

WITNESS STATEMENT

CJ Act 1967, s.9; MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3)(a) and 5B; Criminal Procedure Rules 2005, Rule 27.1

Statement of Helal ABBAS URN: [] [] [] []

Age if under 18 Over 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: Councillor.....

This statement (consisting of: 3..... pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything in it which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature: [Signature] Date: 14/01/2011

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded [] (supply witness details on rear)

I am the above named person and I am making this statement in relation to my work as a councillor and what I consider libellous material published in the run up to Mayoral elections. I consider myself a victim of these publications and wish to make a formal complaint to the police. Although my full time employment is as a grants manger for a charity in the London area, I am also a Labour Councillor in the Tower Hamlets area of London. I have been in two marriages, firstly between 1986 - 1989 which ended in divorce due to work commitments, mainly politics, I then re-married in 1990 to my current wife. I grew up in Tower Hamlets and I have been a member of the Labour party for about 25-30yrs. When I joined initially I was a volunteer and took part in campaigning and other related tasks. In 1985 I was first elected as a councillor however in 1990 I stood down for personal reasons. In 1996 I was re-elected as a councillor and selected as the leader of the council for 4 years between 2001 and 2005. In 2005 I lost the internal leadership vote but still represented at a local level in Spittlefields and Banglatown. There are 17 wards that make up Tower Hamlets and each ward elects 3 councillors. The majority party across the wards then leads the council and that party elects a leader through an internal vote. These elections take place each year and in May 2010 I was re-elected as a Labour councillor. This position was taken up as a result of a public vote. As a Labour councillor an internal vote takes place to decide who will take up the position as the leader of the councillors for the local area. The Labour party are the majority in the Tower Hamlets. On 21st October 2010 the system changed to an electoral Mayor which I lost, to Luftur RAHMAN, now an independent, who was originally a Labour party candidate, who I have worked along side for many years. I was chosen by the Labour party as the Mayoral candidate to face election on the 22nd October 2010, over Luftur RAHMAN. I believe that RAHMAN is behind this smear campaign against me because he was once a Labour councillor before being turned down as the Labour candidate for

Signature: [Signature] Signature witnessed by: [Signature]

Continuation of Statement of **Helal ABBAS**

leader of the council, in favour of me. There can be only one candidate from each party running for election for Mayor. On receiving this news he decided to stand against me in the election which meant that he was expelled from the Labour party in September 2010. The reason for him not being chosen by the Labour party to represent them as their Mayor candidate is that I, along with others, had made a formal complaint against him, to the Labour party, regarding his conduct in a public office. I was concerned that he was being influenced by external groups, including Islamic Forum Europe (IFE). Our relationship in work began to deteriorate about 3-4 years ago, due to his behaviour.

On 20th and 21st October 2010 RAHMAN was interviewed by the Evening Standard in which he was questioned about the allegations I was a 'wife beater' but brushed them aside which is odd as most would have dismissed it. I also received threats during the campaign stage, which the police were notified of.

The London Bangla newspaper print was apparently doubled in the two weeks prior to the election, to the region of 90,000 copies. This is a free newspaper, usually delivered outside mosques in the Tower Hamlets area but on these occasions they were delivered to all of the homes in the area. I do not know who's decision it was to do this or who was behind the financing of it.

During the week commencing 18th October an advert was placed in the Banglar paper telling people not to vote for me in the mayoral elections as I was a wife beater. This advert took approximately a quarter of the page. The paper is distributed each Friday so this advert covered 15th-21st October 2010.

Leaflets containing the same advert as in the paper were also delivered through peoples doors, but they were blown up on to A4 size paper. A second leaflet was also posted to homes in the area, containing the same advert but with added libellous material suggesting that I was a wife beater.

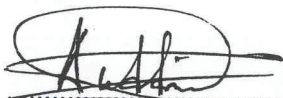
Further to that, an email was sent, to numerous people I believe, detailing seven ways why people should not vote for me. This email, having been printed out, goes on for 6 pages. The content suggests that I am, or have been, involved in domestic violence, which is completely untrue. I do not know how many people received this or how the sender was able to get hold of the email addresses. I received it on my work email address.

This email was also printed in the Banglar paper in its entirety.

On top of that was a text message sent out, outlining the same points as in the email, but this time it was a summarised version. I received this text message but have subsequently deleted it so I can not tell you the originators phone number, but it was from a number I did not recognise. I am aware that a number of people have received the text message.

I believe RAHMAN is being funded by an Islamic group, possibly Islamic Forum Europe (IFE). They control the East London mosque. I do not know of anyone else who may want to do this to me or

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Continuation of Statement of Helal ABBAS

stand to gain from my losing the mayoral election.

It goes without saying that the allegations made are completely false and I have never been involved with the police or otherwise regarding domestic violence.

The email that was circulated made reference to seven points as to why people should not vote for me. As already stated, I have never been involved in domestic violence against my first wife or anyone else. I am confident that my ex-wife would support me in this.

It is true that I had an argument with a Labour colleague Lilian Collins however, it was purely an argument and certainly not violent, physically or otherwise. This happened about 10/12 years ago now.

There were witnesses to this but a number of them have since been expelled from the Labour Party.

I totally deny the allegation that I condone sexist bullying and there is no basis to the what so ever.

I have never allocated funds to friends' organisations. As leader of the council I have overseen the allocation of funds to a number of projects, none of which were corrupt. Any links or contacts, formal or informal, have to be declared at the council meetings prior to any decisions around funding and allocation of money.

In 1988 I had a small business and in 1990 it went in to liquidation, but I have never filed for bankruptcy. The allegation of mortgage fraud is completely false and again there is no substance or truth to this.

I once had an investment in a restaurant, which was once investigated for tax evasion however this was a routine audit and nothing ever came of it. The partner of the business and the manger were investigated, and as a co-owner I was also part of that investigation. There was nothing wrong with the way the business was being run financially.

Being called a 'self serving hypocrite' is simply a statement, which does not warrant any comment.

The last point in the email, about bringing Bangladeshi village politics in to Tower Hamlets is also untrue. I am not part of any political party besides the Labour Party and I am not under any influence by Bangladeshi community members.

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