



# **The Government's response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life Review of Intimidation in Public Life**

Presented to Parliament  
by the Minister for the Constitution  
by Command of Her Majesty

March 2018



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**Foreword by**

***The Prime Minister***

Britain's liberal democracy is admired around the world for its tolerance and decency. It is defined by values which have a universal appeal: freedom of thought and expression within laws which are democratically made; the competition of ideas leading to collective progress and improvement; respect for those with different viewpoints.

These principles have been at the heart of the British tradition of liberty for generations. In an open market-place of ideas, in which different viewpoints can coexist and people are free to make the case for their own beliefs, opinions can be changed, arguments won and progress achieved.

But today, the ideal of a truly plural and open public sphere where everyone can take part is in danger. A tone of bitterness and aggression has entered into our public debate. Participants in local and national public life – from candidates and elected representatives to campaigners, journalists and commentators – have to contend with regular and sustained abuse. Often this takes the form of overt intimidation.

British democracy has always been robust and oppositional. But a line is crossed when disagreement mutates into intimidation.

Last year I commissioned the Committee on Standards in Public Life to conduct an investigation into intimidation following last year's general election. Their report makes sobering reading, but it also points the way forward, and I welcome its recommendations.

All of us in public life have a responsibility to challenge and report intimidating behaviour wherever it occurs. We must set a tone in public discourse which is neither dehumanising nor derogatory and which recognises the rights of others to participate. These responsibilities fall on each of us as individuals and, collectively, on the political parties.

For its part, the Government will act on the Committee's recommendations, as we set out in this response to their report. But the action we need to take to secure our democracy goes beyond committee reports and government responses, to the heart of how we conceive of political differences and how we treat each other.

At its best, British public life is characterised by the values which we have traditionally been most proud of as a nation. Fierce rivalry, yes, but also common decency and a rejection of extremism and absolutism.

Most people don't view politics through an ideological prism. They want politicians to work together to improve their lives and our country. They expect disagreements and debate about the best way forward. But they also want practical solutions which will improve people's lives.

Her Majesty's Government is pursuing policies across every area which are designed to build a stronger economy and a fairer society in a country that truly works for everyone. By taking the action set out in this response, we will also play our part in building a democracy in which every voice can be heard.

**THERESA MAY**

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS

***Recommendation 1: Nobody in public life should engage in intimidatory behaviour, nor condone or tolerate it. All those in public life have a responsibility to challenge and report intimidatory behaviour wherever it occurs.***

***Recommendation 2: Those in public life should seek to uphold high standards of conduct, adhering to the Seven Principles of Public Life, and help prevent a decline in public trust in political institutions through their own conduct.***

***Recommendation 3: Those in public life must set and protect a tone in public discourse which is not dehumanising or derogatory, and which recognises the rights of others to participate in public life.***

***Recommendation 4: Those in public life have a responsibility not to use language which engenders hatred or hostility towards individuals because of their personal characteristics.***

***Recommendation 5: Those in public life should not engage in highly personalised attacks, nor portray policy disagreements or questions of professional competence as breaches of ethical standards.***

The Government welcomes these recommendations. Robust debate is fundamental in an open democracy, but threats and other forms of abuse are unacceptable and must not be tolerated. We welcome the fact that the Committee consulted so widely and produced such considered recommendations which span the spectrum of all those engaged in public life. These issues matter at all times.

As the Prime Minister said in her speech on standards in public life in Manchester on 6 February 2018, it is incumbent on all of us in public life to accept our responsibility to help sustain a genuinely pluralistic public debate.

All those in public life have a responsibility to challenge and report intimidating behaviour wherever it occurs. We must all seek to uphold the highest standards of conduct. We must set a tone in public discourse which is neither dehumanising nor derogatory and which recognises the rights of others to participate and have different views.

The Government takes this issue extremely seriously. We already have codes of conduct to ensure all those in Government observe the highest standards of behaviour and conduct. We recently updated the Ministerial Code to reinforce the requirement to treat everyone with respect, to ensure there is a culture of respect at the centre of public life, and a clear requirement that Ministers must be

professional in all their dealings and treat all those with whom they come into contact with consideration and respect.

The Prime Minister's speech on this issue emphasised that Britain's liberal democracy has long been respected around the world for its tolerance and decency. Freedom of thought and expression within laws which are democratically made; an open-market place of views and ideas, where differences of opinion can coexist but where respect remains for those with different viewpoints – arguments can be won, and progress will be achieved.

British democracy has always been robust and oppositional, but it is essential that individuals are not put off from entering public life because of the coarsening of public debate and intimidation of candidates, evidence of which the Committee found during their review, and which we must work together to address.

***Recommendation 6: The Government should consult on the introduction of a new offence in electoral law of intimidating Parliamentary candidates and party campaigners.***

The Government agrees with this recommendation and will launch a consultation exercise in the summer.

The public consultation will determine whether or not the current criminal law is sufficient, or whether there is a need for the creation of a distinct electoral offence. The current electoral offence of "undue influence" only relates to voters, where actions stop electors from voting or pressure them to vote a certain way.

Criminal offences on intimidation more generally (such as the Public Order Act) are not electoral offences. This means that the acts of intimidation cannot be taken up in an Election Court if such acts adversely influenced the election. There are also sanctions – such as barring those guilty of an electoral offence from standing for five years – which are only available via an Election Court.

The consultation will consider what might be an appropriate threshold for such an offence, as well as balancing free speech considerations.

The Committee's report also recommended (though not as a numbered recommendation) that the electoral law requirements for an imprint on campaigning materials be extended to electronic communications. The Government will also address this proposal in the consultation, including how such a requirement could be appropriately framed. The Law Commission will also conduct a review of the legislation relating to online offensive communications, which is due to commence shortly.

We will also look at this issue in light of the recommendation made by Sir Eric

Pickles in his report 'Securing the Ballot'<sup>1</sup> that the offence of undue influence in respect of electors should be strengthened. The 2015 Tower Hamlets Election Court case found the legal threshold for proving intimidation was too high, such that prosecutions were not viable, even despite clear evidence of intimidation outside polling stations in the 2014 local elections. The Government response to that report agreed that the threshold should be amended.

We will also consider if there are sufficient safeguards from abuse and intimidation for electors and also for public servants charged with delivering our elections.

***Recommendation 7: Government should bring forward legislation to shift the liability of illegal content online towards social media companies.***

The Government has been clear that social media platforms are no longer just passive hosts, and we need a new approach. We need to think carefully about what level of legal liability social media companies should have for content on their sites, and we need to fully understand the consequences of any changes.

Through the Digital Charter the Government is working to understand how we can make the existing frameworks and definitions work better, and whether there is a case for developing a new definition for these platforms. At present, limited liability is defined in EU law, so we are working closely with European partners, as well as other like-minded countries and the businesses themselves, to develop our understanding of the problem, alongside the impacts of any intervention on the digital economy.

***Recommendation 8: The Government should bring forward legislation to remove the requirement for candidates standing as local councillors to have their home addresses published on the ballot paper. Returning Officers should not disclose the home addresses of those attending an election count.***

The Government agrees with this recommendation and will look to bring forward secondary legislation at a suitable opportunity to remove the requirement for candidates standing as local councillors to have their home addresses published on the ballot paper. We do not want to see capable individuals deterred from standing for office because they believe the process risks their safety, or makes them vulnerable to abusive activity.

This requirement will be replaced with an option to include a statement of residence based on an electoral area the candidate lives in rather than having to include a specific address. The Government aims to do this in time for the 2019 local authority elections.

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This practice must be applied equally to all those standing for election to public office and should apply to those standing at any level of local authority elections including for mayoral positions and for the role of Police and Crime Commissioner. This will be done by the next time these polls arise in May 2020.

***Recommendation 9: Local Authority Monitoring Officers should ensure that members required to declare pecuniary interests are aware of the sensitive interests provisions in the Localism Act 2011.***

The Government agrees with this recommendation. The Localism Act 2011 and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government guidance *Openness and transparency on personal interests – A Guide for Councillors (2013)* provides the relevant frameworks for monitoring officers. The local authority monitoring officer (or in the case of a parish council, the monitoring officer of the district or borough council) is responsible for establishing and maintaining a council's register of members' interests.

An authority's register of members' interests must be published on the council or authority website. However, where a member and the monitoring officer consider that disclosure of the details of a specific interest could lead to the member, or a person connected to the member, being subject to violence or intimidation, that is considered a sensitive interest and must be withheld from the published register. This is set out in the Localism Act 2011, and in the 2013 guidance. We will review this guidance and consider whether it can be made more explicit.

The Government will then write to Local Authority Chief Executives, and work with the Local Government Association and sector bodies, to publicise and raise awareness of the sensitive interest provisions, to ensure that Monitoring Officers are aware of this guidance and where to access it.

***Recommendation 10: The Home Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport should develop a strategy for engaging with international partners to promote international consensus on what constitutes hate crime and intimidation online.***

The Government agrees with this recommendation and is already working with international partners on tackling online hate crime.

Government officials are actively involved in Europe-wide efforts to develop an approach which balances free speech with protection from harm. They have also secured agreement from the 57 member states of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which includes the USA, to work collaboratively to reduce the harm caused on the internet. The UK has also successfully engaged with internet firms through the Cyber Hate Working Group established by the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism. This has led to the agreement of a 'Best Practice' document which is published by the Anti Defamation League and has been endorsed by many internet companies.



Building on the success of the above best practice document we have supported the European Commission initiative to agree a second generation of this agreement signed in June 2016 which commits the signatories to removing illegal hate speech within 24 hours.

The UK is proud to have robust legislation on hate crime and sets an example to our international partners in this area.

***Recommendation 11: Those in positions of leadership within political parties must set an appropriate tone during election campaigns, and make clear that any intimidatory behaviour is unacceptable. They should challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.***

***Recommendation 12: Political parties must proactively work together to tackle the issue of intimidation in public life.***

***Recommendation 13: Political parties should set clear expectations about the behaviour expected of their members, both offline and online through a code of conduct for members which specifically prohibits any intimidatory behaviour. Parties should ensure that members are familiar with the code. The consequences of any breach of the code should be clear and unambiguous.***

***Recommendation 14: Political parties must ensure that party members who breach the party's code of conduct by engaging in intimidation are consistently and appropriately disciplined in a timely manner.***

***Recommendation 15: Political parties must collect data on the number of complaints against members for engaging in intimidatory behaviour, and the outcome of any disciplinary processes which result from these complaints.***

***Recommendation 16: Leaders of political parties should always call out intimidatory behaviour, even when it is perpetrated by those in the party's fringes. Fringe group leaders and spokespeople should immediately denounce any intimidatory behaviour on the part of their members or supporters.***

***Recommendation 17: The political parties must work together to develop a joint code of conduct on intimidatory behaviour during election campaigns by December 2018. The code should jointly be enforced by the political parties.***

***Recommendation 18: Political parties must take steps to provide support for all candidates, including through networks, training and support and resources. In particular, the parties should develop these support mechanisms for female, BAME, and LGBT candidates who are more likely***

***to be targeted as subjects of intimidation.***

***Recommendation 19: Political parties must offer more support and training to candidates on their use of social media. This training should include: managing social media profiles, block and mute features, reporting content, and recognising when behaviour should be reported directly to the police.***

The Government is supportive of the Committee's recommendations, but recognises that ultimately these are matters for the political parties.

The Government recommends that all political parties put in place their own code of conduct for all their representatives. The Government does not propose to initiate further steps for a *joint* code – this may create delays towards action by individual parties, given there are over 300 registered political parties. However, the Government does believe that, as a matter of self-regulation, each registered political party should draw up and publish a clear statement of the standards expected of its members, affiliated groups and activists, and how the party would uphold such standards in this code. Different parties may develop differently worded codes: what is important is the effective enforcement of the fundamental principles behind them.

The Parliamentary Parties Panel provides an existing and well-established forum for political parties to work together on matters relating to electoral regulation, and to share best practice. This could help to co-ordinate liaison between political parties and social media companies on how best to provide support to candidates and prospective candidates.

In relation to the collection of quantitative data on complaints, some caution is needed to prevent perverse incentives within political parties from not taking forward complaints. We would recommend that, as best practice, some commentary could be published by political parties within their annual accounts or annual report.

Collectively, these steps should not restrict political parties from holding each other to account in the spirit of democratic scrutiny; nor should it prevent elected representatives from the free (and often frank) expression of their political views as elected representatives. The legitimate exercise of freedom of speech and freedom of association, within the law, goes hand in hand with challenging intimidation which seeks to deprive others of their freedom of speech.

***Recommendation 20: Social media companies must develop and implement automated techniques to identify intimidatory content posted on their platforms. They should use this technology to ensure intimidatory content is taken down as soon as possible.***

***Recommendation 21: Social media companies must do more to prevent users being inundated with hostile messages on their platforms, and to***

***support users who become victims of this behaviour.***

***Recommendation 22: Social media companies must implement tools to enhance the ability of users to tackle online intimidation through user options.***

***Recommendation 23: All social media companies must ensure they are able to make decisions quickly and consistently on the takedown of intimidatory content.***

***Recommendation 24: Twitter, Facebook and Google must publish UK-level performance data on the number of reports they receive, the percentage of reported content that is taken down, and the time it takes to take down that content, on at least a quarterly basis.***

***Recommendation 25: Social media companies must urgently revise their tools for users to escalate any reports of potential illegal online activity to the police.***

***Recommendation 26: The social media companies should work with government to establish a 'pop-up' social media reporting team for election campaigns.***

***Recommendation 27: Social media companies should actively provide advice, guidance and support to Parliamentary candidates on steps they can take to remain safe and secure while using their sites.***

These recommendations are for the social media companies concerned, rather than Government. Nevertheless, the Government has already been clear about the need to encourage social media companies to do more to tackle these issues.

The digital revolution has changed the way that people behave and interact and so we need to respond to this.

The Government will support the Committee's recommendations in this area through the Digital Charter; its core purpose is to make the internet work for everyone – for citizens, businesses and society as a whole. Through the Charter we want to make the UK both the safest place to be online and the best place to start and grow a digital business.

The Internet Safety Strategy is an important early strand of the Charter, and will be crucial in realising this ambition. The Strategy will be published in the spring. It will tackle the urgent need to deal with intimidatory and bullying behaviour, which has become common place online.

We are already taking action to help make the Internet a safer place, and following the recent consultation on Internet Safety, we are introducing a social

media code of practice and an annual Internet Safety Transparency Report. The code of practice will set out what we expect of social media companies. It will provide guidance on how bullying and harmful content should be dealt with.

We have been encouraged by some of the steps taken by companies to prevent online harms, and the code of practice will ensure that there is a coherent approach so all users of social media can be confident participating in online life. The annual Internet Safety Transparency Report will provide UK-level data to enable us to better understand what content users are reporting to social media providers, how social media responds to the handling of complaints, and what gets taken down.

Some companies, notably Google, have already committed to publish transparency reports, but we want to introduce common metrics. We want users to be better informed about what is happening on the social media platforms which they are using and how reported content is dealt with. Getting this right takes time, and we will provide more detail on both in the Internet Safety Strategy. In the meantime social media companies will, in line with the report's recommendation, be putting in place specific support during election campaigns to ensure abusive content can be dealt with quickly – and that they will be providing advice and guidance to Parliamentary candidates on how to remain safe and secure online.

The Government agrees that these are important steps in safeguarding the free and open elections which are a key part of our democracy.

***Recommendation 28: MPs should actively co-operate with the police and other security services working to address the security threats facing Parliamentarians and Parliamentary candidates.***

This is a matter for the House authorities. However, the Government encourages MPs to work and cooperate with the police and the Parliamentary Liaison and Investigation Team on these issues.

***Recommendation 29: The National Police Chiefs Council should ensure that local police forces have sufficient training to enable them to effectively investigate offences committed through social media. Local police forces should be able to access advice and guidance on the context in which MPs and Parliamentary candidates work.***

The Government agrees with this recommendation and will support and encourage the relevant policing bodies concerned to act upon these recommendations.

The College of Policing deliver training entitled Researching Identifying Tracing Electronic Suspects. This training equips officers to safely and lawfully gather information and intelligence on the internet, and crucially to trace and identify suspects online. The National Police Chiefs Council will continue to work with

the College of Policing to ensure that the course context is current, in keeping with technological advances.

The Parliamentary Liaison and Investigation Team – a central team which liaises across the Metropolitan Police Service, regional forces and MPs on allegations of crime against MPs – is already in place. In addition, the team works to ensure standards across the country and also identifies cross border series crime and national trends. Local forces can refer to the Team for advice and guidance on the workings of MPs. The Team have developed a network of UK Policing leads to gather intelligence and visibility of reported crime and will begin producing quarterly reports showing national and regional crime trends, intelligence, overviews and investigation. These quarterly reports will be shared nationally with forces creating insight into some of the issues faced by MPs. The National Police Chiefs Council will review the current advice and guidance given to local forces on the context in which MPs and parliamentary candidates work as part of the next Team quarterly report, due to be published in April 2018.

***Recommendation 30: The College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice for elections should be updated to include offences relating to intimidation, including offences committed through social media.***

The Government agrees with this recommendation and will support and encourage the College of Policing to act upon these recommendations.

It is important for police officers and staff to have the necessary support to meet new and emerging threats and protect the public. Under the devolved policing model, it is the responsibility of Chief Officers, with support from their professional body, the College of Policing, to assess what skills are needed in their workforce and put in place the necessary standards and training provisions.

The College has committed to revising Authorised Professional Practice on elections, through its electoral malpractice group, to ensure it is up to date and sets a clear standard for police officers which reflects the modern context, including offences relating to intimidation and those committed through social media.

Authorised Professional Practice guidance is regarded as the official source of professional practice advice on policing. Police officers and staff are expected to have regard to the Practice in discharging their responsibilities. This review will commence in February 2018.

***Recommendation 31: The National Police Chiefs Council, working with the Crown Prosecution Service and the College of Policing, should produce accessible guidance for Parliamentary candidates giving clear advice on behaviour they may experience during a campaign which is likely to constitute a criminal offence and what they should do in the face of such intimidation.***

The Government agrees with this recommendation and will support and encourage these policing bodies to act upon these recommendations.

Police leaders are already working to ensure that clear advice is available. The National Counter Terrorism Security Office provide security advice, including cyber security advice and guidance to all Parliamentary candidates through the Electoral Commission. The National Police Chiefs Council will review the content of this guidance already provided to candidates by the Office to determine if it covers advice on behaviour Parliamentary Candidates may experience during a campaign, and if that behaviour is likelihood likely to constitute a criminal offence. Any guidance from the National Police Chiefs Council will supplement that of the Office.

The National Police Chiefs Council have put in place a lead for Elections who ensures all advice is shared among MPs and Parliamentary candidates and engages with Party Headquarters. In addition, the Parliamentary Liaison and Investigation Team works extensively with local forces during campaign periods to raise awareness around the heightened risk during this period and act as contact point for advice and guidance. The Team have an established relationship with the Director of Public Prosecutions and the local Crown Prosecution Service for advice on a case-by-case basis.

***Recommendation 32: Press regulation bodies should extend their codes of conduct to prohibit unacceptable language that incites intimidation.***

***Recommendation 33: News organisations should only consider stories from freelance journalists that meet the standards of IPSO's Editors Code, or the Editorial Guidelines of Impress, as appropriate, and ensure that freelance journalists are aware of this policy.***

These recommendations are addressed to the regulators and the news organisations, rather than the Government. The Government is committed to a free and independent press, and therefore the codes of conduct of press regulators are, rightly, written independently by the self-regulators. Robust, high quality journalism is important for public debate, scrutiny and ultimately for democratic political discourse. The Government is determined to ensure that the UK has a vibrant, independent and plural free press which is able to provide this high quality journalism. That is why the Prime Minister announced on 6 February that the Government is establishing an external review looking into the sustainability of the national, regional and local press.

**ANNEX A:****Summary table of the Committee's recommendations and timeframes**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Timeframe recommended by the Committee</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
1. Nobody in public life should engage in intimidatory behaviour, nor condone or tolerate it. All those in public life have a responsibility to challenge and report it wherever it occurs.	Immediately	All those in public life
2. Those in public life should seek to uphold high standards of conduct, adhering to the Seven Principles of Public Life, and help prevent a decline in public trust in political institutions through their own conduct.	Immediately	All those in public life
3. Those in public life must set and protect a tone in public discourse which is not dehumanising or derogatory, and which recognises the rights of others to participate in public life.	Immediately	All those in public life
4. Those in public life have a responsibility not to use language which engenders hatred or hostility towards individuals because of their personal characteristics.	Immediately	All those in public life
5. Those in public life should not engage in highly personalised attacks, nor portray policy disagreements or questions of professional competence as breaches of ethical standards.	Immediately	All those in public life
6. The Government should consult on the introduction of a new offence in electoral law of intimidating Parliamentary candidates and party campaigners.	Within one year	Government

7. Government should bring forward legislation to shift the liability of illegal content online towards social media companies.	On exiting the EU	Government
8. The Government should bring forward legislation to remove the requirement for candidates standing as local councillors to have their home addresses published on the ballot paper. Returning Officers should not disclose the home addresses of those attending an election count.	Immediately	Government
9. Local Authority Monitoring Officers should ensure that members required to declare pecuniary interests are aware of the sensitive provisions in the Localism Act 2011.	Immediately	Local Authority Monitoring Officers
10. The Home Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport should develop a strategy for engaging with international partners to promote international consensus on what constitutes hate crime and intimidation online.	Immediately	Home Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
11. Those in positions of leadership within political parties must set an appropriate tone during election campaigns, and make clear that any intimidatory behaviour is unacceptable. Must challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.	Immediately	Those in positions of leadership within political parties
12. Political parties must work proactively together to tackle the issue of intimidation in public life.	Immediately	Political parties



13. Political parties should set clear expectations about the behaviour of their members, both offline and online, through a code of conduct for members which specifically prohibits any intimidatory behaviour. Parties should ensure that members are familiar with the code. The consequences of any breach of the code should be clear and unambiguous.	Within one year	Political parties
14. Political parties must ensure that party members who breach the party's code of conduct by engaging in intimidation are consistently and appropriately disciplined in a timely manner.	Immediately	Political parties
15. Political parties must collect data on the number of complaints against members for engaging in intimidatory behaviour, and the outcome of any disciplinary processes which result from these complaints.	Within one year	Political parties
16. Leaders of political parties should always call out intimidatory behaviour, even when it is perpetrated by those in the party's fringes. Fringe group leaders and spokespeople should immediately denounce any intimidatory behaviour on the part of their members or supporters.	Immediately	Political parties
17. Parties must work together to develop a joint code of conduct on intimidatory behaviour during election campaigns by December 2018. The code should jointly be enforced by the political parties.	Joint code should be drawn up within one year – it should be enforced beginning at the next general election	Political parties

18. Political parties must take steps to provide support for all candidates, including through networks, training and support and resources. In particular, the parties should develop support these support mechanisms for female, BAME and LGBT candidates who are more likely to be targeted as subjects of intimidation.	Before the next general election	Political parties
19. Political parties must offer more support and training to candidates on their use of social media. This training should include: managing social media profiles, block and mute features, reporting content, and recognising when behaviour should be reported directly to the police.	At the next general election	Political parties
20. Social media companies must develop and implement automated techniques to identify intimidatory content posted on their platforms. They should use this technology to ensure intimidatory content is taken down as soon as possible.	Immediately	Social media companies
21. Social media companies must do more to prevent users being inundated with hostile messages on their platforms, and to support users who become victims of this behaviour.	Immediately	Social media companies
22. Social media companies must implement tools to enhance the ability of users to tackle online intimidation through user options.	Immediately	Social media companies
23. All social media companies must ensure they are able to make decisions quickly and consistently	Immediately	Social media companies

on the takedown of intimidatory content.		
24. Twitter, Facebook and Google must publish UK-level performance data on the number of reports they receive, the percentage of reported content that is taken down, and the time it takes to take down that content, on at least a quarterly basis.	At least every quarter, beginning in first quarter of 2018	Social media companies
25. Social media companies must urgently revise their tools for users to escalate any reports of potential illegal online activity to the police.	Immediately	Social media companies
26. The social media companies should work with government to establish a 'pop-up' social media reporting team for election campaigns.	Before the next general election	Social media companies
27. Social media companies should actively provide advice, guidance and support to Parliamentary candidates on steps they can take to remain safe and secure while on their sites.	Before the next general election	Social media companies
28. MPs should actively co-operate with the police and other security services working to address the security threats facing Parliamentarians and Parliamentary candidates.	Immediately	MPs
29. The National Police Chiefs Council should ensure that local police forces have sufficient training to enable them to effectively investigate offences committed through social media. Local police forces should be able to access	Within one year	National Police Chiefs Council

advice and guidance on the context in which MPs and Parliamentary candidates work.		
30. The College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice for elections should be updated to include offences relating to intimidation, including offences committed through social media.	Before the next general election	College of Policing
31. The National Police Chiefs Council, working with the Crown Prosecution Service and the College of Policing, should produce accessible guidance for Parliamentary candidates giving clear advice on behaviour they may experience during a campaign which is likely to constitute a criminal offence and what they should do in the face of such intimidation.	Before the next general election	National Police Chiefs Council, working with the Crown Prosecution Service and the College of Policing
32. Press regulation bodies should extend their codes of conduct to prohibit unacceptable language that incites intimidation.	By December 2018	Press regulation bodies (IPSO and Impress)
33. News organisations should only consider stories from freelance journalists that meet the standards of IPSO's Editors Code, or the Editorial Guidelines of Impress, as appropriate, and ensure that freelance journalists are aware of this policy.	Immediately	News organisations

