Solidarity with Arooj Shah

19 Jul 2021

As GMB national Race Network, we stand in solidarity with Arooj Shah, leader of Oldham Council.

Arooj was subjected to an horrific arson attack on her car in the early hours on Tuesday 13th July 2021. It is said that this was a targeted attack motivated, it seems, by hate and misogyny.

Arooj is the first Muslim woman to be elected as the leader of Oldham Council. Arooj is also a GMB Member and part of the national Race Network.

As trade unionists we will continue to challenge the inequality, discrimination, misogyny and hate which black, Asian and minority ethnic people face on a daily basis both in the workplace and in wider society.

This same week we have seen the abhorrent racial abuse in sport of Marcus Rashford, Bukayo Saka and Jadon Sancho, resulting in amongst other incidents a mural of Marcus Rashford being defaced.

Let’s not forget that Rashford spearheaded the campaign to ensure children received a hot meal under lockdown, a campaign which our former departed GMB National President Mary Turner was so passionate about. Rashford also led a campaign to support those who were homeless.

We must remember it is not only in football and other sport that we see hate, racism, discrimination and misogyny but in all parts of our lives. It is systematic, structural, institutional and global.
We stand in solidarity with Arooj. We note the outpouring of support from GMB North West and Irish (Arooj’s region) with messages of solidarity like “an attack on one is an attack on us all”.

As trade unionists we can all unite and proactively stand against hate, inequality, discrimination, misogyny and racism.

As GMB race strand leads we will continue to challenge and hold to account by raising awareness, training, and campaigning. We will continue to work together, united to eradicate racism, misogyny, discrimination and hate in all its form and at all levels too. We will not be divided but stand united.

Solidarity with Arooj - “We got you”. 