

JAMAICAN DIASPORA UK

West Midlands Regional Council

Bethel Hall, Unit 3, Kelvin Way,
West Bromwich, B70 7JW

John Crabtree OBE
Chair
Birmingham Organising Committee
2022 Commonwealth Games
One Brindley Place
Birmingham
B1 2JB

12 July 2020

Dear Mr Crabtree,

Lack of Diversity in 2022 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee

Following the open letter from Ian Reid, CEO, Birmingham 2022¹, we are writing to express our concern regarding the lack of diversity in the 2022 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee. While we welcome Ian's open letter, following public outcry, the letter still does not explain the woeful lack of diversity in the Organising Committee's leadership team.

The Commonwealth Games Federation consists of 71 member nations and territories and the 2022 Commonwealth Games is being held in the 'super diverse' city of Birmingham. In the 2011 British census, 42 per cent of people in Birmingham classified themselves as non-white and 60 per cent of young people in Birmingham are from a non-white British background².

Birmingham has benefited from its diverse migrant communities who have settled in the city and successfully contributed to its economic vitality, becoming leaders in education, medicine, sports, arts and business and providing employment opportunities to local people².

Therefore, it is deeply troubling to observe that of the 20 individuals that make up the 2022 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee only 1 member is black. The Organising Committee is made up of a 7-member executive team in addition to a 13-member Board of Directors which includes representatives of organisations, i.e. local partners and four non-executive directors. To appoint only one black person who we understand represents the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority, Andy Street, appears as 'tokenistic window dressing' and in our view, an apparent case of systemic racism.

The current Organising Committee lacks 'cultural competence', for an event that claims to be not just about sports but a cultural festival. For example, the community was invited to a meeting and the internationally acclaimed and well-known, Birmingham based, a cappella group 'Black Voices' was not included. Commonwealth Games personnel stated that they had never heard of the group despite Black Voices being one of Europe's finest female a cappella quintet.

We note with major concern this disturbing trend that continues to marginalise and devalue the important roles that black people can contribute to yet another all-important project in Birmingham³. We understand that for the past 18 months or so some individuals in the community were aware of this unacceptable situation and have expressed



their concerns verbally on an individual basis to some Commonwealth Games board members, Birmingham City Council staff/leaders and elsewhere. However, for transparency and openness there are many questions that need to be tabled and duly answered with supporting evidence by you as to the entire process which led to the most glaring omission of a more ethnically balanced board for the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in 2022.

In exercising public functions the Birmingham Organising Committee is subject to the public sector equality duty in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requiring the Birmingham Organising Committee to have due regard to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and the advancement of equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic including race.

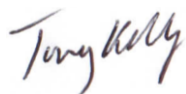
Therefore, we would like you to respond to the following questions:

1. A breakdown of how the entire Organising Committee was chosen would be appreciated and were job descriptions/specifications/roles followed by formal interviews? If so, who carried these out and regarding the equality impact assessments, the ethnic diversity and names of who sat on the panels for all of these appointments?
2. We are led to understand that the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport appointed four non-executive members and if so on whose advice?
3. We understand some people would have been actively encouraged to apply for various positions on the Commonwealth Games Organising Committee, so did anyone seek out competent people from the African, Caribbean, Asian and/or other minority ethnic communities? If so, why were they deemed unsuitable and if that process was not done, why not?
4. What is your action plan for increasing diversity in the Organising Committee leadership team and throughout the entire organisation in accordance with the Equality Act 2010?

Please respond to our letter and outline the steps you intend to take to address our concerns. If applicable, please escalate our letter to the relevant minister, parliamentarian or department and keep us informed of any progress.

We look forward to hearing your response in due course.

Yours Sincerely



Tony Kelly

Regional Secretary, West Midlands Regional Council,
Jamaican Diaspora UK



Maureen Scott-Douglas

Regional Chair, West Midlands Regional Council,
Jamaican Diaspora UK



Dr Kevin Brown PhD

National Chair, Jamaican Diaspora UK
UK North Representative, Global Jamaica Diaspora Council



Cc: The Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
His Excellency Seth George Ramocan, High Commission for Jamaica, United Kingdom
Diane Abbott MP, Member of Parliament for Hackney North & Stoke Newington
Preet Gill MP, Member of Parliament for Birmingham, Edgbaston
Kim Johnson MP, Member of Parliament for Liverpool Riverside
Councillor Yvonne Mosquito, Birmingham, Bordesley & Highgate Ward & Member, Jamaican Diaspora UK (West Midlands)
Ian Reid, CEO, Birmingham City Council
Ian Ward, Leader, Birmingham City Council
Andy Street, Mayor, West Midlands Combined Authority

References

1. An Open Letter from Ian Reid, CEO Birmingham 2022. Available at: <https://www.birmingham2022.com/news/blog/an-open-letter-from-ian-reid-ceo-birmingham-2022/?fbclid=IwAR3S95n8nhTSG-1DrZU2ZC84HugyYfoj1q4JQwTSqFBIx0QE9OWHvi2fpo> [Accessed 11 July 2020]
2. Community Cohesion Strategy for Birmingham Green Paper: Forward together to build a fair and inclusive city for everyone. 2018. Available at: <https://birmingham.cmis.uk.com/Birmingham/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=%2F4eHh6Ncj6EpTs8NalblvdbG4DgoyJE0987bfEchWVSnKKGarpXPUw%3D%3D&rUzwRPf%2BZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3D%3D=pwRE6AGJFLDNlh225F5QMaQWCtPHwdhUfCZ%2FLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3D%3D&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9lXnlq%3D%3D=hFfIUdN3100%3D&kCx1AnS9%2FpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3D%3D=hFfIUdN3100%3D&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2BAJvYtyA%3D%3D=ctNJFf55vVA%3D&FgPIIEJYlotS%2BYGoBi5olA%3D%3D=NHdURQburHA%3D&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJFf55vVA%3D&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJFf55vVA%3D&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCpMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJFf55vVA%3D> [Accessed 09 July 2020].
3. Jane Haynes, The Uncomfortable Truth About Lack of Diversity in Birmingham's Corridors of Power. Birmingham Live. July 2020. Available at: <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/uncomfortable-truth-lack-diversity-birminghams-18508132> [Accessed 11 July 2020]

About the Jamaican Diaspora UK

The Jamaican Diaspora UK (JDUK), established in 2005, is a national organisation consisting of a membership of individuals and community organisations across the UK. The JDUK addresses issues affecting the Jamaican diaspora including trade and economic development, faith-based initiatives, health, education, and disaster preparedness. JDUK interfaces with community groups with a view to consolidating and advocating interests and concerns. The organisation is governed through a national Board of Directors and a Regional framework with 9 regions across the UK.

About the Jamaican Diaspora UK - West Midlands Regional Council

The West Midlands Regional Council is a chapter of the Jamaican Diaspora UK that oversees the work of the region representing and supporting the interests of Jamaican communities in all major cities and towns in the West Midlands including, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Coventry, Walsall, Burton—Trent, Stafford Dudley and surrounding areas.

