



Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

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Julian Knight MP
Chair, DCMS Select Committee
House of Commons
London
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Dear Julian

At the DCMS Select Committee hearing on 18th November 2021, I committed to providing Committee members with an outline of the further action the Government intends to take, if required, in relation to the England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) handling of racism in cricket. I also want to take the opportunity to provide some clarity regarding our ambitions for a legacy to the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games in particular.

At the hearing, I made clear my condemnation of the alleged racism at Yorkshire County Cricket Club. There is absolutely no room for racism or any discrimination in sport, and I expect National Governing Bodies of sport to take robust action to tackle this wherever needed.

As Committee members are aware, the ECB has already taken a number of steps in relation to allegations of racism at Yorkshire County Cricket Club (YCCC) and the manner in which the club has dealt with these. On 4 November 2021 the ECB banned YCCC from hosting England matches "until it has clearly demonstrated that it can meet the standards expected of an international venue, ECB member and first-class county". It also ruled one player mentioned in the report as ineligible for selection by England, and launched its own investigation into events surrounding the allegations.

On 19 November 2021 the ECB convened a meeting of the main cricketing organisations to develop an action plan to tackle racism in the sport, which was published on 26 November 2021. This covers a range of measures to tackle racism and discrimination including a review of dressing room culture. The ECB will also form a new anti-discrimination unit within six months.

These steps are in addition to the work of the Independent Commission into Equity in Cricket, established by the ECB earlier this year, which is looking into race and inequalities in the sport and which will report in 2022.

The Government welcomes these actions and the ECB's investigation into YCCC. However, given the gravity of the allegations and concerns about the pervasiveness of discrimination in cricket more widely, the Government will be monitoring the ECB's progress and leadership in this matter closely, and is prepared to take action where needed.



If there are concerns that the ECB is no longer taking appropriate action or loses the confidence of Parliament and the public to tackle the issue, the government will look to take further action. The nature of this action will be determined by the circumstances at the time, but there are a number of options available to the Government.

These include setting out clear expectations of the ECB in relation to improving its work around diversity and inclusion, reviewing the conditions associated with public funding of ECB programmes, and conducting a review of the ECB's governance.

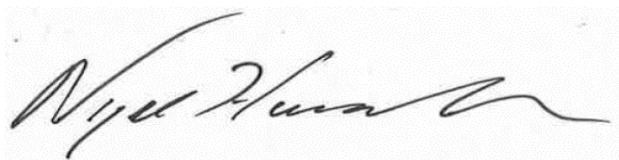
At the Committee hearing I was also asked about the potential for a new independent regulator for cricket. This would require careful consideration, and I believe that sports should be given every opportunity to run their own affairs wherever possible. However, if other actions do not result in meaningful change it remains an option that I will consider as part of a range of wider options around governance and regulation.

My sincere hope is that the actions being taken by the ECB and other cricketing organisations will result in tangible improvements in how the sport tackles racism and indeed all forms of discrimination. The Government stands ready to provide support to ensure this is the case, and to step in should it not happen.

I would be more than happy to answer any further questions the Committee may have on this topic, and will notify the Committee of any further policy developments in this area.

Finally, on the legacy of the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games, I want to underline for the Committee that there has always been a clear commitment that the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will deliver much more than just two weeks of fantastic sport. The focus on leaving a lasting legacy is baked into the £778m delivery budget. With an estimated global broadcast audience of 1.5 billion, our intention is to use the Games to send a clear message that Birmingham, the West Midlands and the UK is open for business. With 40,000 Games-time jobs, volunteering and skills opportunities being created, and over £350 million in contracts to help deliver the Games, the legacy and benefits that these Games will deliver has been built into their design from the start.

If helpful to the Committee, I also attach our recently published Pre-Games Evaluation Report (available [here](#)) which sets out the anticipated impacts of the Games and how we propose to measure and report these to demonstrate value for money and to ensure lessons can be learned for future major sporting events.



Nigel Huddleston MP
Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society