

21 September 2020

Room 109, Conservative Group Office
PO Box 2
Civic Centre, Station Road
Harrow
HA1 2UH

Dear Councillor Osborn,

Islamophobic conduct by Cllr Kamalji Chana

As leaders of Muslim community organisations in Harrow numbering over 30,000 residents, we write to condemn in the strongest terms the recently published Islamophobic statements of Cllr Kamaljit Chana.

Xenophobic statements such as “Muslims are violent” and “I do not like Muslims” have no place at any level in our society. That they are the utterances of an elected official, responsible for representing Muslims and governing their affairs, is risible.

As was established by a Bristol employment tribunal Cllr Chana has demonstrated racist and Islamophobic tendencies, as well as behaviour which constitutes bullying, intimidation and harassment. Such an individual has no place within politics.

At a time when Islamophobia is increasing at an extraordinary pace, we are concerned that the Conservative Party in Harrow is not adopting a zero-tolerance approach. This is unacceptable. We are all the more disappointed that despite the matter being brought to the attention of the party, with the incident also nationally reported in the Sunday Times, the Conservative Party has dragged its heels.

The Muslim community of Harrow will not stand for apathy in the face of Islamophobia.

We note that the Conservative Party has neither launched an investigation into Cllr Chana’s conduct, nor a host of other deeply concerning incidents in Harrow, including:

- Bob Blackman, Conservative MP for Harrow East, has repeatedly demonstrated Islamophobic tendencies, sharing a platform with various well-known Islamophobes, including Katie Hopkins, Tapan Ghosh and David Vance, promoting various anti-Muslim posts on social media, being a member of anti-Muslim Facebook groups, *inter alia*.
- Tweets from Cllr Anjana Patel talking of “barbaric acts” of “Islamists”, which was included in a national dossier of Islamophobic behaviour.

This conduct is all the more worrisome given that Harrow is one of the most diverse boroughs in the country, which should be celebrated.

We expect you will take immediate action to remove this individual from his post, whilst redoubling your efforts to ensure that each and every single individual within the Council serves with the respect and tolerance Muslim residents of Harrow expect from their elected officials.

Copied to:

The Conservative Campaign Headquarters

Harrow Council Conservative Group

Harrow East Conservative Association

Cllr Graham Henson, Leader of Harrow Council

Yours sincerely,

Harrow Association of Somali Voluntary Organisations

Harrow Central Mosque

Kuwaiti Community Association

Pakistan Society of Harrow

Sri Lankan Muslim Cultural Centre of Harrow

The KSIMC of London

The Shia Ithna-Ashari Community of Middlesex (Mahfil Ali)

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