

Motion: Changing Street names - celebrating the rich diverse heritage of Watford.

The Council notes that Watford has a rich, diverse and positive history which must be celebrated. One way to celebrate this is to ensure that street names, buildings, statues and monuments reflect our town and that they do not contain any the negative history which this town abhors. The Black Lives Matter campaign has rightly focussed on the serious concerns of symbols of oppression and slavery.

The council also notes that there are street names that are named after people who were involved in the slave trade, colonisation and oppression, which does not reflect the forward thinking, outward looking Britain and our town.

The council notes that it is not tenable to continue to have these existing names for these streets.

Watford has been enriched by its ethnic minority citizens that have come from right across the world or born in UK. The likes of Luther Blissett, Anthony Joshua, John Barnes are but a few, who have made contributions to our town, but there are many more.

Council resolves to

1. Rename street names such Rhodes Way, Clive Way, Colonial Way and Imperial Way.
2. Consult with the Royal Mail, local businesses and residents to ensure that their views are considered.
3. A task and finish group is set up to report back with suggested names to replace these street names.
4. When naming new buildings, street names, statues or monuments that the council ensure that they reflect our town and its history and diversity.

That this motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a recommendation to set up a task and finish group to consider the question of appropriateness of street names etc., as outlined in the motion, and the need for a formal council policy on street naming, providing opportunities for all relevant stakeholders to participate in its work, before making recommendations to cabinet.