

Dawn Butler MP

Labour MP for Brent Central

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Lord Hall of Birkenhead
Director General of the BBC
BBC Broadcasting House
Portland Place
London
W1A 1AA

13/07/16

Dear Lord Hall,

I am writing to you regarding the representation of BAME communities (Black, Asian, Minority, Ethnic) within your programming content at the BBC.

I am sure you will appreciate the need to ever look at ways to ensure that all audiences are served by BBC output and also that it accurately portrays life in contemporary Britain. It is especially important that given the licence fee is paid by everyone, it should surely serve everyone too.

However your own research, as outlined in the Audience Councils Annual Review 2014-15, explains that both youth and Black and Asian minority ethnic audiences are watching and listening to less BBC programming. In response the Annual Review 2014-15 pledges to *'encourage innovation to transform the BBC's offer and range of services for younger audiences'* however doesn't propose similar measures to address the decline of BAME audiences.

I believe that the audience council, and regional panels, have a significant role to play in ensuring the views of audiences from across England are heard and reflected in programming. I understand that the audience council as presently constituted is made up of the chairs of the 12 regional panels whom *'are appointed to reflect the diversity of the English population'* and to *'represent the views of licence fee payers across England to the BBC Trust'*.

If we truly wish to reflect that diversity I believe it is essential we do more to engage with BAME audiences as the first step in assessing what can be done to attract these audiences back to the BBC. I believe the establishment of a BAME panel, and for the Chair of that panel to be represented on the audience council, would be a significant step forward in ensuring minority voices are heard at the BBC.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further with you at your earliest convenience, as well as to explore in general further ideas as to how ethnic and minority audiences can be better represented at

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I may write to you from time to time. If you do not wish to receive any correspondence from me please write to me at the above address.

the BBC. If you would like to set up a meeting please contact James May, my diary manager, on james.may@parliament.uk or 0207 219 0757.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Butler', with a small flourish at the end.

Dawn Butler MP

Labour Member of Parliament for Brent Central

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