

## Timeline / Background:

- **Nov 2010** – Seven men from Rotherham convicted of CSE crimes
- **2011** – The Times article ‘broke’ CSE scandal onto national conscience
- **June 2013** – House of Commons Home Affairs Committee report ‘Child Sexual Exploitation and the response to localised Grooming’ was published
- **Aug 2014** – Rotherham Council Commission Independent inquiry – Jay Report published on child abuse in Rotherham
- **Aug 2014 – Sept 2015** - Far-right Groups stepped up their presence in Rotherham- in the 14 months post-Jay report, 14 far-right demonstrations were held in Rotherham
- **Feb 2015** – report commissioned by Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government concluded that Rotherham Council was ‘unfit for purpose’.
- **10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2015** – Mushin Ahmed attacked in Rotherham by men who were heard to shout the word ‘groomer’ during attack – Mr Ahmed died 11 days later
- **Sept 2015** – clashes between Britain First and counter-protestors, numerous arrests including ‘The Rotherham 12’.
- **Sept 2015** – Ismail Hussain attacked in racially motivated attack – limb removed with machete
- **8<sup>th</sup> Aug 2017** - Newcastle Crown Court convicted 18 men, 17 of whom were Asian, of CSE offences – The backdrop for Sarah Champion’s comments in the Sun.
- **10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2017** – Sarah Champion writes article in The Sun headlined *“British Pakistani men ARE raping and exploiting white girls...and it’s time we faced up to it”*.
- **SC gives interview to Today Programme on Radio 4, she said, ‘I think what we need to acknowledge and be upfront about this, all of the towns where these cases have gone on, the majority of the perpetrators have been British Pakistani...’. She went on to say that the, ‘...government are not researching what is going on, are these cultural issues, is there some sort message going out within the community...’**
- **She also remarked, ‘...I have to say that within my own constituency, I really, I didn’t sleep last night, coming on talking about this, because I know every time I talk about it, the level of Islamophobia increases...’**
- **11<sup>th</sup> August 2017** - The Sun followed up SC article, with an opinion piece by Trevor Kavanagh, in which he posed the question, post Brexit, what was to be done about ‘The Muslim Problem’.
- **17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2017** – Sarah Champion resigned from Labour’s shadow cabinet as a result of her opinion piece in the Sun.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2017** -, Sarah Champion wrote a further opinion piece in the Times – stating the “floppy left” were failing to confront the truth of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) crimes.

## Recommendations:

### Public Inquiry:

- 1) A key recommendation from this report is a grass-roots led inquiry, under the guise of a Citizen’s Jury that will critically analyse the impact of the CSE scandal on Race Relations and the civil liberties of people in Rotherham from 2012-17 and in this context the role and functions of the State.
- 2) Crucial to the Citizens Jury will be the need to secure a clearly defined scope, agreed and supported by all key stakeholders, including support from the actual victims of the CSE scandal, so that the outcome / verdict of the citizen jury is credible and has legitimacy with all concerned.
- 3) Broadly speaking, the Citizen’s Jury will need to be supported with a qualified research team that has the capacity and skills to support witnesses, research lines of enquiry, undertake literature reviews etc. The research team will be advised by an advisory panel made up of stakeholders and people from all sides of the political spectrum that have a credible stake in Rotherham or have been participants – including in the demonstrations. In turn the Citizen’s Jury will listen to all the evidence presented to them, write up summaries after each session and finally publish a report based on an initially agreed scope with clear recommendations.

### Responsibility:

- 4) South Yorkshire Police and Rotherham Council to openly share with the local community and the Labour party if there was an increase in racist / Islamophobic incident reporting post Ms Sarah Champion opinion piece in the Sun newspaper.
- 5) Ms Sarah Champion to take full responsibility for the words she wrote / used in a) The Sun and Times articles respectively, and consider issuing a full public retraction and b) Issue a full, frank and sincere apology to all those people that may have been affected because of her opinion piece. This acknowledgment and apology, should include Ms Champion’s own personal understanding of the impact her opinion piece may have had on stigmatizing the Pakistani community, their civil liberties / including democratic relationship’s in Rotherham.
- 6) Ms Sarah Champion to include and clarify in her response to the people of Rotherham the words she would have liked to have used in the Sun newspaper, particularly in relation to referencing the Pakistani community. This recommendation is predicated on the basis that Ms Champion genuinely believes that her words were misconstrued by the Sun newspaper.
- 7) South Yorkshire Police to assess if a hate incident / or hate crime has been committed given the content of this report, and to assess this against national confidence levels in reporting hate crimes.

### Relationships

- 8) The Council / South Yorkshire Police and local elected officials work together in a co-productive way to develop a plan rooted in the community, but owned by all stakeholders that is a) designed to learn lessons from the past 5 years based on evidence b) deliver equitable outcomes in relation to all aspects of life, and c) ensure the Pakistani community have an equitable stake and voice in the plan to move forward together.

### Moving Forward Together:

- 9) The Council, South Yorkshire Police, elected officials and the local Pakistani Community to use this report as a watershed moment for race relations in Rotherham and agree a pact to work together. 10) Through an organized and well-resourced representative strategic structure also rooted in the community, that has strategic influence and parity with other key partnership / commissioning structures - feed into key decision making processes that result in intelligence / evidence led changes for the betterment of Rotherham, and all its communities.

15/03/2018

## Temperature Check Report Executive Summary Survey

Understanding and assessing the impact of Rotherham MP, Sarah Champion’s comments in the Sun Newspaper on 10 August 2017. Ref:

*“British Pakistani men are raping and exploiting white girls... and it’s time we faced up to it...”*

Report Authors  
Zaiban Alam & Nadeem Murtuja



In Memory of Muhsin Ahmed



*“I have young polite, caring respecting, loving boys who attend local comprehensive School, that week the article was published, and they got called rapist Paki’s. I was mortified when my sons told me that. Things are hard enough in schools and in the community for young people in Rotherham (through no fault of their own but because of their ethnicity and their religious beliefs) since the publication of J report and the governments prevent strategy. Sadly, Sarah’s article added fuel and divided the community further”.*

Woman, Respondent, Ref 8

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## Preface:

On the morning of 10 August 2015, 81-year-old Mushin Ahmed was savagely set upon...by two white supremacists from Rotherham, Dale Jones and Damien Hunt, both 29, as he walked to Mosque, a short distance from his house. They accused him indiscriminately of being a 'groomer'. Mr Ahmed died of his injuries 11 days later.

Exactly two years later, on 10 August 2017, even as Mr Ahmed's family and community remembered his horrific murder for no other reason than that he was a Muslim male from Rotherham, and therefore labelled with the moniker 'groomer', their Member of Parliament, Sarah Champion, was fanning the flames of racial hatred by calling out 'British Pakistani men' as sexual predators who work in gangs to groom and sexually exploit mainly white pubescent girls. Suddenly, all Pakistani males, or anyone who looked like them, were held to be implicated and all personally responsible.

- How could she have been so insensitive as to write her article and give those interviews to the media two years to the day after the racist murder of an 81 old Yemeni elder whom his murderers dubbed a 'groomer'?
- How could she not have related the extent of neo-fascist harassment of the Pakistani community in her constituency to the likely impact of her utterances about 'British Pakistani men raping and exploiting white girls....', especially as she herself told the Today Programme on Radio 4: *'...I didn't sleep last night, coming on talking about this, because I know every time I talk about it, the level of Islamophobia increases'*?
- In what way could she be said to be representing all her constituents if she, by default, gives such encouragement to the neo-fascists in her constituency to continue their racist harassment of the Pakistani community?
- More fundamentally, what has been the impact on race relations in Rotherham as a result of the neo-fascist activity – and why are the state sponsored agencies in Rotherham silent, or non-inquisitive to understand that impact?

Hopefully, this report will be a watershed moment for Rotherham and a wakeup call for Sarah Champion and all stakeholders, to begin making amends to the Pakistani community and stand together with that community - and in doing so collectively decide and agree a way forward – the recommendations in this report surely provide them with a good starting point.



Professor Gus John

## Executive Summary

### Objectives of Survey:

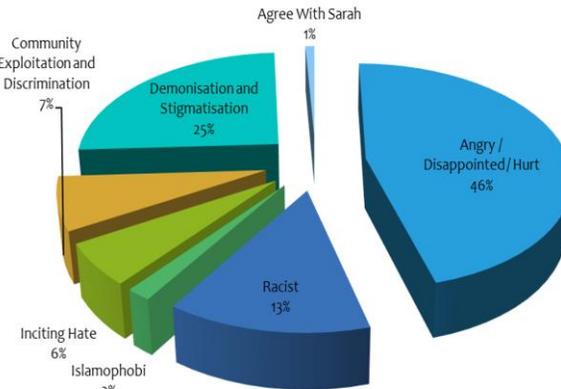
- 1 Understand the impact of Ms Sarah Champion's comments on the Pakistani community of Rotherham via an online survey;
- 2 Ensure the voice and any hurt experienced by the community is fully captured in the report, and heard by the elected officials and local statutory agencies of Rotherham;
- 3 To consider this report as a potential opportunity to build bridges – including issues associated with democratic representation that are crucial if systemic inequalities faced by minority communities are to be profiled and tackled; and
- 4 Based on the findings of the survey, share the intelligence with the relevant agencies if it is perceived (by respondents) that a hate incident or even a hate crime has been committed.

### The Questionnaire / Survey:

- Agreed survey should be done online to ensure a degree of independence in relation to the results.
- Online survey will unintentionally exclude some people.
- Survey must not be leading or biased.
- Survey Monkey tool to be used
- In total 15 questions – both open and closed.
- Survey ran from 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017 – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017
- There were in total 165 respondents – 30% women and 70% men.

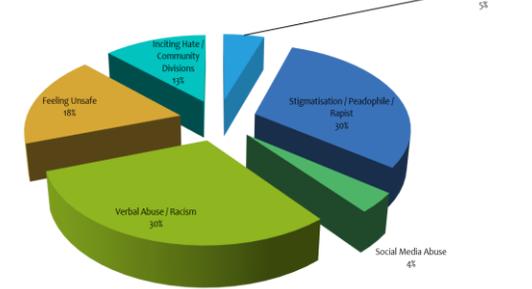
Respondents to the survey were asked how SC comments **made them feel** / from the thematic analysis 46 % of respondents stated they felt angry, hurt or disappointed. 25% of respondents stated they felt SC comments demonised and stigmatised them. 13% of respondents felt SC comments were racist.

### How Respondents Felt About SC's Comments / Key Themes / Messages



Respondents were asked **what impact** the comments made by SC had on them. From the thematic analysis 30% of respondents felt SC comments stigmatised them as pedophiles or rapists – 30% of respondents stated the SC comments had either resulted in racism or verbal abuse – 18% of respondents felt the comments made them feel unsafe – 13% of respondents said the impact would incite hate and cause community divisions and 5% of respondents felt the comments impacted on children – either demonizing or stigmatising children.

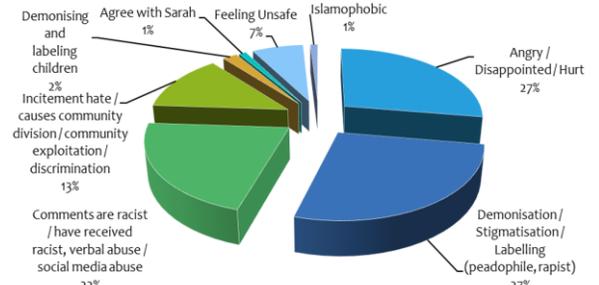
### Understanding Impact / Key Themes / Messages



Given the similarity of themes in terms of how people felt and the impact of SC comments, JUST Yorkshire then grouped similar themes together to gather an overview of the respondent feedback.

The results are: 27% of respondents angry disappointed or hurt; 27% demonisation / stigmatisation / labelling either pedophile or rapist; 22% felt comments are racist / have received racial, verbal abuse; 13% incites hate, causes community division / 7% feeling unsafe and 2% Demonising and labeling children. It was important to keep the distinction between adult demonization and children demonization.

### Overview: How respondents felt about SC Comments and the impact they have had on them or others



One of the key issues that the project group and this report wanted to address were the many misconceptions and stereotypes related to the contribution of Pakistani community in Rotherham. If Rotherham really wants to move forward together with its Pakistani community then key stakeholders must celebrate all the contributions that the Pakistani community / as referenced in this survey makes to the social capital and economy of Rotherham.

### Profession

