"Racism: BBC, Broadcasters and Ofcom" The Campaign for Broadcasting Equality CIO first response to Ofcom's proposed plan of work 2021/22.

The Campaign for Broadcasting Equality CIO (CBE) welcome the clear but scanty words on diversity in broadcasting in Ofcom's proposed plan of work 2021/22 and the opportunity .

CBE intends to submit a series of separate responses on different issues.

CBE assumes that what the Ofcom Chief Executive says to the Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee is or becomes Ofcom policy.

In oral evidence to this Committee on 15 December, the Chief Executive said that to rebuild trust, the broadcasters should bring back into the industry, the minority ethnic people who had left it.

This should lead to specific work plan actions:

- **Ofcom should ask the BBC and the broadcasters to report By 1 July 20201 on what they are doing to bring back the minority ethnic people who left.**
- **Ofcom should commission research to understand the scale of the problem.**
- **Ofcom should commission research on reconciliation processes that work in comparable circumstances**.

CBE has been advised that the following might provide one way of assessing the scale of the problem with the BBC

"In an ideal world Ofcom would hire a research institute like the Sir Lenny Henry Centre for Media Diversity or the Reuters Institute to conduct this research.

The researchers would be given a list of contacts for all BBC staff leavers for the last 10 years. The researchers would contact them to undertake a survey. I think this would be best done as a telephone interview.

The survey would ask questions to determine any protected characteristics under the Equality Act (disability, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion etc).

It would ask them why they left the BBC - this would be a semi-closed question - so fixed categories which respondents could rank as factors (sacked, redundant, economic instability of temporary contracts, bullying (specifying if gender, race or other), lack of progression, poor pay, other (where they are asked to clarify) and then an open section for further comments/explanation.

It would then ask repondents if they would ever consider returning to the BBC (YES or NO). It would then ask them Why and to explain their answer whether yes or no.

The final question would then ask them what changes would need to happen for them to consider returning.

The reason I would go for a list of all leavers over the last 10 years is because it will give you a lot of really good comparable data that you can use. It will let you work out the proportion of leavers from a range of backgrounds and what is specific to different categories of leavers and why.

It's in this comparison of experience and need that clear evidence of discrimination might be found. This could be particularly powerful if for example you were to find the barriers preventing non-white or disabled leavers (the most underrepresented groups) from returning are higher or multiple, requiring more measures to be put in place to entice them back etc.

In fact, it could be extremely useful if Ofcom engaged in such widespread research across the broadcast sector so not just the BBC but for example if it repeated this exercise with other broadcasters."

CBE looks forward to submitting further responses on other issues, in due course.