

4th February 2026

Lord Duvall OBE AM
Chair of the London Assembly
City Hall
Kamal Crunchie Way
London
E16 1ZE

Commander Neerav Patel
Front Line Policing

New Scotland Yard
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Dear Lord Duvall,

The right to free speech is essential to our democracy and we must ensure that it is protected. Everyone has the right to engage in lawful debate without fear of police intervention and offending someone is not a criminal offence, nor does it warrant a non-crime hate investigation.

However, we have seen in recent times that police are being drawn into increasingly complex culture wars and areas of intense public debate. In many instances, this has led to inappropriate and unnecessary use of valuable police time and resources.

We do not believe officers should be policing toxic culture war debates, especially online, and in October last year the MPS took the decision to no longer investigate non-crime hate incidents (NCHIs). This provides clearer direction for officers, reduces ambiguity and enables them to focus on matters that meet the threshold for criminality.

We have not done this unilaterally; the change follows national discussions with the College of Policing and NPCC about giving clearer direction to officers.

This does not mean that the MPS will no longer investigate hate crimes. On the contrary, hate crimes are a criminal offence and there is no change to the response the MPS will provide to these, ensuring that reports of a hate crime are treated with the seriousness they deserve.

We will also continue to record NCHIs, but only after an initial triage of a report and there being no evidence of a criminal offence. Recording helps to gather relevant intelligence to identify local trends, changes in community tensions and to inform policing activities that prevent significant harm or future offending.

In relation to hate crime, we have sadly seen a recent surge in antisemitic hate crime, protests have intensified, and online abuse has grown since 2023. These trends create real fear, disrupt daily life and have an impact on how safe the Jewish community feel. In light of this and the recent tragic attacks in Sydney and Manchester, we have stepped up visible patrols and protective security measures around synagogues, schools and community venues in London. We are also intensifying investigations into hate crime, and Counter Terrorism Policing continues to operate 24/7 to identify and disrupt threats.

These measures are practical and immediate – designed to keep communities safe, deter intimidation and enforce the law. Our intent is clear: a zero tolerance approach to offenders, create a safer environment for Jewish communities, while protecting lawful protest.

All members of society have a responsibility to consider their impact on others, and the MPS remains fully committed to tackling hate crime, supporting victims and bringing offenders to justice.

Yours Sincerely,



Commander Neerav Patel
Frontline Policing
Metropolitan Police Service