

Jasvinder Sanghera CBE

MY HONOUR IS THEIR SHAME

Promised into
marriage aged 8



Leaving Home Aged 16



- Unexpected disownment
- Living life with curtains drawn
- Managing expectations
- Education



A Charity is Born

Karma Nirvana

1993

Increase Reporting, Reduce Isolation &
Save Lives

Robina

A Lasting Memory – First time speaking
out sharing Robina's experiences

Karma Nirvana
Peace &
Enlightenment

Early Days
1993- 2000

No-one would
listen

Learning to
walk around
and not into
obstacles

Making a
difference –
Threats to kill

'Happy Families'

I don't pretend like we're the perfect family
no more

Desire to live is burning

My stomach is burning

But all they think about is honour

I was like a normal teenage kid

Didn't ask 2 much

I jus wanted to fit in

But my culture was different

But my family ignored

Shafilea Ahmed – Aged 17



Campaigning

Helpline – My front room to national helpline receiving over 200,000 calls

Civil & Criminal Law 2013

Forced Marriage Unit –
Repatriating victims

Moving from only supporting women to now including men

Every next level of your life
will demand a different you.



#Me Too

QUESTION?

Heart of British
Establishment
The House of
Lords



- “Do you see that building? It is the most powerful of decision making. If you sleep with me, I will make you a Baroness within a year.” 2006

12 Years Later
Why Now?

Wilderness Days– Reporting 2017
Sub-Committee on Lords Conduct
agreement to investigate
Passed Public Interest Test

Apply standard of balance of probabilities
Statements of both parties and Witness
Statements
Difference in Witness Statements
JS Anonymous

Sexual Harassment

Beginning of my Journey

Offered a corrupt inducement to have sexual relations

Warned of unspecified consequences if I did not accept his offer

Allegations connected to Lord Lester's conduct of his parliamentary duties

Code of Conduct - Members should act on their personal honour in the discharge of their parliamentary duties

Sexual Harrasment

Unwanted touching

Sexual comments

Taking advantage being alone

Warning of unspecified consequences, if I did not accept

Intimidation, emails during the silent years

Threat: Book signing invitation

Removed from debates on FM Civil Law

The red and blue carpet!

First Debate

November 2017

- Held on Friday afternoon
- Commissioner/ JS ridiculed
- Questioned my mental health
- Victim blaming
- One by one the alleged was elevated for his contributions
- Undermined the process approved by HoL 7 times since 2010
- Requested right to cross examination JS

What Followed?

No longer anonymous

Alleged suspended

Publicly named and shamed

Radio 4 – Listening to Today Programme

Vile tweets, journalist, calls/visits

Digging for dirt to further discredit

Victim blaming continued for months:

Why did she go in his car? She's empowered? She could have said no?

What is she getting out of this? How much?

TESTED
Tide Began to
Turn

- Questioning yourself
- Know your friends
- Depression
- Then something reminds you of who and what you have stood for your whole life
- Open letter 74 staff members of HoL signed
- How you treat JS will speak to us. We experience sexual harassment/bullying every day
- Terresa May – HoL "will not be allowed to mark its own homework"

Second Debate

- First debate deemed “ill-judged and misconceived debate”
- Who was there to speak as her friends, to her character and achievements?
- A juror would not sit on a case of a friend
- Who was in the House to make the case for the Complainant?
- Commissioner excellent job and applied the procedure
- Reasons why victims do not always complain immediately about sexual harassment

One by one Peers
shared personal
experiences

- “Probably, every woman in this House will tell you how you get on with business, trying to normalise things after being sexually harassed.”

Peer.

“Each time a woman stands up for herself she stands up for all women.”

Maya Angelou

Complaint Upheld

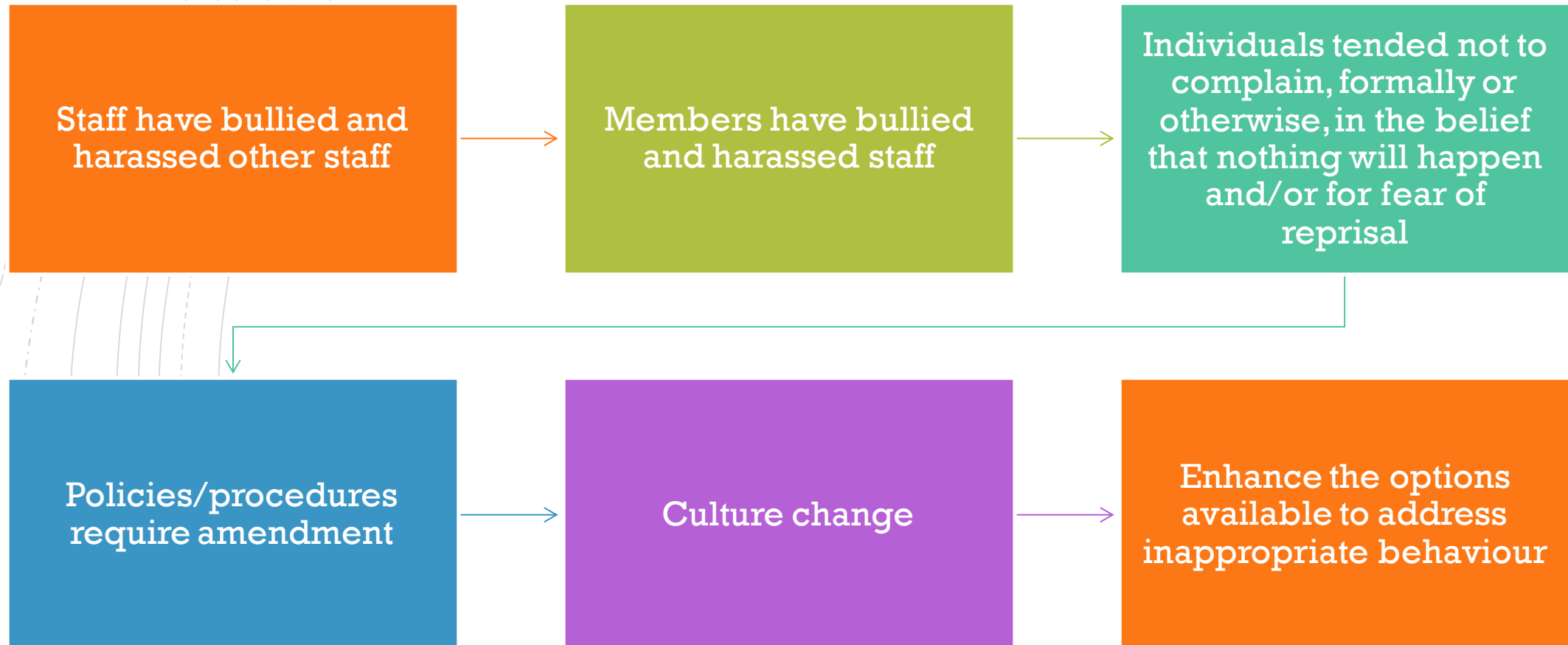
- Peer was suspended, recommended for expulsion and lost appeal, resigned before second debate
- Endorsed conclusions of Commissioner: Lord Lester of Herne Hill breached the provisions of the Code in failing to act on his personal honour by sexually harassing the complainant and offering her corrupt inducements to sleep with him.

Ellenbogen QC
Report
July 2019

Independent Inquiry Sexual
Harassment & Bullying
19 Recommendations

Culture and behaviours are not conducive to an open and supportive culture to ensure that all those working there are treated with dignity and respect

Key Findings



Areas of Concern Referred as 'hotspots'



- Installation of CCTV
- Contributions recounted the Library and Table Offices are areas in which member traffic is high & staff can be on duty late in the evening and working alone
- “Hotspots for poor behaviour”
- CCTV be installed in both areas to deter the continuation of such behaviour and provide a source of evidence of it, should it recur

A red speech bubble graphic with a white outline, containing the word 'Support' in white text. The bubble has a tail pointing downwards and to the left.

Support

- Appoint 'critical friend', to whom they can talk without fear of repercussion
- Not form part of the appraisal process
- Role to offer constructive mentoring
- Neutral Team to deal with concern
- Now a clear reporting process

A red speech bubble graphic with a white outline, containing white text. The bubble has a tail pointing downwards and to the left.

Support
Increases in
Reporting 2022

- Immediate monthly meetings with Clerk of the Parliaments to discuss with members of the House any issues raised by staff, or otherwise apparent
- Internal confidential Helpline
- Increase in reporting since process changes/complaint

**"Raising your head
above the parapet
takes some guts."**



What Next?

I know no other way than to be true to myself and others. Raising my head above the parapet has become part of my DNA

Values are like
fingerprints.

Nobodies are the
same, but you
leave them all
over everything
you do.

- Elvis Presley

Questions?

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