

**All Party Group on Race and Community meeting on Race and Sport:
Summary and minutes**

7pm – 9pm, Monday 12 December

Committee Room 8, House of Commons

Parliamentary Attendees:

David Lammy MP (Labour, Chair of APPG), **Richard Fuller MP** (Conservative), **Andrew Stunell MP** (Liberal Democrat, Race Equality Minister), **Baroness Ros Howells** (Labour)

Speakers:

Professor Kevin Hylton (Professor of Social Sciences of Sport, Leeds Metropolitan University); **Keme Nzerem** (Black Collective of Media in Sport, and Sports Reporter for Channel 4 News); **Paul Elliott MBE** (UEFA, Kick It Out, LOCOG, and the PFA. Former Charlton, Aston Villa, Celtic and Chelsea Captain); **Sarah Soyei** (Regional Manager, Show Racism the Red Card); **Paul Mortimer** (Show Racism the Red Card, Former footballer for Charlton and Crystal Palace)

Other panelists:

Sol Campbell (Footballer, former player for England, Tottenham Hotspur and Arsenal); **Luther Blissett** (Former footballer and manager, former player for Watford and AC Milan); **Curtis Fleming** (Former Republic of Ireland and Middlesbrough footballer, now coaching with Crystal Palace)

Summary/key points:

a) Presentations

- Focusing on race and sport in general, **Kevin Hylton** (Leeds Met University) argued that people should not take a narrow view of anti-racism, taking the view that racism is “more plural”, and added that there are problems with the approaches taken by both the left and the right. He also questioned much of the Olympic legacy and highlighted constraints for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people across sport in general.
- He added that there is need for more data to determine ethnic breakdowns of who is playing and administering sport.
- **Keme Nzerem** (Channel 4 News, BCOMS) argued that Black communities have poor representation in sports media, and argued that there needs to be more Black presenters. He highlighted that the confirmed BBC presenting line up for the Olympics does not include any

Black presenters (see <http://tinyurl.com/c2mkvj6>), and expressed disappointment about this, particularly given that London's multiculturalism was a key element of the 2012 bid. **David Lammy MP** stated that he would write to the BBC regarding this.

- **Paul Elliot** (Kick it Out) highlighted that even though 25% of footballers in the UK are Black, there are only 2 Black managers. He added that there is currently a lack of transparency in recruitment processes for managers, and argued that there needs to be equality of opportunity. Mentioning the "Rooney Rule"¹ used in the USA, Elliot argued that despite popular belief, the ruling does not lead to a guaranteed job, but instead requires clubs to interview Black players.
- Focusing more generally on tackling racism in football, Elliot argued that fines are currently not enough of a disincentive to clubs, and said that deduction of points and expulsion from competitions would be more effective.
- **Sarah Soyei** (Show Racism the Red Card) spoke about how football can help people overcome their fear of talking about racism. Mentioning Show Racism the Red Card's work in schools, Soyei argued that there is a significant need for teachers to be trained more effectively on tackling racism, highlighting that currently large numbers are not adequately trained on the issue. She also argued that equality needs to be embedded in the curriculum. **Paul Mortimer** (Show Racism the Red Card) echoed many of these points, adding that racism becomes more subtle as people get older.

b) Questions and debate

- **Marc Willers** (Garden Court Chambers) asked whether Kick it Out and Show Racism the Red Card have any Gypsy, Roma or Traveller role models working with them. In response, Sarah Soyei mentioned that they have recently recruited Freddy Eastwood². Paul Elliot said that some from the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities are reluctant to "come out" about their origins due to fear of abuse, particularly in Europe.
- **Richard Fuller MP** asked whether people are becoming complacent about racism, particularly as they get older.
- **Sol Campbell** spoke about the lack of Black managers, arguing that some Black players have more experience than white players, but don't get jobs.

¹ The Rooney Rule, established in the USA in 2003, requires National Football League teams to interview minority candidates for head coaching and senior football operation opportunities.

² Footballer for Coventry City from the Romany community

- He added that football clubs are not used to a Black manager running their business, and may think that a Black person isn't good enough to run a club. He went on to say that there are higher standards for Black managers than white managers, and that they have to achieve more.
- **Leon Hall** (Ipswich and Suffolk Race Equality Council) called for Black footballers to “step up” and do more to tackle racism. **Paul Mortimer** responded by saying that if players do this they are at risk of not being played, and highlighted an example of this happening to him. Luther Blissett added that players need to look at this in relation to their own career, but added that it is important to stand up and say when something is wrong.
 - **Keme Nzerem** said that it is important for the media to look at how they present images of Black people, adding that whilst affirmative action is a messy subject, “it works”. Also focusing on the media, **Sol Campbell** stated that more Black news anchors and journalists are needed, and added that for this to change “someone from the top” need to encourage change.
 - **Drew Christie** (Black Collective of Media in Sport) asked whether speakers believed that the “promised legacy” of 2012 would be delivered. Responding, **David Lammy MP** said that the UK is good at selling multiculturalism overseas, but is not so good at the reality on the ground.
 - **Sarah Soyey** argued that we need to move away from labeling *people* as racists and instead label *behaviour* as racist
 - **Baroness Howells** encouraged the footballers to look into theories of racism, and offered assistance in identifying reading material.
 - Wrapping up the event, **Rob Berkeley** (Runnymede Trust) asked how organizations can support Black players in tackling racism, and also asked what should be achieved in the next year, and over the next 5 years. **Paul Elliot** responded by saying that there needs to be more Black people in higher visibility and higher level positions, and that in the next 5 years it should be the norm to have more Black managers. He stressed that “the Rooney Rule is the catalyst needed”.

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