Written evidence submitted by Naveed Akbar

I wish to make a brief submission for consideration relating specifically to the role of Social Media and the enforcement agencies with respect to any abuse.

One only has to look in the comments section of any ‘Muslim/Islam’ related headline post on Facebook to see how Islamophobia and abuse is rife. You can see the hate being peddled by individuals is clearly a reflection of inflammatory headlines in the daily press, particularly the tabloids.

In my view this is likely to cause significant problems for the future in the UK. Such negative reporting regarding Islam & Muslims on a constant-basis has normalised Islamophobia. A greater worry however is that it creates a detachment between those of the Muslim faith and everyone else.

The terms of reference used when reporting a crime committed by a Muslim and an equally abhorrent crime committed by a non-Muslim are commonly differentiated by one being committed in the name of a whole religion (despite tenuous links) and in the case of a non-Muslim, it seems mental health is always a primary consideration.

Media in all its forms MUST take a stand and STOP creating an ‘Us v Them’ mentality. The menace of terrorism is a battle against the entire of humanity including Muslims and the media has portrayed this in an entirely different manner leading to the rising incidents of violence towards Muslims.

In terms of Social Media, the providers together with enforcement agencies (Police) should actively be seen to be taking a stand against any hate comments. At the moment, Facebook’s ‘reporting abuse’ button is useless.