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## [Learn more about why Rabi Martins is standing to be Vice President](#)

**Let's Make Lib Dems BME Friendly – It's Not What We Do, But How We Do It That Counts**

Below is an outline of why I am standing for Vice President.

I am an established Race Equality and Diversity campaigner with a Business Management background and an established record of striving for Race Equity across the Party. In the course of my 25 years as Party member I have served on the Federal Policy Committee, International Relations Committee, been Secretary of the PCA, vice chair of EMLD and served as a Regional Diversity Champion. I am also Secretary of Lib Dem Friends of India. It is this personal history that accounts for my reputation as a Community Champion within the Party and my high profile amongst BME communities nationally.

In 2001 at the request of the then Party President Lord Dholakia I chaired the first Race Equality Group in the Party and produced a report with guidelines on what the Party should do to attract support from Ethnic Minority (BME) Communities. It recommended establishing an Ethnic Minority Election Task Force (EMETF). This was done and soon after we elected our first BME MP. Unfortunately EMETF was killed off by the Party machine.

In 2018 Lord Alderdice undertook a comprehensive review on the same subject. His study concluded that "Despite our clear liberal values, rejecting all

forms of prejudice and inequality, the Party has failed to engage sufficiently with BaME communities”.

That is precisely what I and others who are campaigning to make our Party more inclusive have been saying for years. By and large our messages fell on deaf ears. As a consequence several talented highly capable politically active BME individuals became disillusioned, felt undervalued and left the Party. But I chose to stay on and fight. I am glad I did because I now have one more chance to change things. So I promise you if I am elected Vice President and charged with the responsibility of making Lib Dems more appealing to individuals from BME Communities I will make do everything in my power to achieve that outcome.

Doing this will need member support. So I will closely with local parties in England, Scotland and Wales to develop a plan for attracting individuals and groups from BME Communities who will act as ambassadors within their respective catchment areas. I know it can be done because I did it in Watford. Indeed I consider it my prime responsibility to drive this change.

This is my three point plan to Kick Start my plan:

1. Establish a BME Engagement Consultative Group made up of BME Councillors and Activists from England, Scotland and Wales and task the group with devising a plan to implement the recommendations in the Alderdice Review
2. Devise a BME Engagement Framework for local Parties in our Target Constituencies and in Councils with significant BME populations
3. In consultation with the Leaders Office, Campaign Team and Communications Office produce a special BME Media plan

I know I can rely on our members to help me achieve our common inclusivity goals for the Party.

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## [Learn more about why Amna Ahmad is standing to be Vice President](#)

Time and time again, we hear that the reality of what ethnic minorities face in our party and in our politics does not match up to the principles we hold, and, as a party committed to equality, it is vital that we apply our values and make a change. I will provide the positive vision and leadership we need to move forward and make that happen.

As a former Lib Dem Parliamentary candidate, I have seen prejudice close-up,

within British politics and, sadly, within our party. And I know that I'm not the only one. My experience led me to take time to reflect and then, at Harvard, I learnt from world leaders on race equality, collaborative working, and leadership. I want to translate my experience and learning into change for our party in the UK. As a starting point, we must implement the Alderdice Review recommendations.

I was honoured to receive endorsements from members across the country, including Baroness Sal Brinton, Chris Lucas, Cllr Sarah Cheung Johnson, Tom Brake, Layla Moran MP, Baroness Alison Suttie and Sarah Green MP.

If I were elected as your Vice President, we could:

- Promote a collaborative, positive working style to take the party from debate to action
- Implement the Alderdice Review recommendations at every level of the Liberal Democrats
- Help local parties and SAOs engage and campaign with diverse communities to win elections in the country

It is time for change. As a party, we need to attract ethnic minority talent, promote equality and opportunity for all.

### **All about me**

I was born in Lahore, Pakistan, and grew up on a council estate in London. I was in foster care for a short time. I studied at Oxford and most recently, Harvard.

I joined the party due to my opposition to the Iraq War and since then, I have run for council, London Assembly and as a target Parliamentary seat candidate in 2017. That year I was appointed the Lib Dems' Shadow Refugee Minister and debated Nick Ferrari on LBC about the policy to allow in Syrian child refugees.

I am a regular contributor to BBC Asian Network and has appeared in The Guardian, the Evening Standard, ITV News, and the BBC, amongst others. Professionally, I am a campaigner working in healthcare policy.

Fun fact: Barack Obama follows me on Twitter! You can too at: [@amnajahmad](https://twitter.com/amnajahmad). You can also join my Facebook group – Amna for VP or email me at [amnaforvp@gmail.com](mailto:amnaforvp@gmail.com).

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# [Learn more about why Roderick Lynch is standing to be Vice President](#)

## **A campaigning Vice President, for a campaigning Party**

I was a 100/200m Sprinter. Catastrophe struck in my early 20's when my achilles tendon ruptured. For 20 months I was in a wheelchair. I needed wheelchair-friendly public transport to hospital and the inadequacy of it shocked me. It made me realise that everyone has a choice. When you see something that's wrong, do you leave it for someone else, or do you fight for change?

I decided to fight for change. I set up a transport company and, eventually, was transporting 5,000 vulnerable children and adults in wheelchair accessible vehicles. I got involved in drafting the Private Hire Vehicles Act and helped lead the campaign for cab safety. I delivered contracts to the 2012 London Paralympics. I was named in the Black Power List.

But throughout my life I experienced racism and saw it blight so many people's lives. I have spent years fighting racism.

I provided a campaign bus for Operation Black Vote and helped thousands to register to vote. In 2018 I was the founding chair of the Liberal Democrat Campaign for Race Equality. We established the RDC to develop ethnic minority candidates.

I was disappointed that, after John Alderdice's report on race diversity, the party did nothing. So when the Thornhill Review was set up I, as Chair of LDCRE, sent in a submission.

We need to recognise that the ethnic minority vote is so substantial, that we cannot win without ethnic minority communities. If you ignore 40% of a constituency you are giving your local party a target of reaching 60% of the white vote.

Our recommendations were published in the Thornhill Review. Still the party failed to implement it. I then piloted an amendment to the strategy motion at the federal conference and committed the Party to act.

That is why I'm now standing for Vice-President: if elected I will make the party implement that strategy. John Alderdice and Dorothy Thornhill are supporting me.

I have rolled up my sleeves to show how it's done – in just the last year I helped Anton Georgiou win a 29% swing in Brent; helping Nancy Jirira win Fortune Green, building support for Gareth Roberts in Hounslow and helping demolish the Labour vote in the C&A by-election. I have advised the Scottish Lib Dems and campaigned in Wales.

**Change can't wait**

I will:

Ensure that the Party implements the Alderdice and Thornhill reviews. I will make the party launch a national campaign to encourage and assist local parties to:

- reach out to ethnic minority communities
- include these communities in canvassing targets during elections
- establish their key concerns and campaign on them
- continue to campaign for the rights of women and LGBT+ ethnic minorities
- recruit ethnic minority members
- gain ethnic minority votes and make our party better reflect the diversity of the society we wish to represent

I will give you the tools to become more diverse, confident, and vote-winning. For further information see my Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1118017102271737>

Change can't wait. I hope you will vote for me for Vice-President.

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## Tahir Maher

### **Vision**

My goals for this role are:

- I want to help provide a platform for better training and promote a programme that supports ethnic minority members to develop their potential, so they are competently able to stand for external and internal elections of office
- I want to see established an attractive and resilient message that helps to build a strong foundation for the Liberal Democrats to engage and campaign with in Ethnic Minority communities
- Within the party, I want to establish a better understanding of Ethnic minority issues on housing, education, LGBT+, health, crime, etc. This will allow us to better serve the ethnic minority communities at a national and local level

### **Believe**

This is the part I say how good I am...

- I understand how the party works
- How to deliver change

- I have extensive experience of campaigning
- I can lead to make change happen

I have been a member of the party coming up to 20 years. In that time, I have been a Town/Borough councillor for over 11 years; I have been a Branch, Constituency, Regional and English Party chair.

I understand how the party works, how to engage the different parts of the party to ensure we achieve change together, and I have a record of leading change at State and regional levels.

I am also an experienced campaigner overseeing and running a number of local campaigns and being involved in national campaigns.

Implemented change, in a party with a large volunteer base requires this to be done collaboratively. Therefore, imposing change or a standalone solution I believe won't work.

## **Achieve**

Like anyone else, ethnic minority members are concerned about their environment, health service, climate change etc., and they want to do something about it. To help them make a difference (many) will need training in planning a campaign, making a speech, writing Focuses, identifying a winnable seat and so on. I want to help get that developed and delivered.

Because every local, regional, and state party has diversity officers, a structure exists to communicate and work with officers. Such a structure can be used to identify issues, gather data and share information. As a party, we need to further develop the right message, and this will require working with a number of SAO's, ethnic minority members and with the Head office. Again, bring people together.

Prior to Lord Alderdice's report there were two other reports done looking at the issues relating to ethnic minorities in the party. Those reports were not really implemented. In fact, as a summary you can say that Lord Alderdice's effectively said that if those reports were implemented most of the issues would be addressed. Consequently, it's a priority for me to implement Lord Alderdice's report.

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