As residents, community and faith representatives in Bristol we are feeling a sense of shock and sadness at the sickening news of the terrible attack that unfolded in Manchester on Monday night. It has impacted on us personally and professionally and we each want to do all we can to redress the harm such a heinous attack does to our nation.

Firstly our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families and those affected. This is an absolutely heartless attack on innocent people and an attack on all of us as a country.

We would like to pay tribute to the people of Manchester who have responded with such dignity, courage and harmony in the wake of such an atrocity. This has really helped give hope to others around the UK. Such positive community spirit counteracts the despair and fear that terrorism can incite and is a role model to the rest of the UK.

We also need to credit the professionalism of the Emergency Services who handled the situation with the excellence we have come to expect of them and also to credit our local Emergency Services who are working tirelessly as we speak to do all they can to keep us safe and to prevent any harm coming to Bristol residents.

As some of Bristol’s local charities and forums, we ask all our local communities to do all we can to reach down deep within ourselves and tap into our national spirit to stand together united as individuals, communities, cities and as a nation to maintain calm to ensure that such evil and misguided acts don’t succeed in dividing us. Below are a few statements which we wish to share with the people of Bristol to guide thoughts and response at this difficult time:

**SARI (Stand Against Racism & Inequality) states:**

“SARI stands with Manchester, with every victim and their loved ones. We stand united against terror. We ask all our local communities to promote the best response and to tackle all forms of hate and terror. Do not let those with such mal-intention achieve their goal to divide, break and scaremonger communities. Get closer to your community, neighbour and fellow citizens and look out for each other. Report any hate incident to your local police force and/or SARI or Bristol Hate Crime Services. You can call us on Freephone number 0800 171 2272; e-mail us on sari@sariweb.org.uk or visit our website at www.sariweb.org.uk. Remember as Martin Luther King said: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that". Alex Raikes MBE, Director (Strategic), SARI.
Bristol Manifesto for Race Equality States:

"On behalf of the Bristol Manifesto for Race Equality steering group we are deeply saddened by the horrific attack in Manchester on Monday night. Our immediate thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families.

We stand together in unity with Manchester and with each other here in Bristol.

We believe it is even more essential in such times for all communities to work together to fight extremism however and wherever it manifests itself, and to help keep each other safe from any form of hatred or retaliation. We continue to strive in the pursuit of this aim.” Sumita Hutchison (Chair), Monira Ahmed Chowdhury (Co Vice-Chair) & Alex Raikes (Co Vice-Chair).

Bristol Multi-Faith Forum states:

“News of the suicide bomb attack in Manchester is shocking.

That the victims were children and young people makes our outcry against this act of violence even more urgent and determined.

The Bristol Multi Faith Forum, and the faith communities of our city, send deepest condolences to the victims of this attack, their families and the people who live in Manchester.

We also say that horrific events like these are happening too often. And while we stand together to reply to this vicious attack with determination that we will not be frightened or divided, we know that we are living through deeply worrying times.

We see and celebrate acts of kindness and ‘community spirit’ in the aftermath of this kind of incident ... but we desperately need to look more deeply and see with more understanding the everyday actions that can build up strong, caring community, where people are known and included, prejudice and resentment are noticed and challenged, where we reach out to isolated people and invest our interest and energy in making our life together good and peaceful for all citizens.

Standing together, getting to know our neighbours, listening to one another in the days, weeks months and years ahead and being determined to grow strong and peaceful communities that are diverse and inclusive ... are things we can all do every day. These things offer a strong response to the pain we all feel and fear that we share with the people of Manchester”. Revd Tracey Lewis. Chair of Bristol Multi Faith Forum.

Building the Bridge (our local Prevent partnership) states:

“Whilst we are all grief struck, shocked and sickened, our Nation stands strong in the test of time purely because of the respect we have for each other. The loss of life will never return or be replaced, this void will remain but these parents, families and friends can take comfort from the people of Bristol that our thoughts, prayers, love and unity are with you forever. Our determination for peace, harmony and tolerance will no doubt prevail against the obstacles that stand to divide us. We will continue to work locally and nationally to root out all forms of extremism using the strong partnership approaches that are needed to make this happen”. Zaheer Shabir, Chair for Building the Bridge
Bristol Cathedral states:

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God and God in them” 1 John 4:16. Bristol Cathedral stands alongside our Bristol communities in solidarity with the people of Manchester against the atrocity of Monday’s attacks. We continue to pray for all those who have been affected by this tragedy; those who have died, those fighting against injury, those facing the devastation of loss and all who work in our emergency services. God’s perfect love drives out all fear. In the face of it, the Cathedral remains open as a place where all people, of any faith and none, are welcome to light a candle, to pray, to reflect and to mourn.” Dean of Bristol (Very Revd Dr David Hoyle)

Bristol Hindu Temple (Sanatan Deevya Mandal states:

“It was with great sadness and profound shock that we learnt of the brutal attack that struck Manchester City. It breaks our hearts to think that once again terrorism has sought to instil fear where there should be joy.

I would like to convey my deepest sympathy to those families who lost their loved ones. May the almighty give strength to cope with this difficult time?

We as faith communities will work together to fight terrorism and will use solidarity to establish love, peace and harmony.

Aum shanti shanti shanti. Kamlesh vyas (The priest, Bristol Hindu Temple)

The Bristol and West Progressive Jewish Congregation states:

“The Bristol and West Progressive Jewish Congregation shares the horror of all good people at the attack on defenceless people in Manchester this week. Our hearts are with the survivors and bereaved relatives and all those injured in body and mind. We hope they will take solace in the united response of love that has been shown.

We express the hope that justice will be firm but fair, and that the terrorists will fail in their attempt to divide the religious communities that make up our diverse country”. (Dr) Jane Clark, Chairperson, BWPJC.

Bristol Muslim Cultural Society states:

“Statement of Solidarity from BMCS: as we slowly heal from another attack on our country many of us will be pondering what drives another human being to so lose touch with their own humanity and values that they can carry out such an atrocious and evil act on other people. It is simply beyond comprehension. The fact that in this case children were also targeted makes it even more incomprehensible.

Of course our thoughts and prayers are still with the victims and their families and those affected at this difficult time. We hope have the support they need to cope with such a horrible tragedy.

Words are not enough to express the anger and sadness we feel whenever innocent lives are lost through evil misguided criminal behaviour justified by a warped sense of right and wrong. Be it here or any other place in the world. Or whoever the perpetrator is. Whether carried out by an individual, group, army or a nation

In this instance our hearts have been shaken but our common resolve in humanity to stand united remains unshaken and firm. Once again the majority of us have reached down deep within ourselves and tapped
into our national spirit to stand together unified as individuals, communities, cities and as a nation to maintain calm to ensure that such evil and misguided acts don’t succeed in dividing us.

This was no more beautifully exemplified than through the people of Manchester who in adversity came together from all walks of life to not only help at the time of crisis but also stand together and not let this evil act divide them in the days that followed the attack. They are excellent example for the rest of us to follow.

There is an oft quoted verse in the Qur’an where God tells us in Chapter 5, Verse 32 that whoever kills one human being unjustly it’s as if you've killed all of mankind and if you save the life of one human being it’s as if you've saved all of mankind. This alone highlights the gravity of this evil act that human life is so precious that God has equated killing one person to killing all of mankind itself.

Figuratively then, going by this verse the individual who carried out the attack killed mankind 22 times over in Manchester. Conversely those from the emergency services, the Police, Doctors, Nurses and other community members of Manchester who helped to save lives that night have saved mankind many times over. And credit to all of them who served us with the excellence we have come to expect from them.

Bristol Somali Forum states:

“First of all, our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families. What happened in Manchester was extremely horrendous. It was an attack on humanity, attack on the diversity and multiculturalism that we have here in this country. It was an attack against all of us.

On behalf of Somali community, Bristol Somali Forum condemns this barbaric act with the strongest condemnation possible. Actually there is nowhere in the holy Quran that mentions verses that would justify killing of innocent people. In fact the holy Quran is against these kinds of actions. The perpetrators should not go unpunished. They must face the full weight of justice.

Bristol Somali Forum would like to pay tribute to the law enforcement agencies, emergency services who worked very hard to save lives as well as the civilians and taxi drivers who offered their support and free lifts to the affected people and their families.

Bristol Somali Forum would also like to encourage different communities to stick and work together. That is the only way we can fight terrorism and make our communities safer”. Abdul Ahmed, Chair of Bristol Somali Forum.

Council of Bristol Mosques states:

It saddens the Council of Bristol Mosques to talk about the heinous crime committed by an individual in which children and adults lost their lives. This cannot be condemned enough. Children are a wonderful gift from God and there can be nothing worse than losing that gift.

Losing any life has become the norm in this world we live in at the moment and yet it is the most valuable thing. Sadly, the individual committing the crime may be claiming to do so in the name of Islam but the reality is that Islam does not have any place for this ideology, nor individuals like this.

The Quran States that to take one life is as though one has taken the lives of all of humanity and to save one life it’s as saving the whole of humanity (to the nearest meaning). This criminal chose to take his life and the lives of 22 other human beings; there could never be a bigger crime in Islam. Our thoughts and prayers are with the loved ones of all affected and we stand shoulder to shoulder with you in your pain, grief and resilience.
Extremism of any sort, right wing or religious, only seeks to divide people and we must not let this happen. We must make all efforts to respect each other, build stronger bonds and send a clear message that nothing will divide us and if we are able to achieve that then the terrorists have lost. These individuals who choose to harm are the biggest enemy of Muslims; they have taken away our identity as peace loving people. Our struggle increases every time this happens; we have to restart all over again in rebuilding our wonderful relations but we will not give up on doing that. The key to a peaceful life is to feel the pain of each other and console each other when needed and work together to build a brighter future for ourselves and our children.

Lives have been changed forever. What the rest of us must do is to not let the terrorists define the narrative that follows. Our response of UNITY and LOVE right now is the worst possible result for them, so let’s give it to them in buckets!”

**Hosseinieh Foundation (Shia Mosque) states:**

“Our Statement of Condemnation for the Manchester Arena suicide explosion last night: We strongly condemn the Manchester Arena suicide explosion last night.

This is a brutal act, in which innocent people and young children have been killed and have been targeted. Our heartfelt sympathy go out to the families of the bereaved and injured and everyone affected by it.

We stand in solidarity with the victims and we condemn all terrorist activities. We stand firm and united to uproot terrorism from the communities”. Imran Hussein, Hosseinieh Foundation Secretary (Shia Mosque).

**The Sikh Council of Bristol Sikh Temples state:**

“\*WE STAND WITH MANCHESTER*. The 4 Sikh Temples and entire Sikh community of Bristol and surrounding areas would like to express its heartfelt sympathy and condolences to those affected by Monday night’s tragic incident in Manchester. As a Sikh Community we stand firm and strong alongside this wonderful City at this sad time of mourning. May the Almighty bless those affected with strength and courage during this darkness. Thank you and well done to the Emergency Services who continuously work hard to ensure the safety of our communities. Bristol Sikhs are here to support you M❤️NCHESTER.” 4 Sikh Temples, Bristol.