

The following statements have been submitted – full details are attached:

	Name	Subject
CS01	Clr Abdul Malik	Cuts to Tell MAMA and the Rise of Islamophobia in Bristol
CS02	Clr Mohammed Makawi	Islamophobia and hate crimes
CS03	Clr Patrick McAllister	Planning consultation and call-in deadlines

CS01

Member Forum statement from Cllr Abdul Malik

Subject: Cuts to Tell MAMA and the Rise of Islamophobia in Bristol

I am deeply concerned about a decision that has far-reaching consequences for our city and beyond—the government’s withdrawal of funding from Tell MAMA, the UK’s leading organisation tackling Islamophobia. This isn’t just a bureaucratic budget cut. It’s a political decision that sends a dangerous message: that the growing hatred and violence against Muslims in our society is not a priority for those in power.

Here in Bristol, we have seen the rise of far-right activity with our own eyes. We’ve witnessed coordinated efforts to spread division, to intimidate, to create fear. And it’s not just rhetoric—it manifests in real attacks. The mosque I help run, Easton Jamia Masjid, has been targeted multiple times. We’ve had to deal with graffiti, vandalism, and direct threats to our congregation. But this is not just about one place of worship. It’s about individuals across this city—men, women, and children—who are facing harassment in their daily lives simply because of their faith.

We cannot pretend that Islamophobia is a minor issue. Hate crimes against Muslims have risen dramatically, and every report from communities across the UK confirms what we already know—Islamophobia is on the rise, both in physical attacks and online abuse. It impacts people’s ability to live freely, to feel safe, to be part of society without fear. Tell MAMA has been one of the few organisations actively tracking this rise, supporting victims, and ensuring accountability. By cutting its funding, the government is effectively saying that this struggle does not matter, that the voices of victims do not count.

This should alarm every single one of us, because history shows us what happens when hate goes unchecked. We’ve seen where division and scapegoating lead, and we must never allow it to take root in our city. Bristol has always been a city of resistance, of solidarity, of standing up for what is right. From the fight against slavery to the struggles for racial equality, this city has always taken a stand against injustice. And we must do so again today.

So I call on this council to send a clear message: that Bristol will not tolerate the silencing of those fighting Islamophobia. That we will not accept our communities being left exposed to hate. And that we demand the immediate reinstatement of Tell MAMA’s funding, so they can continue their crucial work in protecting some of the most vulnerable members of our society.

Hate crime does not exist in isolation. When one community is targeted, it emboldens those who seek to divide us all. If we are to build a stronger, safer, more united Bristol, we must ensure that no one is left to face this fight alone. We stand together, and we will not be silent.

CS02

Member Forum statement from Cllr Mohamed Makawi

Subject: Islamophobia and hate crimes

I would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome the Holy Month of Ramadan and extend my best wishes to Bristol's Muslim communities, my Muslim colleagues here in the council, and all those observing this sacred time. Ramadan is a month of reflection, compassion, and unity—values that strengthen our diverse city and bring communities together.

Bristol takes pride in celebrating the rich cultural and religious diversity of its people. However, we must also acknowledge the challenges we face. Islamophobia, the rise of the far right, and hate crimes—whether against Muslims or any other community—have no place in our city. We must stand firm against all forms of hatred and division.

I call on the Labour government to take stronger action in tackling Islamophobia and hate crimes in all their forms. Words of solidarity must be backed by meaningful policies to protect and support our communities.

As we mark this holy month, let us recommit to building a Bristol that is inclusive, respectful, and united against hate. Ramadan Mubarak to all those observing.

CS03

Member Forum statement from Cllr Patrick McAllister

Subject: Consultation and call-in deadlines

During the last couple of months, I became aware of a high-profile planning application in my ward. I communicated with the applicants and realised that the application merited being heard at a Development Control meeting instead of being decided under delegated powers.

I spoke with the case officer over email, submitted a statement of support on the planning portal, and around a week later a formal call-in form asking for it to be referred to committee. I would like to be clear that I am not complaining about the case officer, who was doing their job.

I was disappointed to learn that the call-in was being opposed by the Planning Department. I appreciate that the call-in was technically after the deadline; however, I believe this is superseded by the fact that important, material documentation continued to be uploaded – by necessity – after the deadline. In fact, the consultation expiry date was retroactively extended to just last week and public comments continued to be submitted.

I am fully aware that our planning officers are working as hard as they can within a system that has still not recovered from previous service cuts. Because the system has a way to go before it is reliable and punctual, it is essential that there is leeway for councillors to exercise their rights to call-in. It cannot be that call-ins are expected and public consultations end before all material documentation has been uploaded.

I would like to urge those councillors responsible for the planning service to help ensure that consultation and call-in deadlines must reflect the actual, not ideal, timeframes for documentation upload.