



Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel 020 7219 6188

Robin Smith
By email

16 March 2022

Dear Robin Smith,

Yorkshire County Cricket Club

I was astounded to read in the Daily Mail yesterday that you have accused my Committee of putting “unlawful pressure” on the England and Wales Cricket Board to sanction Yorkshire County Cricket Club for failing to address issues of racism at the club. You were also reported as accusing us of an abuse of power.

We considered it unbelievable that Azim Rafiq should have suffered racist abuse while playing at Yorkshire and were shocked by the reluctance of the club to acknowledge its responsibility in how this happened. We now find it inconceivable that anyone should be looking to use technical points of law to challenge efforts to restore the reputation of the club and to risk the financial future of the club while threatening Lord Patel with financial ruin.

I can only imagine, if those accusations were accurately reported, that you were entirely unaware of the role of Parliament and its select committees to have made accusations of unlawful pressure and an abuse of power. My Committee would like you to explain what you think we have done that was unlawful or an abuse of power. These are serious and unfounded accusations to be made against a Parliamentary Select Committee and we think you should seriously consider publicly retracting them.

We also note that you offered Lord Patel a meeting with you and Colin Graves, a man that has, when twice invited to speak to the Committee, told us he has no current interest in cricket or Yorkshire County Cricket Club. The Committee retains an interest in this issue and I presume, if you were invited, you would attend a meeting of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Julian Knight MP
Chair, DCMS Committee