



Dear Caroline Dinenage MP,

17th February 2021

RE: Roundtable request

CC Nigel Huddleston MP, Sport, Heritage and Tourism
CC Claudia Webbe MP (local MP)
CC Kirk Master - Our Ambassador (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner)

I hope this email finds you well in the midst of the COVID19 pandemic. I had previously written/ emailed the department in September 2019 in regards to a number of pledges made by Government, private sector organisations as well as sporting bodies to address and review inequalities and discriminatory practices in football.

The conversation of racism in football is a constant one and fluctuates with various focuses. Much of the emphasis is on the professional game and their experiences, and not enough weight given to the grassroots game, even though football is played by millions. Those of us who represent the grassroots game often feel overshadowed, with even less opportunity of national representation and involvement.

The previous Culture Secretary of State and the now Sports Minister led a roundtable discussion with current and former players from the Premier League, English Football League (EFL), Women's Super League (WSL) and Women's Championship, to get the players' perspective on tackling discrimination and abuse in the game, as part of their series of discussions on the "Future of Football". Unfortunately, the grassroots voice was omitted from these discussions.

The BAME Football Forum is a grassroots organisation championing local issues on a National scale. Thousands of adults and young people up and down the Country at a grassroots level are affected by decisions of Government and National body organisations such as The FA.

The Forum would like to request a similar conversation and opportunity for a grassroots round table discussion, and can recommend a number of groups to be invited.

Currently, no National organisation is speaking up about the experiences of racism that many children and young people and adults are facing locally across the Country. This discussion would be a good opportunity to hear first-hand how communities are being affected, and to hear some of the solutions that could be put in place. It would also provide a more rounded view for input into the DCMS "Future of Football".

Please consider our request, as there is also an important conversation around safeguarding children and young people from continued racial abuse.

I look forward to your timely response.

Kind regards
Ivan Liburd, Chair of the BAME Football Forum

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