



Restore Britain candidate helped lead biased grooming gangs inquiry

Description

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Marlon West, who is a mayoral candidate for Restore Britain Greater Manchester, speaks on camera for

The [leader](#) of Restore Britain has announced its candidate for the Greater Manchester mayoral elections: Marlon West, whose [daughter](#) is a victim of group-based child sexual exploitation.

However, CSE survivor, [Femi Mohammed](#) says West is one of the people who deliberately excluded her from Lowe's intensely biased a Rape Gang Inquiry Report.

The goal? To reinforce the misinformation that only Pakistani Muslim men prey on white British girls.

Restore Britain: Who is Marlon West?

On 22 June, Rupert Lowe [posted](#) that he was "delighted" about the announcement.

West is one of the most prominent campaigners against the rape gangs in the country. He spent more than two years forcing the government to establish a national rape gang inquiry, meeting repeatedly with senior politicians, including safeguarding minister Jess Phillips, and publicly accusing Labour of breaking its promises to victims and families when they stalled.

West is running on a platform of attracting business investment, cutting public spending, and overhauling Manchester's public transport network. This is somewhat odd, given that [public transport](#) is one of previous mayor Andy Burnham's more well-known success stories.

However, Lowe also [highlighted](#) West's "central role" in gathering evidence for the inquiry, which the *Canary* has [criticised](#) for its major methodological issues and fabricated statistics.

Likewise, we also [reported](#) on Femi, who said she was deliberately excluded from the inquiry.

Femi is a Brown, Muslim woman, and a survivor of group-based CSE. However, she was suddenly dropped from the inquiry once her background came to light.

After Lowe announced West as Restoré’s candidate, Femi published another statement, underscoring that West was one of her contact points on the inquiry – and one of several who froze her out once she was dropped.

Femi [posted](#):

We are told that Muslim women and girls do not speak up because we are afraid of our families and communities. Well, my experience with MP Rupert Lowe’s Rape Gang Inquiry has shattered that illusion.

I am testament that when Muslim women and girls do speak up, we are held back, silenced, covered up, and erased. Individuals and organisations in the survivors movement and the Rape Gang Inquiry.

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Timeline of events

Femi then went on to share a [timeline](#) of her interactions with Marlon West and the inquiry this year:

â€¢ 6 January – During an online Teams meeting with West, Femi was informed she’d been selected to give evidence at the hearings.

â€¢ 7 January – During a second online meeting, now with West, Nat Enderby and Kerie Boon, Femi was advised to draft a victim statement. She also pointed out:

It was also during these online meetings that I was asked where I was born.

Femi was born in Pakistan. Her family moved to the UK when she was three months old.

â€¢ 7 January – Femi sent an email asking if she needs to add anything to, or condense, her statement. She also added that she was:

Elated that I was chosen to attend the Inquiry hearings, I was so excited to be able to convey to the attendees the status of victims in Islam and how victims are supported in the Quran and in Islam.

â€¢ 8 January – After a follow-up email, West said he’d uploaded the statement without alteration.

â€¢ 19 January – After 11 days without contact, Femi emailed West and Enderby again.

I was concerned that I had seen Natá??s post regarding the hearings starting in two weeks and wanted to check whether I am expected to attend Parliamentá?!

I never heard from Marlon West or Nat Enderby again.

á?ç 23 January á?? Sammy Woodhouse, a survivor and an organiser for the inquiry, messaged Femi with an invite to attend the hearings on 4 February. Femi accepted the next day, and Woodhouse then sent her train tickets to travel to London.

á?ç 28 January á?? Femi was suddenly dropped from the inquiry. Woodhouse texted Femi, requesting a phone call. About the conversation, Femi said:

Having spoken with Sammy on numerous occasions previously, she did not seem her usual self during this conversation and failed to provide any explanation for my exclusion.

I felt betrayed and was left in a state of shock, confusion, and despair. I had been removed from the hearing with no justification, and I believe the decision to exclude me came from the very top of the Rape Gang Inquiry.

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Why was Femi excluded from the inquiry

In the second part of her statement, Femi made clear why she believes she was excluded:

I am a Muslim survivor whose experience differs significantly from the narrative that was later presented in the Rape Gang Inquiryá??s final report.

My Child Sexual Exploitation was perpetrated by a white grooming and trafficking gang, my recent sexual assault and threats to my life by a Conservative public figure, and I believe my experiences and Muslim identity challenged assumptions that the inquiry ultimately appeared determined to promote by directing blame towards Islam and the Pakistani community.

The [report](#) used conjecture from an Anglican vicar, Mark Durie, to conclude that Islam predisposes its followers toward the sexual abuse of non-Muslim girls. It included speculative figures on the number of victims and the Muslim make-up of the perpetrators.

The inquiryá??s racist, Islamophobic conclusions were determined long before it began. It then cherrypicked and excluded evidence in order to reach that conclusion.

[Marlon West](#) was one of the inquiry leaders who perpetrated that exclusion and ignored Femiá??s testimony. As such, Femi denounced West and his candidacy:

I see the word "honourable" used repeatedly to describe Marlon West. In my view, there is nothing honourable about taking away the voice of a survivor who participated in good faith, regardless of religion and faith.

When Muslim survivors are excluded, ignored, or their experiences omitted because they do not fit a preferred narrative, that is a serious injustice.

For that reason, I do not regard Marlon West's conduct towards me as honourable.

In the coming weeks, as we watch Restore Britain frame West as a crusader against the grooming gangs, remember Femi's words here. Remember how West and his cohort treated a survivor who didn't fit the narrative they wanted to convey.

Greater Manchester can do far, far better.

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1. News

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1. biased
2. britain
3. candidate
4. gangs
5. grooming
6. helped
7. inquiry
8. lead
9. news
10. restore

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1. News