



Minutes

Title of meeting	Windrush Cross-Government Working Group Meeting		
Date	24 January 2023	Time	11.30 – 12:30 (extended to 13:00)
Venue	10 Downing Street	Secretary	Rubina Tarry-Khan
Chair	Home Secretary Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP and Bishop Derek Webley MBE DL		
Attendees	For a full list of attendees see Annex A	Copies to	Members of the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group
Apologies	For a full list of apologies see Annex A		

Welcome and opening remarks

1. The Home Secretary opened the sixth meeting of the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group. The Home Secretary said how very pleased she was to co-host her first meeting and thanked the Working Group for being an integral part of the progress made on implementing Wendy Williams' recommendations. She also put on record her thanks to Bishop Webley for his constructive input into the agenda for today's meeting and wanted to use part of the meeting to reflect on how to celebrate the input of the Working Group and seventy-fifth anniversary of Windrush Day.
2. Bishop Webley thanked the Home Secretary for the constructive start to the meeting and acknowledged that it's a big year for Windrush. It was a time of greater scrutiny and we needed to be ready to be held to account. It was time to redouble our efforts in improving people's confidence in the Windrush Compensation Scheme and engagement efforts.
3. Bishop Webley wanted the Working Group to have a legacy they could be proud of, where positive outcomes were achieved together.

Publicising Windrush achievements

4. Angela Wilson from the External Engagement team introduced the paper on the draft narrative of positive news stories. The narrative documents what the department has achieved since the injustices came to light and was drafted in conjunction with policy officials. It lists the achievements of the Working Group, progress with the recommendations and reinforced some extremely positive messages about progress on the Windrush Schemes. It included information on our Windrush engagement and outreach that Wendy Williams had commented on as being positive when she re-visited the Department on 29 September 2021 to assess progress made.
5. Ben Biddulph, head of communications, then talked to the draft communications strategy, acknowledging that it hasn't been easy in the media when it comes to Windrush. We have undertaken two paid national communications campaigns to raise awareness of the Windrush Schemes. He expressed his thanks to the Working Group for helping to shape those campaigns. He highlighted that statistics released that same day showed strong progress in terms of payments made from the Windrush Compensation Scheme. There were now a number of opportunities, including Windrush's seventy-fifth anniversary, for the Home Secretary to signal her commitment to Windrush, starting today.
6. **Open discussion:** Bishop Webley thought both documents were a good start. He understood the need to include reference to the scandal but not be defined by it. We needed to be more proactive in our communications. Blondel remained concerned about the label of 'Windrush' in our communications as it is a wider Commonwealth issue and felt the narrative should include testimonies from those who had positive experiences through the schemes. The narrative should have translated messages to reach all affected communities and should be couched in language that other government departments could endorse visibly. We needed to get the history right and keep communities (both UK and abroad) consistently updated, not just when things go wrong. The Home Secretary asked for the narrative and communications strategy to be progressed in line with all the valid comments.

Windrush Lessons Learned Review recommendations

7. Angela opened the discussion by highlighting that Wendy Williams had commented that 21 of 30 of her lessons learned recommendations had been met or partially met. Wendy herself had acknowledged the scale of work involved and that change on this scale would take time. The department was striving to be more transparent. Highlights and recent progress included the appointment of an ethics adviser at director general level, the establishment of the Office for the Independent Examiner of Complaints and the appointment of an Independent Examiner of Complaints. In June last year, the department began rolling out our learning packages, starting with serving diverse communities to ensure that we act on the department's values. This will be followed by the roll out of diversity and inclusion training and then finally, training about the history of the UK and its relationship with the rest of the world. The Windrush programme had been embedded into the One Home Office Transformation programme. The department would publish a written ministerial statement to parliament with a more detailed update on the WLLR recommendations on 26 January 2023.
8. The chair of sub-group 1 (implementation of Wendy Williams' Lessons Learned Review (WLLR)), Duwayne then gave his view on progress on the WLLR. There was discussion around the relationship between recommendation 7 (full review and

evaluation of the hostile/compliant environment policy) and the creation of a new cross-government ministerial taskforce on immigration enforcement led by Minister Jenrick. Duwayne requested an update on recommendation 7 and the distinction between the taskforce and the work being taken forward to produce materials which will provide assurances of the safeguards in place to protect those living in the UK lawfully.

9. There was discussion about the need for the new training packages to be rolled out throughout government, not just in the Home Office. Members also opined that our communications needed to be more robust and proactive to negate false information circulating in communities around how many recommendations the department had implemented. It was agreed that a table of progress on the recommendations would be provided to the Working Group.

Update on Windrush schemes

10. The Home Secretary opened this item to say she was passionate about innovative ways to encourage people to access the Windrush Compensation Scheme. She acknowledged the vital role Martin Levermore played in this regard as independent adviser to the Scheme. Nigel (Head of the Windrush Compensation Scheme) provided an update on the statistics which showed significant amounts had been paid out in compensation, whilst also reiterating how important listening to individuals was. He mentioned the recent changes in policy ([Windrush Compensation Scheme factsheet – October 2022](#)) that had been made as a result of listening more to those impacted.
11. Martin thanked Nigel and teams for all their work. He agreed that there was the need for a more inclusive brand than Windrush. He was particularly pleased to see good factual data being pulled from the numerous databases to produce quality information. He highlighted that there was significant support to landing our key messages abroad. He had also seen diverse teams in the Home Office, top, middle and bottom, who were engaged. In Martin's view, the main issue to iron out, was the public's understanding of the definition of eligibility versus entitlement. The Home Secretary welcomed Martin's scrutiny and incredibly valuable views.
12. There followed a discussion about the need to share and better publicise the good data being extracted on the Schemes as not everyone will focus on just statistics. There was constructive challenge on what more could be done to reduce the 40% of compensation claims that remained in the pipeline. The Home Office committed to exploring the provision of additional resources to reduce the 40% (before June). The Home Secretary was keen to support the reduction of these outstanding claims.

[The Home Secretary left to attend another meeting and passed to Lord Murray to take over as chair].

Beyond the Windrush Lessons Learned Review (updates from other government departments)

13. **Ministry of Defence (MOD)** - Commodore Richard spoke about Commonwealth Cultural Day on 27 March that would be marked by the MOD to acknowledge the contributions, past and present, of Armed Forces. They were actively working with OGDs on their race and ethnicity action plan which they hoped to publish by the end of March.

14. **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office** – Russell Crane reported that they had set up a Windrush hotline so callers avoid expensive international charges on their first contact with HMG. The FCDO was collaborating with the Home Office to support a media campaign in Jamaica about the compensation scheme across print and radio to maximise reach and impact. They had signed the Business in the Community Race at Work Charter and their Board Sponsor for Race had implemented a plan to help the FCDO achieve racial parity across 3 priority areas: promotion and progression, performance and development and employee experience and culture.
15. **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)** – Tom Foster reported that DWP set up the DWP fast-track urgent case service to meet the public commitments on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) to make immediate arrangements to help those who needed it, help people navigate the immigration system and taking a sympathetic and proactive approach when resolving applications. So far DWP has helped over 500 claimants receive their benefits or arrears quickly and has supported the HO with more detailed benefit information checks on over 500 applications through the Windrush Compensation scheme. DWP has run internal communications to colleagues about Windrush. They have a Race Programme Board leading on the representation and employee experience of ethnic minority colleagues in the department and a colleague-led National Race Network advocating for and supporting colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds. They recently won a social mobility award for their Aspire programme which supports progress for those from minority ethnicities.
16. **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)** – sent through a written update. They are the lead government department for the seventy-fifth anniversary celebrations of the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush to the UK. Applications were open for the Windrush Day Grant Scheme 2023. They will allocate further funding to help develop an educational component for the National Windrush Monument legacy website in time for the seventy-fifth anniversary celebrations. As of 2 February 2023, DLUHC has dedicated £3.75 million in funding toward honouring the Windrush legacy. This includes £2.75 million across 4 years of the Windrush Day Grant Scheme, and £1 million allocated to the National Windrush Monument.
17. Bishop Webley asked that the narrative also records what OGDs are doing as a result of the Lessons Learned Review and beyond as part of the legacy of this group. He asked that this be tabled on the agenda for the next meeting.

75th Anniversary HMT Empire Windrush and legacy of the Windrush Working Group

18. Building on DLUHC's update, Paulette, chair of the Windrush Day grant scheme, was pleased to update that the grant had been increased by £250,000 to £750,000 for this year due to the seventy-fifth anniversary. She hoped for a joined up approach to the Windrush 75 celebrations with OGDs and including overseas. There was a call for Lord Murray to support the National Memorial events planned on 20/21 June in the Arboretum, Staffordshire to honour servicemen.
19. There was general consensus that a joined-up cross-government approach would be ideal.

20. Bishop Webley requested that the Working Group be invited to attend all the different events planned and that there was a need for a cross-government national plan. Lord Murray acknowledged that DLUHC were the lead department on the seventy-fifth celebrations but agreed to add all planned events to the House of Commons forward look.
21. It was acknowledged that the group had achieved most of its objectives, so attention was now beginning to focus on closure and the right time to wind down the work of the group. Combining this with the celebrations to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the arrival of HMT Empire Windrush was a suggestion mooted, as it would enable the group to end on a celebratory high. Further thought will be given to this at subsequent meetings.

Closing remarks

22. Bishop Webley and Lord Murray closed the meeting, thanking everyone for their commitment and support.

Annex A – Attendees and Apologies

Stakeholder members:

Bishop Derek Webley (Chair of the Windrush Working Group)
Duwayne Brooks (Managing Director, Active Community Engagement and Development)
Loanna Morrison (Journalist and founder of London Apprenticeship Fair)
Kunle Olulode (Director, Voice4Change England)
Blondel Cluff (Chief Executive, West India Committee)
Paulette Simpson (Executive Director, 'The Voice')

Martin Levermore (Independent Adviser to the Windrush Compensation Scheme)

Other government department representatives

Russell Crane (Deputy Head of Caribbean and SIDS Department and Head of Caribbean Team, FCDO)
Tom Foster (Deputy Director, Service Planning and Delivery, DWP)
Commodore Richard Harris (Deputy Director, Diversity and Inclusion, MoD)
Sarah Wareing (Deputy Head, Diversity and Inclusion, MoD)

Myles Stacey (No 10 Special Adviser)

Lord Murray (Lord's Immigration Minister)
Alex Hurst (Director, Transformation)
Gabi Monk (Director, Customer Operations Support Services)
Nigel Hills (Deputy Director, Customer Operations Support Services)
Mark Osborne (Head of Strategic Insight and Improvement Unit)
Angela Wilson (Head of Windrush External Engagement)
Rubina Tarry-Khan (WWG Secretariat)
Ben Biddulph (Communications)
Parri Desai (Private Secretary to Home Secretary)
Daniel Thornley (Assistant Private Secretary to Lord Murray)

Apologies

Stephen O'Connor (Ministry of Justice)
Robert Cooper (Deputy Director, DLUHC)
Clive Palmer (Department for Education)

Summer Nisar (Race Disparity Unit, Cabinet Office)
Dominic Smales (Secretariat, Cabinet Office)