

Movement on the Melville Monument

As he promised yesterday, the Council Leader has managed to get some real movement on the wording of the plaque for the Melville Monument.

This was being dealt with under the Culture and Communities committee, but following events of last weekend in Bristol where the Colston statue was toppled and turfed into the harbour, the Council Leader decided upon fast action. He said that he wanted fast action on tackling racism.

He called a meeting of Professor Sir Geoffrey Palmer and someone he called 'an expert from the University of Edinburgh'. It seems that they have very quickly agreed the wording for a plaque to be affixed to the base of the monument.

Listen here to why this monument is an integral part of the slave trade and Edinburgh

Council Leader Adam McVey said: "Edinburgh is a progressive, diverse and welcoming City and we must continue to fight against racism in all spheres of Government and across society.

"What is essential is that we tell our City's story more accurately – for better or worse. We have a lot to celebrate about the contribution black and ethnic minority Edinburghers

have made and are making to our City's progress and success and that should be clear. Yet, we also need to address and talk openly about those moments in Scottish history where people have been killed, enslaved or discriminated against, simply because of their race.

"As part of this, we'll be reviewing our own museum and gallery collections through the lens of BAME history to make sure that Edinburgh's stories are accurately told. Building on the progress we'd already made with Prof Sir Geoffrey Palmer and others, I'm pleased to say that we've come to a form of words on a plaque at the statue of Henry Dundas – and this will be published tomorrow.

"It will be finalised and installed at the foot of the Melville Monument as soon as possible. This is just one part of Edinburgh's history and one small change we can make. We should make many more."

Earlier today Mr McVey explained the position to BBC Radio Scotland:

"I would have absolutely no sense of loss."

Leader of Edinburgh City Council Adam McVey reflects on calls to remove the Melville Monument, a statue in the city dedicated to Henry Dundas who had a prominent role in the slave trade

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Statue of Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville © Martin McAdam