



Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley MP
Chair, Home Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA.

14th November 2025

Dear Dame Karen,

Independent Review into Public Order and Hate Crime Legislation

The appalling terrorist attack in Manchester on 2 October shocked the nation and served as a stark reminder of how hatred and division can be exploited to create fear and violence. In its aftermath, we have seen heightened community tensions and growing concern about the impact of both public protest and hate crime on the cohesion and safety of our society.

In the days following the attack, the Home Secretary made clear that this Government is determined to act. We must ensure that our laws protect the public, uphold democratic freedoms, and prevent disorder, while respecting the fundamental rights that define our democracy. To that end, we have already tabled amendments to the Crime and Policing Bill to ensure that the police take into account the cumulative impact of protest activity in a particular location when determining whether to impose conditions on further planned protest.

Today, I am writing to provide further detail on the Independent Review of Public Order and Hate Crime legislation. The review will consider both protest-related public order powers and the hate crime legislative framework. In particular, it will assess whether current aggravated and “stirring up” offences are effective, proportionate, and clear.

The review will address three critical questions:

- Is existing legislation effective and proportionate?
- Does it adequately protect communities from intimidation and hate?
- Does it strike a fair and sustainable balance between the right to freedom of expression and peaceful protest, and the need to prevent disorder and keep communities safe?

This balance is at the heart of our democratic society. We will never compromise on the right to lawful protest or free speech. But equally, we cannot allow those rights to be abused by individuals or groups who seek to intimidate, incite hatred, or create disorder. The law must be clear, fair, and enforceable.

To lead this vital work, the Home Secretary has appointed Lord Macdonald of River Glaven KC, former Director of Public Prosecutions and one of the UK’s most respected legal authorities. His independence and expertise will ensure a rigorous and impartial review. He will be supported by former Assistant Chief Constable Owen Wetherill, who brings operational experience from his role as the National Police Chiefs’ Council Lead for Civil Contingencies and National Mobilisation. The review will commence immediately and conclude by February 2026.

This is a moment to reaffirm our commitment to democratic freedoms, the rule of law, and the safety of all our communities. We will not allow hate, disorder, or terror to undermine the values that bind us together.

I look forward to keeping the Committee updated as this important work progresses.

I will deposit a copy of this letter in the library of both Houses.

Very best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a loop and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Sarah Jones MP
Minister of State for Policing and Crime