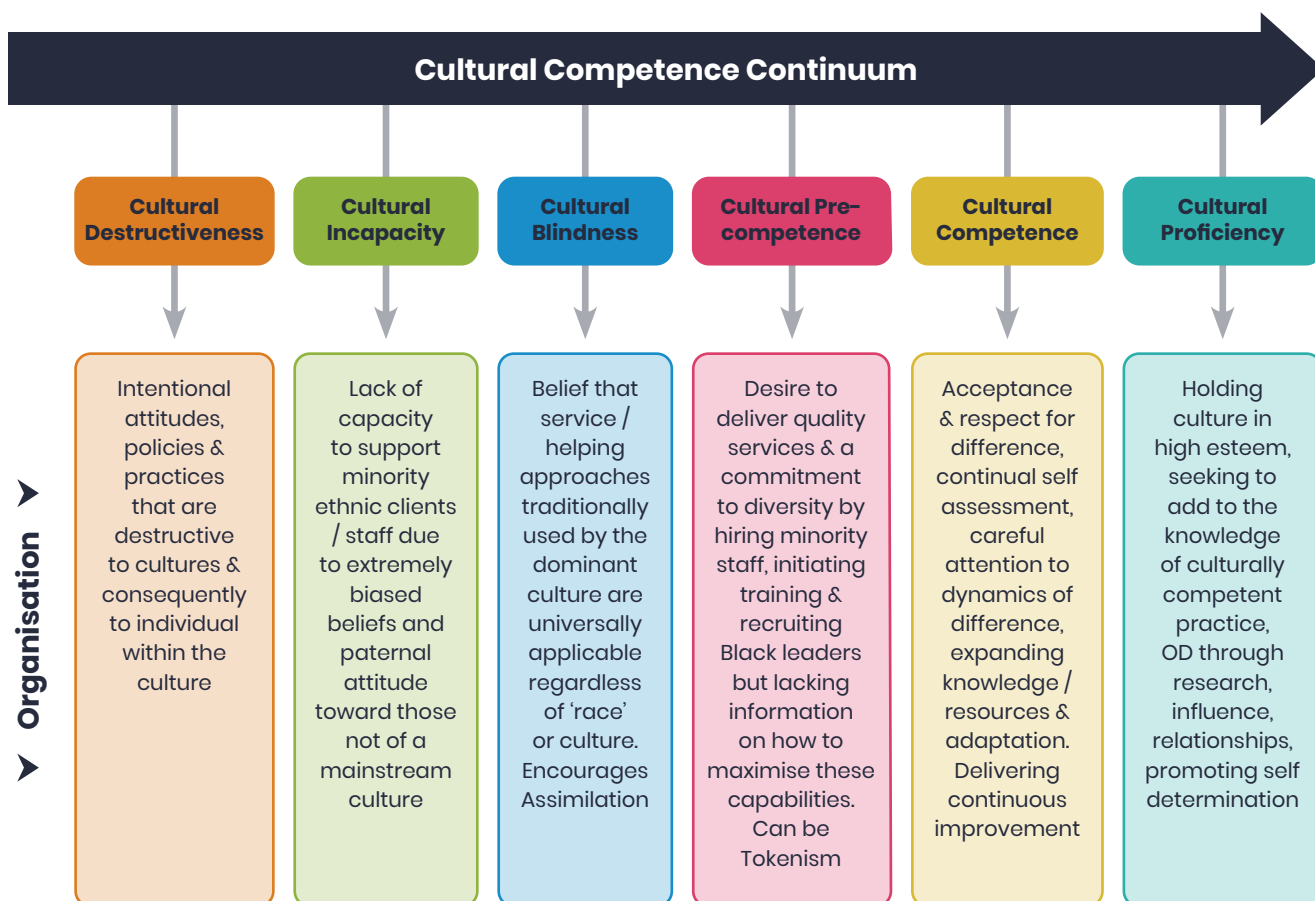
That demands bold, compassionate and creative place-based leadership focused on priorities to re-establish community well-being and local resilience and renewal.

Where's your forum to reflect on the positive and innovative practice that is emerging? What's on its agenda and is it taking sufficient account of multi-dimensional racism? This is a tough, terrible, unsought, but nevertheless unique opportunity, based on the evidence of inequalities, to incorporate learning into new service designs.

Cultural Competence, set out in detail in 'Cultural Competence – Promoting leadership and organisational change',⁶⁸ is an approach that can help cement this into practice. Using the partnerships with local communities, voluntary organisations and across strategic partners it's a way to build and embed this competence into on-going service design, delivery and evaluation.



Cultural Competence enables organisations and individuals to review where they are on the cultural competence continuum to support improvement and engagement of both staff and communities in tackling inequalities. It's 'A set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enables work in cross-cultural situations.'⁶⁹ The model is not simply one about addressing racism, rather it is inclusive of all aspects of inequality. As a way of moving forward with the issues of multi-dimensional and structural racism it is a concept that is flexible and can be co-created by engaging with local communities.



Adapted by M. Spillett (2018) from Terry L. Cross et al 1998 & Julie Coffin 2007.

This is the moment when we can seize the opportunity to fundamentally tackle racial discrimination. Staff as we have seen, are unsure whether this opportunity will be grasped in their lifetime. Surely, we can do better than that? When asked about why previous 'equality' initiatives had not taken hold but had ebbed and flowed, one of the authors of this paper said:

'Perhaps one of the reasons race equality initiatives have not taken hold is that they may have been seen by white leaders as a 'task' to be done and not as a way of life, inside and outside of the work environment. Authentic change requires professional and personal learning with empathy, acknowledging that Black colleagues and communities can never leave the impact of racism behind'.⁷⁰

Do you recognise yourself in that description? In the context of an ongoing response to the pandemic:

- What's your early learning from recent local evolving partnerships?
- What are the strengths and gaps in place-based leadership focused on priorities to re-establish community well-being and local resilience and prosperity?
- Where's your forum to reflect on the positive and innovative practice that is emerging?
- What's on its agenda and is it taking sufficient account of multi-dimensional racism?
- What are the metrics that matter to your staff and to your communities?
- Are equalities just an item on your 'to do' list ... or do they permeate all you do?
- What do you have to change in yourself to effect change for others?



Starting with self – what’s it like to be a white leader?

***‘To move forward out
of this moment without
trying to change is
unethical’⁷¹***

Perhaps one of the hardest things for any of us to do is to explore and acknowledge our own values, beliefs and attitudes and how they consciously or unconsciously affect our leadership on issues of racism. For most Public Sector leaders, investing in reflecting on their own whiteness, how that shapes their understanding of discrimination and how power dynamics are embedded and entrenched into an organisational culture that they've been instrumental in building, is no easy task. But neither is it impossible. You may not have lived experience of racism, you may have experienced some or no discrimination in all that you have done, however, it is possible to self-reflect on why, as a white leader, you have been afforded power and influence simply because of the colour of your skin and consider how you use your social capital to network, get on and 'do business'.

Clenton Farquharson MBE, in an interview on what white privilege is, used the analogy of life as a game of monopoly:

*'In the game, the white players begin playing three days before the Black players do. In addition, having a head start, the white players already possess the properties, wealth, resources and decision-making abilities to succeed in the game. The difference between the players, is power.'*⁷²

Identity is complex and becoming increasingly so. It cuts to the heart of who you are, the way you think and feel about yourself, the way you are viewed by the world and the characteristics that define you. Identity is nuanced and defined in a myriad of constantly evolving ways. In a global context, acronyms such as 'BAME', are not only clumsy and blunt, but becoming increasingly irrelevant due to their inaccuracy within a world-wide context.

However, the acronym BAME, while contentious, is still lazily and some would say intentionally, used across British government agencies and the media in the UK, thereby de-legitimising the right that people so labelled have to self-identify or even 'be', on their terms.

Global Majority Leadership, by contrast, is a collective, inclusive and empowering term that first and foremost speaks to and encourages those so-called, to think of themselves as belonging to the majority on planet earth. It refers to people who are Black, African, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or, have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities'. Globally these groups currently represent approximately eighty per cent (80%) of the world's population, making them the global majority now, and with current growth rates, notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, they are set to remain so for the foreseeable future. Understanding that singular truth may shift the dial, it certainly should permanently disrupt and relocate the conversation on race.

As a white leader you may not have invested much, if any time, reflecting on the colour of your skin. The reality is as Jodi-Ann Burey⁷³ says in a recent TED talk:

'It's easier to be who you are when who you are is all around you.'

Dissonance between your espoused views and your behaviour is seen and noticed by Black staff. Saying you will champion racial equality and then continuing to appoint those already known to your network erodes the confidence Black staff have in you. Reflect on your social capital and networks, are they diverse or just like you?

There are now resources (and see those which support this publication as a starting point) to help white leaders reflect and understand how much of what they take for granted is not taken for granted by their Black staff and communities. Having the discussions on how racism affects individuals will always be akin to



a museum culture, a conversation that Black colleagues don't feel a part of, unless one truly addresses the issues at a personal level. We do not need to invent new words for the overall set of circumstances that see racism and oppressive practices hold back individuals and communities. Let us hold to a definition of institutional racism that still exists today:

*'The collective failure of an organisation to provide appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin.'*⁷⁴

As a white leader, deep and honest self-reflection about race, inclusion and diversity is high-stakes and likely to be discomforting and challenging. It can be painful, especially where traditionally being and leading organisationally has been built on expertise and knowing, whereas systemic racism involves us all but impacts on some more than others. *'It is not easy to face the responsibility of power and privilege, but it is easier than being constantly silenced by them.'*⁷⁵

As a white leader, in all honesty:

- **Are you up for getting behind Black colleagues, speaking out and standing up for them and supporting Black families and communities?**
- **Are you in it for the long haul?**
- **Are you prepared to keep going?**
- **Will you notice and call out macro and micro aggressions and invite your colleagues to examine and change their behaviours?**
- **Reflect on your social capital and networks. Are they diverse or just like you?**
- **Are your own behaviours aligned with your values?**

As The King's Fund's own team highlighted:

'truly engaging with diversity and inclusion feels personal, disruptive and emotional'⁷⁶

Becoming and staying inclusive, diverse and fair

‘Diversity makes us more effective, inclusion makes us stronger’⁷⁷

While it’s a moral imperative to become and stay an inclusive, diverse and fair leader, it also adds huge value organisationally too. Research⁷⁸ identifies that high performing teams are both demographically and cognitively diverse, and together come up with superior judgements, better predictions and wiser strategies, so why wouldn’t you actively work to bring people together with different experiences and perspectives to manage complex problems, lead change and maximise organisational advantage and community benefit?



A helpful start point in moving towards a culture and practice that taps into the contributions every employee can make is to reflect that *‘diversity is the measure, inclusion is the mechanism’⁷⁹* and organisations that focus on both stand a good chance of becoming and staying high performing. *‘Most people feel more committed when they are given the opportunity to make a contribution. It strengthens motivation, boosts creativity, and increases the potential of the entire organisation.’⁸⁰*

Inclusion can mean different things to different people and it’s important to be sure there’s both a shared vocabulary and a shared understanding. For us, inclusion is a sense of belonging: a culture where you feel respected, valued, seen and heard as an individual, with a strong and palpable sense of connectedness with others throughout the organisation, safe to speak up without fear and supported and empowered to grow and do your best work. In short, everyone knows everyone matters.

Inclusive leaders have impact – research by Deloitte⁸¹ highlighted that inclusive leadership behaviours have a powerful impact on team performance (+17%), decision making (+20%) and collaboration (+29%). Staggering statistics but only evidenced in practice if inclusive leadership beliefs and behaviours operate at every level, all the time.

High performing organisations are characterised by their commitment to diversity and a culture of inclusion. Deriving the value of diversity means uncovering all talent, and that means creating a workplace, building partnerships characterised by inclusion.

As Matthew Syed⁸² highlights, homogeneous teams don't just under-perform, they under-perform predictably (if you do what you've always done...), their shared blind spots are constantly reinforced and people put effort into agreeing and mirroring each other, rather than valuing difference, debate and discussion to reach a richer picture and maximise collective wisdom. A clone team is usually a comfortable 'to be in' team, an agreeable but ineffective echo chamber, investing time in staying stuck in the same places and the same silos. Thinking in a linear way about complex multi-dimensional challenges tends to validate status quo and similarity. An ecosystem which shuts out or suppresses diverse perspectives and insights loses out on talent, collective intelligence and increases risk. Ideas need to meet and mate and to enable this, organisational values and behaviours need to support and encourage fresh insights, welcome voices and views that may challenge, dissent and diverge and promote strong interconnected networks through which information flows freely and

Important to reflect whether you lead an organisation where people feel their uniqueness is known and appreciated, their worth valued, an environment where people feel they can offer suggestions, bring fresh perspectives and take sensible risks...or one that prizes corroboration, confirmation, agreement and more of the same.

fast. Cognitive diversity pays off because 'new ideas come from diverse ways of seeing things'⁸³ and coupled with demographic diversity helps teams tap into those new ideas, different perspectives, powerful knowledge and important networks. It fosters a stronger, richer and broader narrative, one in which everyone feels relevant, included and part of a shared goal. It more accurately reflects



people's intersectional complexity rather than a partial focus on one specific aspect of social or demographic identity.

*'...the tough issues embedded in diversity, equity and inclusion can only be effectively raised when employees are not operating in a state of interpersonal fear of speaking about their lived experiences.'*⁸⁴

A key pre-requisite to becoming and staying inclusive is the concept of a workplace that is 'psychologically safe'⁸⁵; the place where colleagues can answer honestly and positively to three simple questions:

- **Can I speak up?**
- **Will I be punished or ridiculed for sharing my opinion?**
- **Can I be honest about who I am and my perspective?**

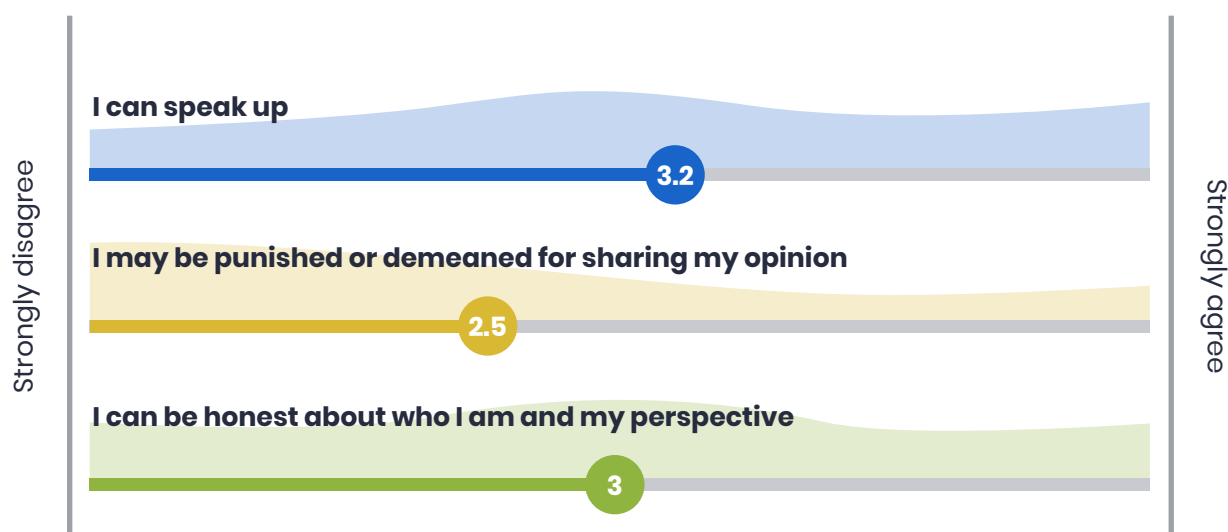
'When you make us responsible for your fear you neutralise the legitimacy of our perpetual discomfort'⁸⁶

As ‘Breaking through the Mistrust’⁸⁷ identified *‘leaders now and leaders of the future need to be equipped to create psychologically safe environments for all employees and lead conversations and drive change on race.’*

Psychological safety is an essential building block for innovation, divergent thinking and

risk taking – all hallmarks of diverse, inclusive high performing teams. So, is your organisation one where people feel safe? When we asked participants on our BALI programme those simple questions recently about how they feel in their workplaces, this is what we heard:

Psychological Safety in Your Organisation



What will you hear when you ask those questions?

A high performance team culture is characterised by individuals feeling safe and confident to speak up with the motivation and support to do their best work. What else might need to happen where you lead for this to be a daily workplace reality for every employee in your organisation?

- **How do you encourage an open culture that welcomes questions not confirmation, dissent and difference not mere assent, and ‘thinking differently’ rather than thinking the same?**
- **Do you demonstrate and model courage in sharing and showing vulnerability, empathy and trust? Or do your organisational values implicitly prize solo ‘heroes’ and dominance hierarchies?**

What do you need to do now to reshape and reset teams to recognise and practice diverse and inclusive leadership?

‘delivering equality of outcome and opportunity should be the professional and moral obligation of every leader in the NHS’⁸⁸

Courageous conversations

‘The discomfort of confronting their own unintended sloppiness, perhaps biases, in what they choose to ignore, privilege and prioritise’⁸⁹

One powerful approach to leading inclusively is the concept of courageous conversations, the ones that are tough, but so critical to have with yourself and with others. These are fundamental conversations that focus on the core equality agenda and help initiate irreversible change for communities.

Inequalities are deepening and escalating and we believe that these are the important and courageous conversations to have with teams, politicians and partners now. We offer some starting points for you to read, reflect, own and, critically, follow up:

- **Acknowledging and understanding the multi-dimensional nature of racism that compounds inequality and poorer outcomes for particular cultural groups**
- **Leading the challenge of landing, embedding and sustaining cultural competency**
- **Being and staying an inclusive white leader**
- **Creating and sustaining the conditions for Black leaders to breakthrough, survive, thrive and add value to top leadership roles**
- **Setting out and progressing what a culturally competent council and partnerships might look like**

Courageous conversations are the ones that always go perfectly when you have them with yourself in front of the bathroom mirror or when



you're talking confidently to your car windscreen. They are often much trickier when you have them for real and other folk inevitably and often uncomfortably have a different perspective to yours. **But however complex, problematic and difficult it may be, leaders seeking to create inclusive and fair workplaces and communities have to find ways to step up and stay up. If you want your teams to stand up for inclusion, you have to stand up first.**

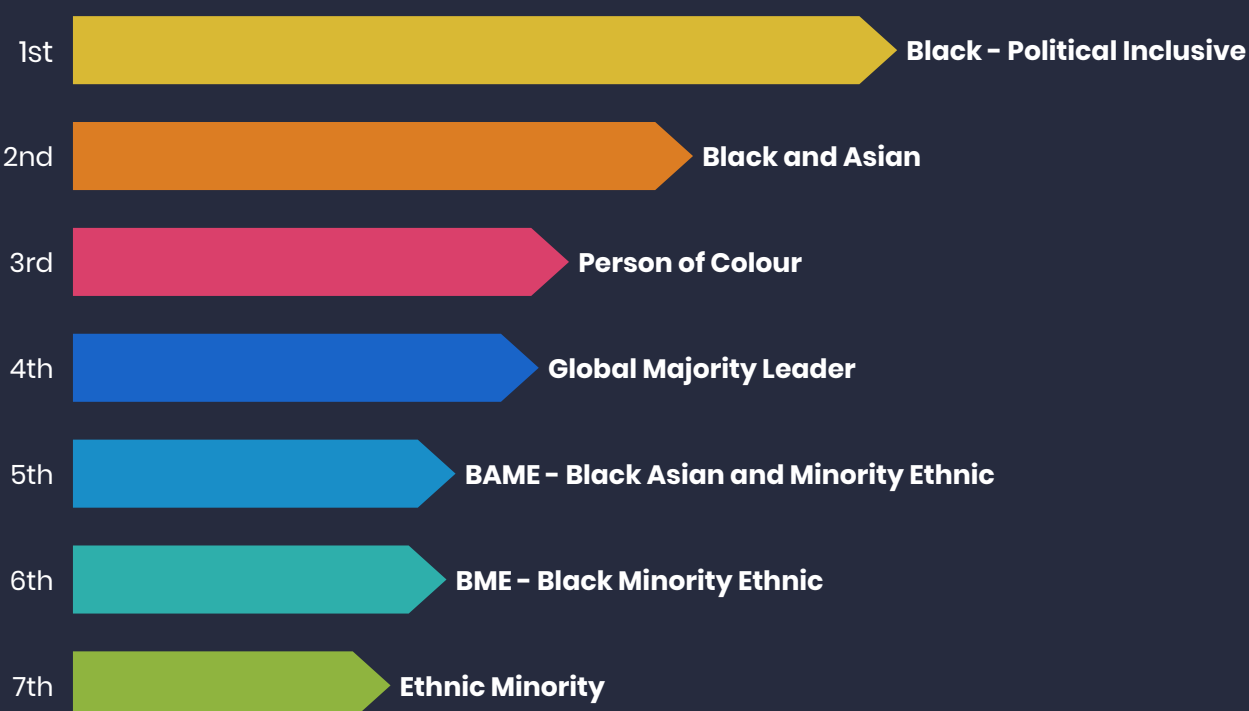
First of all, missteps to avoid:

- **Staying silent:** Many white leaders avoid talking about race because they are fearful of getting it wrong, of lacking the skills or the words, or of being seen as prejudiced, so find it easier to hide behind a corporate diversity policy or adopt a 'strategic colour blind' approach but as Desmond Tutu once said: *'If you are neutral in the situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.'*⁹⁰

- **Being over-defensive:** When leaders open up, really open up, then long held views, positions or advantages will get questioned and challenged. Robin DiAngelo's research on white fragility⁹¹ highlights the importance of fighting back defensive reactions and remembering that comments on systemic inequalities are not (though they may feel so) personal attacks.
- **Over-generalising:** Avoid sweeping generalisations about groups. Individuals who experience racism are not a homogeneous group – why would we expect that? Of course other people experience issues of gender or other identity and may have shared experiences, so it's important to recognise and affirm their diversity too. Leave room for, and encourage, dissent. Don't claim to know how an individual or a group feels. Or stereotype particular groups as aspirational 'models' for all (see more on model minorities in the glossary). As a white leader you can empathise, you can care, you can lead and embed change but you can't walk in a Black person's shoes.
- **Hesitating or using terminology clumsily:** There are many different definitions placed on marginalised and 'othered' groups. The current debates about terminology as they relate to race, can leave the uninitiated, of whatever background, confused, disempowered, disconnected and, metaphorically, on mute. It is ok to ask and the diagram below may help reach a working definition that lands well in your context.

At a recent meeting of BALI, we asked participants to say which of the definitions they preferred (see below), the results show there is a fluidity of responses on terminology.

Which definition do you prefer?



If those are the missteps, what can you do to be an inclusive leader?

‘Where there is disconnect between the lived experience of employees from ethnically diverse communities and leadership, there is opportunity to engage and for leaders to listen and learn’⁹²

Simply, but powerfully:

✓ Tell the truth

Share your candid perspective with others, both about what you know as well as what you don't.

✓ Ask for help

Leadership is not about being an invincible hero. It's not even about being the person in charge, rather it's about releasing and mobilising the forces that bring people together as a team. Being open about your own fragilities and organisational vulnerabilities and your need for everyone's support helps unlock positive commitment and energy.

✓ Benefit from mutual or inclusive mentoring

Previously we'd used 'Reverse Mentoring' to describe this approach but in testing it out as we wrote, we heard the feedback that a more helpful reciprocal phrase is 'mutual mentoring' or 'inclusive mentoring'. Those already within your organisation who have been on the BALI programme or other programmes may be ready and waiting to help you but culture and hierarchy sometimes stops them. Important, however, to guard against optical mutual mentoring or coaching that merely indicates virtue signalling.

✓ Go outside your comfort zone

Leaders who only play to their strengths may well succeed for a while, but inevitably stagnation, operating on auto-pilot and endless repeats of what worked well in a different time will kick in and progress will stall.

✓ Lead by example

Encourage the 'hard to have' conversations which may well be awkward or clumsy *'but where individuals are not afraid to say the wrong thing and learn from the ensuing dialogue.'*⁹³

✓ Continuing Professional Development

Critically consider the training that all leaders in your organisation receive, irrespective of their background, their professional socialisation, the institutional culture of which they become a part, the systems and processes they operate. Do facilitators, content and process come from a white 'as the norm' perspective? Arguably these may have outlived their usefulness in a globalised world.

✓ Inclusive Language

Recognise that different groups will identify themselves differently, allow for that by being clear about the definition you are using and why. How people prefer to identify will shift and change over time. There are of course some definitions like 'non-white' that are not now acceptable, how would you feel if Black staff went around calling white people 'non-black'. Be wary of heralding 'Race Champions' or 'Race Relations leads' these terms are outdated and simply give the impression that it will be others rather than you leading the work. Ask for help and check in with colleagues about preferences ...and be prepared to learn and change your language so it stays invitational and inclusive.





*'For knowledge work to flourish, the workplace must be one where people feel able to share their knowledge.'*⁹⁴

A good starting point for effective courageous conversations is to ask better questions, rather than trying to swiftly fix, solve and tick off the 'to do' list. *'Supplying answers shuts a conversation down...but asking questions, as a way of solving the problem, implies confidence.'*⁹⁵ **Show courage not just in what you ask but in how you listen, reflect and act. Revealing vulnerabilities, being aware of your limitations, and having the humility to reach out to grow your own and others' potential are key ingredients in contexts of uncertainty and interdependence, where it's vital to make progress but it's not clear how. Better questions can help bridge uncomfortable silences and awkward exchanges about power and privilege.** Start small by trying to understand what challenges staff face daily. This set of better questions, based on work by Margaret Heffernan, can provoke and stimulate rich conversations:

Across your organisation, your partnership how easy is it to:

- **Raise concerns?**
- **Ask questions?**
- **Sound the alarm?**
- **Share proposals?**
- **Exchange ideas?**
- **Celebrate success?**
- **Let go, forgive and move forwards?**

And who isn't round the table:

- **Whose voice or what perspective might be missing?**
- **How can I help amplify your voice and that of other under-represented voices?**
- **Do you feel safe enough to contribute?**
- **Do you feel safe enough to take risks at work?**

What's getting in the way:

- **What are the biggest barriers to your success and what should I do to remove them?**
- **What proportion of your time is spent dealing with microaggressions against you or others?**

Will you share that you're reading 'Leading in Colour: the fierce urgency of NOW' because you want to learn and practice inclusive leadership for those you work with and for the communities you support and serve?

As George Dei highlighted: *'Inclusion is not about bringing people into what already exists; it is about creating a new space, a better space for everyone.'*⁹⁶

A courageous conversation doesn't just need better questions, better listening and better reflection, it's also about what you do. Staff value words of care, concern and compassion but **your actions**, the way you use, and continue to use, your power, your platform, your resources to promote equity and justice will have a more lasting impact. Sharing your responses to reading this publication can be one starting point.

‘We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now...Procrastination is still the thief of time.’⁹⁸

Martin Luther King Jnr



Conclusion and Action

‘The call for leaders at all levels, is that they must now be brave enough to ask themselves whether their practices are making a difference to the lived experiences of those who they claim that their work will benefit’⁹⁷

Leadership for racial equality and inclusion has to be upfront and personal. It is about embracing truth and justice, as well as being honest about what you don't know. It demands courage, humility, constant learning and an understanding of workplace and community realities. It means accepting dissent and welcoming challenge. Above all, it can be emotionally draining and yet it is so very necessary right now. Remember Black people around you are dealing with racism daily. It requires asking, reflecting and responding wholeheartedly to ‘What actions and risks am I prepared to take personally to create and sustain fairer workplaces and contribute to fairer communities?’

Agreeing and focusing on what needs to change is critical. And the business case for diversifying leadership and increasing inclusion for the next 12-24 months has to go way beyond representation and recruiting more professionals from Global majority backgrounds into existing structures and systems. A different consciousness and critical lens to that which created the problem in the first place, matched with developing and using empowering language and embedding practice that challenges marginalisation is vital if real and enduring change is going to take place.

The Staff College is well placed to facilitate and support strategic leaders to go outside their comfort zone and to follow through on their commitments to enduring and inclusive change. COVID-19 has had a disproportionate effect on Black groups. At the same time, the pandemic has galvanised profound change in our workplaces with a shift towards being ‘in it together’, mutual trust, learning not blame and a willingness to do things differently. That’s been matched, in many cases, by more community kindness, support and cohesion. It has also seen a rise in far-right challenge and acts of racism against individuals and groups.

This is a pivotal moment to seize and lead a whole systems approach to articulate and live up to shared values and act to make a change where everyone has a role to play in an organisation’s racial equality and inclusion effort – through leadership, participation or allyship. **Black staff and communities have waited many times for these changes to happen and endure. Many of your staff do not believe change will come in their lifetime and they are tired of lip service or nominal change that soon fades away.**

What actions and risks are you prepared to take personally to create and sustain fairer workplaces and contribute to fairer communities?

What will you do today?

Five Resources to help



1. Conversations to support leaders in this work



2. Assurances local leaders might wish to seek



3. Glossary of words and phrases in this space



4. A curated resource of key blogs, books and podcasts for you to draw on



5. And the last word: an end note and thank you from Jo Davidson, Principal of The Staff College, to encourage and challenge you to start now!

We hope this publication provides you and your teams with some constructively challenging issues to consider all forms of racism. Notice and recognise your own instincts to resist or minimise concepts, or defend a status quo you helped to build, instead stay with uncomfortable feelings as you explore your thinking.

- **Resource 1 – Conversations:** sets out all the key challenges and questions across this publication. Will you address these challenges, start those conversations, ask these questions, listen, learn and respond on behalf of those you support, serve and employ?
- **Resource 2 – Assurances:** asks local leaders how they know about the impact of work within their organisations and across their partnerships to address inequalities. It provides some examples of assurance questions to ask to demonstrate their leadership commitment to driving real change for Black staff and residents.
- **Resource 3 – Glossary** offers important insights into the meanings and implications of commonly used words, phrases and acronyms. Language is constantly evolving and it's important to understand the meaning behind terms we and others use, and stay updated and willing to change our language so we use appropriate and respectful terms. The ability to communicate with someone, to understand their experiences and empathise with their struggles is incredibly meaningful and a critical part of forming human connections and a fundamental aspect of leadership.
- **Resource 4 – A curated selection** of books, blogs and podcasts offers you a range of resources to draw on to suit your personal learning style. You may wish to look at white privilege through the lens of Shakespeare or read one of the books or blogs we suggest or watch one of the videos we recommend. Whichever you choose we hope that it continues to solidify your thinking and galvanise your leadership now and in the long-term and helps you secure enduring change with and for your staff and your communities.
- **Resource 5 – And finally:** an end note from Jo, 'Why this and why now' to offer encouragement, support and challenge to you and reaffirm our ask of you to start this work, right now!



Resource 1:

Conversations to support leaders in this work

So what now?

‘Do what you can, with what you have, where you are’⁹⁹

As local leaders of people and place, Chief Executives and Leaders are well placed to decide on the actions they are prepared to take to create fairer workplaces and contribute to fairer communities. 2020 was a year like no other and its legacy lives on for councils charged to rekindle resilience and renewal locally. But 2020 also exacerbated the stark risks for the already vulnerable and marginalised Black communities, so it's a pivotal moment to be sure that there's an explicit focus in recovery priorities and strategies to tackle the even deeper inequalities Black local residents, your residents face. You live, lead and breathe your place, your localities and communities on a daily basis. 2020 and now 2021 have been characterised by tough accelerated leadership decision making in abruptly changing times to deliver the best of what is possible in impossible circumstances. But leadership locally through COVID-19 has highlighted the ways in which common purpose, innovation and renewed partnership can and does get the most out of people and can make a difference to entrenched as well as new challenges.

In terms of what next and what now, consider a 'no decision about me, without me' approach, whether with staff or with residents. Possible principles to guide you – or provoke or even irritate you into saying *'for us, it's like this and this is the way we're planning to tackle entrenched local inequalities'* – might be:

- **Prioritise rigorously** – with an ambition for the best outcomes for Black staff and residents

- **Invest productively** – in developing a fairer workplace and contributing to fairer communities
- **Think strategically** – appreciating what matters locally to Black staff and residents
- **Learn constantly** – by listening and taking **action** on what you hear in this space
- **Collaborate effectively** – through an inclusive system leadership approach

There are no shortcuts or silver bullets for enabling and embedding inclusive workplaces. But it's vital you start somewhere and start now. Think about the questions, challenges and conversations below. Which do you need to have? In what order and with whom? Don't leave out or leave behind your directorate teams, partners, schools, ward councillors or your local communities – they can add value, but only if they are involved, engaged and part of your preferred inclusive future.

So step one, look through the questions below. Read, reflect and then decide on which ones best suit the ways in which you will lead and model diverse and inclusive leadership.

Then consider which conversations you want to have and with whom.

- **Who needs to be round your table?**
- **What do you need to talk about?**
- **What will be different afterwards for those you employ, serve and support?**
- **How will they and you know change is happening and will last?**

Take a breath and then embrace the discomfort of not knowing, resist the urge to oversimplify and go solo, aim for progress, expect mistakes and know you have the ability to adapt as you learn ...and be the inclusive leader both your staff and your communities need.

Why you and why now?

- **Your first step, an initial but critically important step, is to accept the reality about the pervasive and pernicious impact systematic and structural racism has played and continues to play in the UK and globally.**
- **So what's your considered, personal and sustained action to address the discrimination experienced by your staff and the diverse communities you serve?**

Do you know what your Black staff are saying – are you listening?

- **Do you recognise some or all of this about the organisation you lead? What resonates for you? How are you planning to respond? What will you do? And how will you and your Black colleagues know positive change is happening for them?**
- **Are you listening, hearing, reflecting and then moving visibly and explicitly into action?**
- **What does your preferred future inclusive organisation look like? Does everyone you lead know about and actively work together to achieve your goal?**
 - How will it feel to the colleagues that work with and for you? What will be changing for the communities you serve and support? How will you be contributing to achieving a just society?
 - Are you sure you've identified any dissonance and disconnect between organisational rhetoric and everyday reality?
 - What will you do next? By when?
 - What impact and difference will it make?
 - How will you and others know?

Uncomfortable Truths – what we know now: COVID-19, Racial Inequality and Hatred

In relation to these uncomfortable truths how are you demonstrating compassionate, inclusive leadership:

- **Behind every statistic is a human story, the story perhaps of one of your colleagues or one of your residents – how are you planning to use the emerging learning from COVID-19 and the broader inequalities Black communities are facing in place-based discussions and plans?**
- **Are you confident that previous local reviews, reports and commissions on inequalities in your area haven't been undermined or put aside?**
- **Is your JSNA changing to reflect what you now know so far about how COVID-19 has intensified social and health inequalities for Black families locally?**
- **We are hearing from many Black staff that they are experiencing the inequalities of COVID-19 first-hand, with significant family losses. What are you hearing from your Black staff?**
- **How are you looking after at risk staff, prioritising their physical and psychological safety, as well as looking out for, and addressing, the impact on local communities?**
- **What more can and should you be doing with and through partners, and are there opportunities to maximise the potential of Integrated Care Systems here?**

Seeing the whole picture – using what we know (and can't unknow) differently

So, what's your local bigger picture:

- **Do you know what life is like for those you support, serve and employ?**
- **What is your local multi-dimensional information telling you?**
- **What are you doing, in place-based partnerships, to tackle issues effectively and secure sustainable change?**

Compounding and multiplying inequality – opportunity for change you can lead and deliver

In the context of an ongoing response to the pandemic:

- **What's your early learning from recent local evolving partnerships?**
- **What are the strengths and gaps in place-based leadership focused on priorities to re-establish community well-being and local resilience and prosperity?**
- **Where's your forum to reflect on the positive and innovative practice that is emerging?**
- **What's on its agenda and is it taking sufficient account of multi-dimensional racism?**
- **What are the metrics that matter to your staff and to your communities?**
- **Are equalities just an item on your 'to do' list ...or do they permeate all you do?**
- **What do you have to change in yourself to effect change for others?**

Starting with self – what's it like to be a white leader?

As a white leader, deep and honest self-reflection about race, inclusion and diversity is high stakes and likely to be discomfiting and challenging. In all honesty:

- **Are you up for getting behind Black colleagues, speaking out and standing up for them and supporting Black families and communities?**
- **Are you in it for the long haul?**
- **Are you prepared to keep going?**
- **Will you notice and call out macro and micro aggressions and invite your colleagues to examine and change their behaviours?**
- **Reflect on your social capital and networks. Are they diverse or just like you?**
- **Are your own behaviours aligned with your values?**

Becoming and staying inclusive, diverse and fair

- **Do you lead an organisation where people feel their uniqueness is known and appreciated, their worth valued, an environment where people feel they can offer suggestions, bring fresh perspectives and take sensible risks ...or one that prizes corroboration, confirmation, agreement and more of the same?**
- **What will you hear when you ask throughout the organisation:**
 - **Can I speak up?**

- **Will I be punished or ridiculed for sharing my opinion?**
- **Can I be honest about who I am and my perspective?**

A high team performance culture is characterised by individuals feeling safe and confident to speak up with the motivation and support to do their best work. What else might need to happen where you lead for this to be a workplace daily reality for every employee in your organisation?

- **How do you encourage an open culture that welcomes questions not confirmation, dissent and difference not mere assent, and 'thinking differently' rather than thinking the same?**
- **Do you demonstrate and model courage in sharing and showing vulnerability, empathy and trust? Or do your organisational values implicitly prize solo 'heroes' and dominance hierarchies?**

What do you need to do now to reshape and reset teams to recognise and practice diverse and inclusive leadership?

Courageous Conversations

Across the organisation you lead, and your local place-based partnership how easy is it to:

- **Raise concerns?**
- **Ask questions?**
- **Sound the alarm?**
- **Share proposals?**
- **Exchange ideas?**
- **Celebrate success?**
- **Let go, forgive and forwards?**

And do you know who isn't round the table:

- **Whose voice or what perspective might be missing?**
- **How can I help amplify your voice and that of other underrepresented voices?**
- **Do you feel safe enough to contribute?**
- **Do you feel safe enough to take risks at work?**

As well as understanding what's getting in the way:

- **What are the biggest barriers to your success and what should I do to remove them?**
- **What proportion of your time is spent dealing with microaggressions against you or others?**

Will you share that you're reading 'Leading in Colour: the fierce urgency of **NOW**' as you want to learn and practice inclusive leadership for those you work with and for the communities you support and serve?

Conclusion and Action

- ❓ **What actions and risks are you prepared to take personally to create fairer workplaces and contribute to fairer communities?**
- ❓ **What will you do today?**



Resource 2:

Assurances local leaders might wish to seek

System wide assurances for local leaders to seek to ensure actions speak louder than words

Championing the organisations you lead, the partnerships you belong to, the places you support and serve to become and stay inclusive, diverse and fair demands visible leadership, governance, effective accountability and robust assurance arrangements.

Gaining assurance is critically important for local place-based leaders to make sure that:

- ✓ **Support and services are accessible and responsive to local residents**
- ✓ **Their workforce reflects the diversity of the communities they serve**
- ✓ **They provide equality of opportunity for staff**
- ✓ **Their Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)¹⁰⁰ requirements are met**

Key assurance questions:

1 Is our equality data up-to-date and comprehensive?

- Across our workforce(s)?
- Across our local area?
- Identifies and prioritises changing needs?
- Routinely shared within organisations and across partnerships to ensure changing needs are met?
- How are data sources including those from the pandemic shared to see the whole picture within your JSNA to determine which groups in the community need additional help?

2 Are reports, scrutiny and key decisions informed by active consideration of your PSED responsibilities?

- What is the information provided telling you about inequalities?
- What are the issues that are being drawn out?
- Do they cover the additional guidance on the PSED and the COVID-19 pandemic?¹⁰¹
- How could the Workforce Race Equality Standards support greater partnership work on these issues?
- How are you and partners assessing the impact(s) of decisions, across the areas of life that are important to people and enable them to flourish¹⁰²:
 - Education?
 - Work?
 - Living Standards?
 - Health?
 - Justice and personal security?
 - Participation?

3 Does our workforce profile reflect the community we serve?

- At every level?
- How do you know if there is a reality gap between where you think your organisation is on providing an inclusive environment for Black staff and those with protected characteristics and their view on their experiences?

4 How is your organisation making it psychologically safe for those experiencing discrimination in the workplace or in the community to speak up, be heard and have their concerns taken seriously and followed up?

5 What are you hearing from community leaders and residents about the impact of your work to champion equality, balance competing interests and foster good relations?

- What data sources do you draw on to give you information on potential risks of harm and extremism for different cultural groups?
- How are you engaging with communities to lessen inequalities and risk of all types of extremism?¹⁰³
- Who takes the lead in bringing partners and the community together if there are serious incidents of hate crime?

6 What changes are you making to strategic plans to combat racism within the workplace and for local people, by increased focus on:

- Inequality
- Community resilience
- Targeted economic stimulus
- Skills and employment support
- Health and wellbeing including opening up public spaces

7 What are the place-based leadership opportunities for system wide collaboration and innovation towards fairer workplaces and fairer communities?

- How will the emerging Integrated Care System (ICS) add value to this agenda?
- How could becoming more culturally competent across partners encourage a greater understanding of the needs of local communities and improve practice across partnerships?



Resource 3:

Glossary of Useful Terms

‘...it is useful to remember that language related to race is complex and always in flux’

Erica Foldy, associate Professor Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University, August 2020

Ableism	Unfair treatment of people who have been socially constructed as unable to do things that others can.
Affinity Bias	Affinity bias (also known as similarity bias) occurs when we treat people more favourably, simply because they are like us or others we like. Similarities can include any shared commonality, including everything, from likes, dislikes or appearance, to schooling or career history.
Ally, Allyship, Optical Allyship	Ally in this context would be someone who stands up, stands with and actively supports those experiencing discrimination even though they do not belong to that group. This can be called Allyship. It can also be called Optical Allyship when being an ally is a visual illusion to show others you are seeking to address inequality but without the active work needed to tackle or change it.
Anti-Discrimination	Recognising and actively challenging discrimination and inequality because they as an individual or group are treated differently to others.
Anti-Racism	Recognising and actively challenging discrimination and inequality of outcomes, based on the colour of a person's skin or their identification as such. It includes proactively seeking to improve laws, policies, attitudes, behaviours and processes to improve racial equality.
Anti-Semitism	Hostility/Hatred and discrimination against Jewish people and their culture.
BAME	Black Asian Minority Ethnic terminology is mainly used by the Government and the term is shorted to BAME. There are criticisms about the use of BAME, Black and Asian people are in a global majority not a minority. In addition, the term ethnic applies to culture and all of us come from different cultural backgrounds.
Belonging	A sense of fitting in or feeling like you are an important member of a group having social recognition of membership. <i>(See also othering)</i> .
Black	A political and inclusive definition of anyone who experiences racism based on the colour of their skin or Black heritage.
Blackface	A non-Black person wearing makeup or clothing to imitate a Black person.
Black Perspective	A black perspective recognises the collective capacity of black people to define, develop and advance their own political, economic, social, cultural and educational interests.

Black Perspective <i>Continued</i>	'Black' provides a historical and cultural context, whilst 'perspective' supplies the unique analysis and consciousness-raising tool for action. A black perspective equips black people to continue the fight for self-emancipation and create a body of knowledge, develop strategies that contribute to their intellectual freedom and political liberation. ¹⁰⁴
BME	Black Minority Ethnic – another term used to describe particular groups.
Brown	Some people choose to call themselves brown, that can be for a number of reasons; this may include a belief that the term Black only refers to African for example African American, some cultures still have unresolved historical issues relating to a 'caste' system, others have simply decided to use the term Black and Brown.
Cancel Culture	A social climate in which a person or organisation is criticised in response to an alleged wrongdoing.
Colonialism and Imperialism	The practice by which a powerful country directly controls less powerful countries and uses their resources to increase its own power and wealth. A situation in which one country has a lot of power or influence over others, especially in political and economic matters for their sole gain.
Colour Blind	Belief that by treating people the same, inequality will not exist. This leads to practices, systems, or organisations not meeting the specific needs of different communities and/or perpetuating current structural advantage of those in positions of power.
Covering	Sociologist Erving Goffman coined the term to describe the behaviours of certain stigmatised groups who sometimes feel the need to disguise or hide that which may be used to oppress them.
Cultural Appropriation	The act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, without showing that you understand or respect this culture and any power dynamics of doing so.
Cultural Competence	Terry L. Cross et al definition; 'a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professional that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations'.
Diaspora	People who come from a particular nation, or whose ancestors came from it (willingly or unwillingly), who now live in many different parts of the world.
Diversity Climate	Refers to an organisational climate that is characterised by openness towards and appreciation of individual differences, and the added value that culturally diverse teams can make to outcomes.
Ethnicity	SAGE definition 'is a multi-dimensional concept which includes culture, language, religion, migrant status and physical appearance (race).
Gaslighting	Gaslighting someone aims to make the victim doubt themselves and weaken them. It allows behaviour that seeks to undermine individuals and often involves 're-framing' where any positive attribute can be turned into a negative one. It can also be taking credit for someone else's ideas or taking something they have said and using it as if they created it.

Gaslighting <i>Continued</i>	The phrase Gaslighting was taken from a 1930's American play called 'Gaslight' it was about a husband who trying to convince his wife and others that she was losing her mind. In the context of this article, Jodi-Ann Burey (see resources) identifies the stages that white people, who gaslight Black people, often go through when challenged: DARVO : they D eny, A ttack, and seek to R everse the V ictim with the O ffender.
Gender Binary / Gender Neutral	The traditional system of regarding gender as having only two options: men (with all the traditional notions of masculinity) and women (with all the traditional notions of femininity).
Global Majority Leaders	Coined by Rosemary Campbell-Stephens MBE, Global Majority Leaders is a collective term that first and foremost speaks to and encourages those so-called, to think of themselves as belonging to the majority on planet earth. It refers to people who are Black, African, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or, have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities'.
Homogenous	Is used to describe a group or a thing which has members or parts that are all the same. In this context it is important to recognise that while people may choose to adopt the term Black, all the people in that group are not the same, in their views, experiences or reactions. Like white people, Black people can and do disagree about many things.
Homophobia	Dislike, hatred or fear of people whose emotional and/or physical attraction is toward people of the same 'gender' as themselves.
Identity Politics	Tendency for people of a particular background to form political alliances for themselves.
Institutional Racism	Best defined by Sir William Macpherson as <i>'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional services to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping'</i> . Can also be known as Systemic Racism.
Integrated Care System	Commonly known as ICS, Integrated Care Systems bring together providers and commissioners of NHS services across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities between different groups.
Intersectionality	Term defined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to consider how race, class, gender and other individual characteristics 'intersect' with one another and overlap.
Islamophobia	Hostility/Hatred and discrimination against Muslim people and their culture.
LGBT	Acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender.
LGBTi	Acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex.
LGBTQi+	Acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex. Adding a + to any of the above is a denotation of everything that letters and words cannot yet describe.

Microaggression	Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward stigmatised or culturally marginalised groups.
Model Minority	A Model Minority is perceived as 'better' than other minoritised groups, as if its members have overcome adversities, do not face racism and don't need anti-racist support. The concept and practice pits and polarises 'good minorities' against 'bad minorities' and compounds this by systematically deeming both communities divergent from the White cultural norm, 'othering' them.
Museum Culture	Used to highlight the power to define the relative standing of individuals within a community. Cultural images presented in museums suggest tacit messages about power, history, knowledge and identity and what we see and don't see in a museum and on what terms and by whose authority we do or don't see it is closely linked to larger questions about inclusion and identity.
Othering	Is a racist process in which Black individuals or groups are defined and labelled as not fitting in within the norms of a social group. It is an effect that influences how people perceive and treat those who are viewed as being part of the 'in-group' versus those who are seen as being part of the 'out-group'. Othering can be thought of as an antonym of belonging. Where belonging implies acceptance and inclusion of all people, othering suggests intolerance and exclusion. Othering also involves attributing negative characteristics to people or groups that differentiate them from the perceived normative social group.
Positive Action	Positive action applies to all these protected characteristics. Positive action provisions mean that it is not unlawful discrimination to take special measures aimed at alleviating disadvantage or under-representation experienced by those with any of these characteristics.
Privilege Checking	Exploring and acknowledging one's own privilege which may give you advantages that others, due to discrimination or exclusion, do not have.
Protected Characteristics	The Equality Act 2010 protects people from being treated less favourably because they have a protected characteristic. These are: 1. age 2. disability 3. gender reassignment 4. marriage and civil partnership 5. pregnancy and maternity 6. race (including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality) 7. religion or belief (including lack of belief) 8. sex 9. sexual orientation

Psychological Safety	Defined by Amy Edmondson in 'The Fearless Organisation: creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation and growth' (Wiley 2018) as ' <i>a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking</i> '.
Reverse Mentoring	Reverse mentoring (more helpfully known as mutual or inclusive mentoring) is a process where Black, LGBTQI+, disabled, and under-represented employees can grow their leadership network, increase their social capital and open doors which may typically be harder to get through. Reverse mentoring can occur with a senior leader who is mentored by a less senior person. The process recognises that there are skills gaps and opportunities to learn on both sides of a mentoring relationship and flipping the traditional format on its head can be very beneficial for both parties. It is critical that reverse mentoring for those who experience discrimination avoids tokenism and solicits actions by the senior leader to avoid disenfranchising those with whom they have had a reverse mentoring experience.
Sectarianism	Conflict resulting from differing religious and/or political views.
Sponsor	A sponsor in the context of Black staff is someone with power who for reasons of social justice wants to harness their potential, advocates for their success, helps remove obstacles to progress, increasing individual social capital, shares tips for succeeding and champions an individual's progress. In the same way as allyship, there is a potential for this to be optical sponsoring.
Tokenism	Actions that in essence pretend to give advantages to those experiencing discrimination but it can be done just for effect without making any real changes to dismantle the impact of discrimination.
Virtue Signalling	An attempt to demonstrate to other people one's own enlightened views on a topic. This can be genuine or optical.
White Privilege	Describes the inherent advantages possessed by a white person, which can perpetuate racial inequality and injustice. Peggy McIntosh describes 'I was taught to see racism only in the individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance on my group.' ¹⁰⁵
White Supremacy	Is an inherently racist ideological belief that white people are superior to anyone else and should therefore be in charge and in control. White supremacists usually assert that there are two races, of which theirs is superior, despite there being only one race, the human race.
Woke, Wokedom	A term designed to distract from the material issues of racism by dismissing ideas to address inequality, as woke, in the way 'political correctness' was used in the past to disparage issues. The term 'woke' comes from awake and Martin Luther King Jnr, referenced 'remaining awake through a great revolution' crediting the quotation to John Donne, English writer, poet and Anglican cleric (1572-1631).



Resource 4:

Curated resources for you to read, listen, watch, reflect and learn and then act on

'If we can't see a problem, we can't fix the problem'

Kimberlé Crenshaw



Read and reflect on:

- ***Slay In Your Lane, The Black Girl Bible* – Yomi Adegoke and Elizabeth Uviebinené, 4th Estate, 2019**

Illustrated with stories from best friends Yomi and Elizabeth, gives an insight into being a Black woman in the UK. Tackles issues of discrimination and how they manifest in everyday life.

- ***Demarginalising the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* – University of Chicago Legal Forum, Volume 8, Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1989**

[University of Chicago Legal Forum](#)

Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term 'intersectionality' to describe how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics "intersect" with one another and overlap in 1989. In 2019 Kimberlé launched '[Intersectionality Reach Everyone on The Planet](#)'.

- ***Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race* – Reni Eddo-Lodge, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017**

The Guardian long read provides a good insight to an edited extract from this powerful and passionate book: Guardian 2017 Reni Eddo-Lodge.

And this quote sums up the importance of listening and really hearing, looking and really seeing, acting and not ignoring: *'Not seeing race does little to dismantle racist structures or improve the lives of people of colour. In order to do so, we must see race. We must see who benefits from their race, who is affected by negative stereotyping of theirs, and on whom power and privilege is bestowed – not just because of their race, but also their class and gender. Seeing race is essential to changing the system.'*

The book itself is a wake-up call to pervasive, institutionalised racism and a searing, personal and important exploration of what it's like to be a Black person in Britain today. It offers a framework and approach for how to see, acknowledge and counter racism.

- ***White Privilege Unmasked: How to be part of the solution* – Judy Ryde, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2019**

Judy Ryde offers candid, accessible insights into the way that all white people understand cultural differences from a platform of relative privilege, affecting their personal and professional interactions. She looks at how even well-meaning white people may project unconscious bias in their everyday lives and offers meaningful steps you can take to break down unconscious bias and structural racism.

- ***Inclusion: The HOW for the Next Organizational Breakthrough – Judith H Katz and Frederick A Miller, NTL Institute for Applied Behavioural Science, Issue Five, May 2012***

Organisations are typically great at setting out what they need to accomplish, much less so at how they can achieve their goals. Powerful brief article arguing that to do their best work individually and collectively, people need to belong, feel respected, valued, seen for who they are and experience supportive energy and commitment from leaders, colleagues and others.

A stark contrast to what most Black staff highlighted as their lived experience at work: a sense of not belonging, not being included in the flow of the organisation and their ideas and perspectives not mattering or particularly wanted, a place where it's hard to be you and even harder to speak up.

- ***Me and White Supremacy: How to recognise your privilege, combat racism and change the world – Layla F Saad, Quercus, 2020***

Awareness leads to action and action leads to change. This is an upfront, urgent and often uncomfortable book about being ready to do the work; Layla Saad encourages people to own up and share their racist behaviours, big and small and then do something about it. The book includes a very useful glossary of terms.

- ***Rebel Ideas: the power of diverse thinking – Matthew Syed, John Murray Press, 2019***

Where do the best ideas come from? And how do we apply these ideas to the problems we face at work and in the biggest shared challenges of our age? Matthew Syed argues and evidences that individual intelligence is no longer enough; that the only way to tackle these complex problems is to harness the power of 'our cognitive diversity'. It offers a radical blueprint for creative problem solving, challenges hierarchies, encourages creative dissent and forces each of us to think again where the best ideas come from. He highlights the need for a team of wildly different talents as the key to success, stresses 'demographic diversity and cognitive diversity ...helps us break out of the echo chambers that so often surround us' and emphasises that doing things differently means daring to disagree ...and to change our minds.

- ***The Colour of Power: Green Park 2020: The Colour of Power 2020 – Raj Tulsiani, CEO of Green Park***

Powerful photo montage showing senior leaders (mostly male and pale) in positions of power across the public and private sectors. It highlights the disparity of power in UK's leadership positions: out of 1099 roles, only 288 are female. As Raj Tulsiani says 'If ever there was a need for open and carefully curated conversations about the UK's relationship with race and power, the time is now. Our report graphically illustrates the lack of ethnic minority representation in the upper echelons of the UK's most powerful institutions which directly or indirectly impact the everyday lives of our multi-cultural population.'

[The Colour of Power Green Park 2020](#)

- ***Leadership imbalance: Black and Asian leaders missing in action, Meera Spillett, The Staff College, 2014, ISBN: 978-1-9999441-1-7¹³***

Exploring the barriers and obstacles faced by talented Black leaders moving into senior leadership positions, what needs to be tackled and how they can best be supported to fulfil their potential and add value to organisations.

- ***Cultural Competence: Promoting leadership & organisational change, Author Meera Spillett, Editor Anton Florek The Staff College, 2018, ISBN: 978-1-9999441-0-0¹⁴***

Introduces the concept of cultural competence and how it can be used at an organisational level and individual level. It provides all the tools to undertake both an organisational and individual assessment of competency. It can also be a powerful way to engage communities in enabling more culturally competent service design and delivery.



Podcasts to listen to and think about:

- **Courageous Conversations About Race – The Staff College, January 2021: Jo Davidson, Principal The Staff College, Kathryn Perera, Director at NHS Horizons, Rosemary Campbell-Stephens MBE, freelance international leadership speaker and coach**



[Staff College Episode 1: The Language We Use](#)



[Staff College Episode 2: Leadership Paradigms](#)



[Staff College Episode 3: Harvard V Ancestral Leadership](#)

- **Understanding whiteness and racism – The Globe Theatre**

Explores what is meant by whiteness and racism and how it feeds into our understanding of Shakespeare's work.



[Shakespeare's Globe Understanding Whiteness and Racism S6](#)

- **Race at Work: candid conversations about the role race plays in our careers and lives HBR 2020**

Episodes 4 and 6: 'Listen, Learn and Lead' and 'How to talk about Race at work' are particularly relevant.



[Race at Work: candid conversations about the role race plays in our careers and lives](#)

- **Dare to Disagree – Margaret Heffernan, 2012**

Use 12.56 minutes and listen to Margaret Heffernan's Ted talk. Words that might resonate: 'best partners aren't echo chambers'. Her other works include 'Beyond Measure: the big impact of small changes' where she makes the powerful point that 'supplying answers shuts a conversation down... but asking questions, as a way of solving the problem, implies confidence.'



[Dare to Disagree Transcript – Margaret Heffernan, TED Talks](#)

- **We need to stop talking about race!**

Take 45 minutes to listen to a proposition asking us to stop the talk, stop the reports, stop the recommendations about dealing with race and instead reframe and refocus the conversation and the action to the lived experiences of Black people of every age. Be prepared to be challenged and provoked and critically be open to learning!



[We need to stop talking about race! – Podcast Episode Links – Plink \(plinkhq.com\)](#)

- **Where Are You Really From?**

A series of podcasts by Louisa Adjoa Parker explores the experience of people of African, Asian, mixed and other ethnically diverse heritage in rural UK. It asks, how does it feel to be one of the few black or brown faces in a white rural landscape? And how does this impact on a person's sense of self and well-being? Reflecting on the experiences of life of Black and Brown in rural parts of Britain. Presented and produced by Louisa Adjoa Parker with Gary Pickard, music credits, Gary Pickard and Femi Oriogun-Williams.



[Where Are You Really From? Episode 1](#)



[Where Are You Really From? Episode 2](#)



[Where Are You Really From? Episode 3](#)



[Where Are You Really From? Dear White West Country People](#)

- **The role of cities and place in shaping health**

 [King's Fund: Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol: The role of cities and place in shaping health](#)



Blogs that may resonate and prompt action:

- **Creating space for compassion, empathy and learning – Sam Allen**

Teases out the learning from leading in a crisis which can demand and value confidence, grip, strength and so on and argues we also need a different leadership approach which promotes a safe and compassionate culture and a workplace where employees can be their authentic selves. A leadership which is empathetic, values humility, creates a genuine desire to learn from experience and feedback, and practices a willingness to accept other viewpoints.

[King's Fund: Creating space for compassion, empathy and learning – Sam Allen](#)

- **Do you work for a racist organisation? – Hong-Anh Nguyen**

Stark, uncomfortable and thoughtful blog which touches on tough truths and tackling behaviours that are dissonant with how we perceive ourselves.

[King's Fund: Do you work for a racist organisation? – Hong-Anh Nguyen](#)

- **Reflections on organisational development during COVID-19: restoring purpose and driving change – Sally Hulks**

Looks at organisational and system development learning from COVID-19. Key findings:

- Effortless, rapid transition to new ways of collaborative working – flattening silos and blurring boundaries leading to '*surprising new possibilities*'
- Upfront recognition of inequality in plain sight – COVID-19's disproportionate impact on the health and well-being of ethnic minority groups (though work still to do about tackling it)
- Benefits of '*permission to work differently*'
- Openness to learning with compassion, not blame about what's working and what's not.

[King's Fund: Reflections on organisational development during COVID-19 – Sally Hulks](#)

- **On Leadership that Leads to Racial Justice – Tracie Jolliff**

Sets out simply and powerfully in a 12 minute read why leaders can't sit on the side lines in relation to their social justice responsibilities. In a candid and straightforward way invites reflection and action on the leadership that:

- is bold, visible, present, vocal and doesn't sit on the fence
- addresses indifferences to racial justice
- challenges racism when black and brown people are not present
- will not stand for racial segregation
- supports black and brown people who speak truth to power and challenge the status quo

Suggests the leadership practice of now and the future is about '*building leadership communities that have more robust capabilities, able to contain the emergence of more mature forms of racially-aware emotional resilience...in order to be able to embrace a subject matter that is profoundly emotive at its core*'.

[King's Fund: On Leadership that Leads to Racial Justice – Tracie Jolliff](#)



Videos to watch and consider:

- ***Everyday racism: what should we do? Akala, 2015.***

Akala is a poet, rapper and author.

[Everyday racism: what should we do?](#)

- ***Why you should not bring your authentic self to work – Jodi-Ann Burey, TEDx Seattle, 26 December 2020***

Explores the concepts of racism through the prism of being told to bring your authentic self to work and the inequality when this is merely a token gesture.

[Why you should not bring your authentic self to work – Jodi Ann Burey](#)

- ***How to lead in a crisis – Amy Edmondson, TED talk October 2020***

A short (less than 5 minute) talk on leading when you don't know what to do...and everyone is looking at you to know where to go.

[How to lead in a crisis – Amy Edmondson](#)

- ***How to turn a group of strangers into a team – Amy Edmondson, TED talk, May 2018***

Teaming is teamwork 'on the fly'. It's co-ordinating and collaborating with people across boundaries of all kinds – expertise, distance, time-zone, you name it – to get work done, and done well.

[How to turn a group of strangers into a team – Amy Edmondson](#)

- ***A Poem on the UK's History of Racism – Keith Jarrett, poet and author, 2020***

[A Poem on the UK's History of Racism – Keith Jarrett](#)

- ***How to Have a Voice and Lean Into Conversations About Race – Amanda Kemp, TEDx Wilmington, 2017***

Looks at how you can 'hold space for transformation' in discussions about race.

[How to Have a Voice and Lean Into Conversations About Race – Amanda Kemp](#)

- ***From the Inside Out: Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging – Wendy Knight Agard, TEDx Kanata, April 2020***

Looking on how self-reflection on these issues leads to personal growth, at times uncomfortable, but necessary to build real diversity and inclusion.

[From the Inside Out: Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging – Wendy Knight Agard](#)

- ***Mentorship & Workplace Equity Takes Work – Janice Omadeke, TEDx Grace Street Women, 16 March 2019***

[Mentorship & Workplace Equity Takes Work – Janice Omadeke](#)

- ***‘Heart of Darkness: Representing Colonial Atrocity Critique of Heart of Darkness’ – Ato Quayson, Professor of English, Stanford University***

Numerous literary critiques including on colonialism/imperialism and racism.

Ato Quayson critiques Joseph Conrad’s novella ‘Heart of Darkness’ and what it allows us to see in the relationship between colonial atrocity and its representation in literature. Ato regularly critiques new works.



[Literary Critique of Heart of Darkness – Proffesor Ato Quayson](#)

- ***Pursuing Cognitive Diversity with Matthew Syed***

In conversation at the RSA Matthew Syed discusses the deep downsides of homogeneous teams with similar views.



[RSA Conversation with Matthew Syed](#)

- ***How to deconstruct racism, one headline at a time, TEDx – Baratunde Thurston, 2019***



[How to deconstruct racism, one headline at a time – Baratunde Thurston](#)





Resource 5:

And the last word from Jo Davidson, Principal, The Staff College



'You see, as a white person you can decide whether or not to prioritise anti-racism. As a black person I can't. Because I face racism every day. I can't just leave it behind when I go home. Like you can.'

Workshop participant Summer 2020

In summer 2020, I was co-facilitating a workshop with Meera as part of our now bi-annual Blue Sky Thinking Festival. It was a lively and reflective discussion. This particular comment brought me and others up short. Despite spending a career focussing on addressing inequity and inclusion, I did have the luxury of deciding when I did or didn't engage with anti-racism. Being honest, I'd prioritised or deprioritised diversity work dependent on what I'd seen as other pressing issues. My attention varied depending on my energy levels. I'd not been assiduous in asking myself and my team searching questions about our practices and ethos. All human responses on one level, I guess. Deeply inhuman on another.

This publication has come about partly as a response to that challenge to white leaders that summer. It adds to our contribution and insights into helping white leaders make sustained change in relation to anti-racism and achieving real diversity in their teams, their organisations and their places. We know, from first-hand experience, that this is difficult work; that it requires courage and humility; that it is and feels clumsy; and that it means honesty with yourself and others.

It's also come about because we've lost patience. We've spent 9 years running programmes supporting and nurturing Black and Global Majority colleagues through our Black and Asian Leadership offer. Yet we hear the same injustices and frustrations today as we did 9 years ago. We

see huge talents suppressed or lost to the public sector because people move out to secure better opportunities because they can't seem to progress within it.

Please use this publication and the resources we recommend, to think about your leadership practice. You can dip into this in any order. We encourage you to use any of the materials, as long as you credit the source. We've designed it to prompt conversations and action and for you to be able to use it as you wish, including with partners. If you'd like a further discussion about how the College can help you further, or to suggest further development, contact us at



hello@thestaffcollege.uk

I would like to thank particularly Meera, Rosemary and Rose for having the idea and developing it; and we are indebted to the group of Chief Executives, Directors and other senior leaders who read earlier drafts and made many hugely helpful suggestions. We wouldn't have produced this without you.

This is vital work; this is your essential leadership work – in the words of Audre Lorde ***'It is not our differences which divide us. It is our inability to recognise, accept and celebrate those differences.'***¹⁰⁶

End Notes

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Author Biographies

Rose Durban

Rose began her career as a teacher for children with SEND. She's a former DCS in a number of authorities and has worked as a DfE intervention adviser. She is a Staff College Associate and an executive coach, and currently working on some children's services leadership development and improvement support, including leading a number of peer reviews. She's a member of a NICE public health committee and adviser to their centre for guidelines.

Rose is the Independent Person for her local council, a Samaritans volunteer and chairs two local school boards. She is a trustee with the Laurel Trust, which supports research in schools serving areas of multiple disadvantage.

What matters to Rose is working to change lives and life-chances across communities and ensuring that those who work with them are safe, supported and able to do their jobs well.



Meera Spillett

Meera, a former Director of Children's Services with a social work background, has over 35 years' experience in the social care and education sector. Meera helped design the Black and Asian Leadership Initiative (BALI) for The Staff College to support aspiring Black leaders. She is the author of 'Black Leaders Missing in Action' and 'Cultural Competence'. Meera continues to support BALI and contributes towards anti-racist and culturally competent approaches to support organisations, individual practitioners, and their communities. She has recently joined the DHSC Advisory Group for the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard. Meera started life as a looked after child, is disabled and manages a number of long-term health conditions, she is a breast cancer survivor following treatment in 2020.



Rosemary Campbell-Stephens MBE

Rosemary Campbell-Stephens MBE is a veteran educator who received her professional training in England, but her breadth of experience is international. Rosemary is a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Education, University College London. Her ground-breaking leadership work as part of the London Challenge 2003-2011 was in developing a leadership preparation programme focussed on increasing the numbers of Black and Asian educators in London Schools.

Rosemary provides bespoke training and coaching internationally and is a sought-after keynote speaker in her areas of expertise and passion, namely developing anti-racist decolonising practice, in pursuit of equity and social justice in educational leadership. Her book on decolonising leadership preparation builds on her work in the UK and Canada and will be published in autumn 2021. In 2016 Rosemary was awarded an MBE for thirty-five years' service to education in the United Kingdom. She was honoured to accept the award for recognition by her peers of activism.



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We would like to thank our BALI Alumni, the BALI network and those we have worked with who continue to experience racism every day of their lives, for sharing their experiences and stories in the hope of change. Their stories are powerful, inspirational, often disturbing and highlight the ongoing racial discrimination they face in the workplace. Many continue to work in environments that are not inclusive, can be hostile and where their additionality is not seen or valued. Yet in spite of this, they continue to speak out, reach out to those following in their footsteps and have the courage to believe change is possible.



**This publication is in memory of Patrick Scott,
a white man, who helped everyone lead in colour.
1949 – 2021.**



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