

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community
Scottish Council of Jewish Communities
SCoJeC

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House of Commons Oral Answer

Prime Minister's Questions

Eric Pickles: The Prime Minister has shown considerable leadership in adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism. Does she believe that it is the duty of all party leaders in the house not just to pay lip service to it, but to do something about it, and does she share my disgust that a former Member of this House, criticised by the Home Affairs Committee for his anti-Semitic utterances, is now the official candidate in Bradford East—for the Liberal Democrats?

The Prime Minister: May I first pay tribute to my right hon. Friend—my chum in this House—for all the service he has given, and not just for his service in this House: he had a considerable record in local government before he came into this House? He has also in his time and the work he has done on anti-Semitism performed a very important role: he has had a relentless drive to stamp out anti-Semitism and, indeed, intolerance in all its forms in our communities, and he should be proud of his record and the work that I know he will continue to do as a champion on this issue.

My right hon. Friend is right to highlight Bradford—of course, he has a particular knowledge of that city—and I think that people will be rightly disappointed to see the Liberal Democrats readopt a candidate with a questionable record on anti-Semitism. It is important that all parties maintain the strongest possible censure of all forms of intolerance and send that message to our communities.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-04-26/debates/CC7BF7D9-1C7D-484A-BA58-269E29BD7E07/Engagements#contribution-6894C257-A83A-41A5-93FF-BFB3D70BB32D>

House of Commons Written Answers

Social Media: Hate Crime

Nusrat Ghani [61015] To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of introducing fines for social media companies which fail to remove hate material from their online platforms.

Marcus Jones: This Government has recognised the harm caused by hate on the internet and committed to take action to reduce this harm in the recently published

Hate Crime Action Plan. Despite the challenges we face, we have made considerable progress in addressing hate on the internet. The Director of Public Prosecutions has published guidance to prosecutors on when it is in the public interest to take perpetrators to court. We also continue to support the police hate crime web-facility, True Vision to provide information to victims and professionals and to allow on-line reporting of hate crime. The College of Policing has included guidance to police and partners on responding to internet hate crime in their Hate Crime Strategy and Guidance. This guidance was downloaded over 4,700 times from True Vision in the first five months, in addition to the physical documents circulated to individual agencies.

We have supported the establishment of the UK No Hate Speech Movement which equips, trains and supports young volunteers to operate on the internet, supporting victims, reporting damaging material and challenging hate-fuelled perpetrators through 'counter-narrative' activity.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-20/61015/>

The hate crime action plan referred to above can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/543679/Action_Against_Hate_-_UK_Government_s_Plan_to_Tackle_Hate_Crime_2016.pdf

Crime

Steve McCabe [71274] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the police's capability to tackle (a) fraud, (b) online abuse and (c) hate crime.

Improving the law enforcement response to fraud is a priority for the Joint Fraud **Brandon Lewis:** Taskforce where we are working with law enforcement to improve the local, regional and national response to fraud. All police forces have access to regional support through the Regional Organised Crime Units and national support from the City of London Police.

We recognise that local policing capabilities in respect of the investigation of digital crime need to be further developed to meet the challenges the police face tackling fraud or online abuse in the digital era. We are supporting the work of the National Policing Lead for Digital Investigation and Intelligence. We are also providing £4.6 million through the Police Transformation Fund to enable to police to improve digital capability, funding police led programmes that will work to equip forces with the tools to effectively police a digital age and protect victims of digital crime.

The police have increased their capability to record and respond to hate crime. This is reflected in the increase in police recorded hate crime. The police have also improved their training to staff on the identification, investigation and prosecution of hate crime.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-04-19/71274/>

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Israel

Foreign Affairs Committee Inquiry into the UK's policy towards the Middle East Peace Process

New written evidence

Ilan Baruch

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/foreign-affairs-committee/the-uks-policy-towards-the-middle-east-peace-process/written/69237.pdf>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Arbitration and Mediation Services (Equality) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/arbitrationandmediationservicesequality.html>

Assisted Dying Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/assisteddying.html>

Lobbying (Transparency) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/lobbyingtransparency.html>

Promotion of Israeli-Palestinian Peace (United Kingdom Participation)

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/promotionofisraelipalestinianpeaceunitedkingdomparticipation.html>

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Consultations ** new or updated today

Independent review of hate crime legislation [in Scotland] (closing date 12 May 2017)

<https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/hate-crime/2f6c8d5f/>

Caste in Great Britain and Equality Law (closing date 18 July 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/caste-in-great-britain-and-equality-law-a-public-consultation>

Workplace Diversity (Wales) (closing date not stated)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/wtucdiversity>

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