# Reform UK Headlines — 07 Oct 2026

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> NewsNow topic-hub sweep: `https://www.newsnow.co.uk/h/UK/Politics/Reform+UK` — compiled Wednesday 07 Oct 2026, ~09:15 BST. Items covered on the 06 Oct page (polling slump, Coogan arrest, Question Time row) are carried forward only where they moved.

## ? Latest Developments

### Ann Widdecombe murder suspect in court TODAY over alleged Farage terror plot — 07 Oct

**Joshua Kerry, 28**, of Rotherham, appears at **Westminster Magistrates' Court today (07 Oct)** charged with one count of **preparation of terrorist acts** relating to alleged activity between 31 May 2024 and 08 July 2026 — i.e. an alleged plot against Reform leader **Nigel Farage**. Kerry is already charged with the murder of **Ann Widdecombe, 78**, the former Tory cabinet minister and Reform spokeswoman found dead at her home near Haytor on Dartmoor on 08 July; a previous hearing was told she suffered **21 hammer blows to the head**. Notably, the charge followed **CTP reopening its year-long probe into the alleged firebomb attack at Farage's south London home** — originally investigated by the Met as an "attempted burglary" and closed with no arrests; CTP London now says a line of inquiry "may have been relevant" but was not "identified and pursued… at the time". (Evening Standard, Devon Live, Mirror — cluster of 10 articles)

# Reform UK Selby chairman apologises for sharing AI-generated fake news article — 06 Oct

**Ruben Duffy**, chair of Reform UK Selby, apologised after an **"AI-generated" image imitating a local newspaper article** was circulated on his Facebook page. The fake carried a convincing copy of **The Press (York)** masthead, font and layout with the headline "*York Labour on course to lose seats to Reform in May*" plus an image of real York Labour councillors. It ran from 20 September, gathering **3,600 likes and 380+ comments** before removal. Duffy says he shared it "without the realisation that it was artificial". A fabricated news story favouring his own party, shared by the party's local chairman, is a serious authenticity row — the apology does not address who made it. (York Press / Newsquest)

# Badenoch: "I'd rather have another election than do a deal with Reform UK" — 06 Oct

At Tory conference, **Kemi Badenoch** told the BBC she would rather face **another general election** than form an arrangement with Reform in a hung parliament — Farage's party is **"neck deep in scandal"** and a deal would be "just one problem after another". Polling currently projects a hung parliament with Labour largest, Reform second, Tories third. She also pledged to halve employer NI for 21–24-year-olds and published a 100-page principles document, *The Right Way*. The Irish News and Mail carried the same line for a hung parliament and Scotland respectively. (BBC, Irish News, MailOnline)

# Reform to target Badenoch's own seat with a US-style open primary — 06 Oct

Reform will let **every resident of North West Essex** — members or not — vote to select its candidate against Badenoch, with the final choice made at a **public event hosted by Nigel Farage**. The move emerged on the eve of her conference speech. Badenoch holds the seat by just **2,610**, and Reform took Essex County Council from the Tories in May. Reform spokesman: candidates will "actually show up for the area". (The Independent)

# Senedd working "at pace" on smart-glasses rules after Reform MS uses them in the Chamber — 06 Oct

Nation.Cymru reports the **Senedd Commission** is drafting guidance after Reform MS **Jason O'Connell** (Pontypridd Cynon Merthyr) admitted using **teleprompter-equipped smart glasses** to deliver a Chamber speech. One MS "caught glimpses of text moving down O'Connell's lenses"; others noted he never looked down at notes. O'Connell refused to answer Nation.Cymru's questions; a Reform spokesperson later told Wales Online: "*There's nothing unusual about seeing parliamentarians reading speeches from tablets or phones. This is likely the next step in that journey.*" Llywydd **Huw Irranca-Davies** now expects any Member using such tech to clear it with him first. Follows O'Connell's separate **"playing the victim" row** (05 Oct): he claimed the smashed window at his constituency office was a political "attack", though South Wales Police were investigating damage to **"multiple premises"** in Pontypridd and the building carried **no signage identifying it as a politician's office**. (Nation.Cymru ×2)

# Bradford sanctuary-status motion branded "shameful" — 07 Oct

Independent councillor **Joe Wheatley** condemned Bradford's Reform-led administration's motion to withdraw the council's **Local Authority of Sanctuary** accreditation: "*Removing our status removes the additional support that status provides to people in need… a thoughtless, irresponsible and misguided motion rooted in demagoguery rather than reality.*" The motion was announced by Reform portfolio holder **Cllr Ian Walker**; a Reform councillor defended it amid "hate and division" claims (03 Oct). Third week of the story on the hub. (Telegraph & Argus, LocalGov, BBC)

# ?? Policy / Controversy

- **Cornwall: Reform accused of "doing nothing"** (06 Oct, Cornwall Live/LDRS) — the council's biggest opposition group has been **unable to form a shadow cabinet 18 months after the election** ("they got five out of nine and the rest are refusing"), leaving the administration effectively unopposed. Reform group leader **Paul Ashton** calls it "absolute nonsense" and says members are undergoing training first.
- **Wales 20mph repeal push** (07 Oct, North Wales Live) — ahead of a Reform Senedd debate, transport spokesperson **Jason O'Connell** argues the default 20mph limit has cost **£32m to implement** with a claimed **£9bn economy impact**, and cites road deaths rising from 84 (2024) to 91 (2025). Reform wants limits returned to local authorities. Supporters of the policy dispute the casualty framing.
- **Derbyshire LDR ban — Society of Editors escalates** (05 Oct, InPublishing): SoE chief executive **Dawn Alford** — "*Refusing to engage with a journalist because you object to their reporting sets a dangerous precedent… A council cannot simply choose which reporters deserve answers. Transparency is a responsibility, not a favour.*" The NUJ's condemnation notes deputy leader **Stephen Reed later accepted his initial claim was incorrect** (that reporter Eddie Bisknell hadn't given enough response time) — **yet the ban remains in place**. Now in its third week with every major press-freedom body

on record.

- **Derbyshire leader's Bentley/SEND meeting** (05 Oct, Derbyshire Live): council leader **Alan Graves** denies looking at a virtual SEND meeting on his phone while driving a **Bentley Continental GT**; a screenshot seen by the LDRS appears to show him looking down at the phone with a hand on the wheel. He says the car was stationary when he joined and he then listened via Bluetooth: "I haven't done anything wrong in that sense."
- **London mayoral pitch** (02–07 Oct, Evening Standard): mayoral candidate **Laila Cunningham** vows to run London **"like Tokyo on steroids"** — automating the Tube to stop strikes, AI-streamlined planning, eliminated police paperwork. By-election candidate **Pete Newman** (Holborn & St Pancras) claims Camden is "lawless" (173 crimes per 1,000 residents, second-worst in London) and promises an urgent meeting with the Mayor and Met chief if elected.
- **Carry-overs from the 06 Oct page:** YouGov poll (Lab 27 ↑3, Ref 22 ↓3, Con 20 ↑1); **51 councillors lost** since May (Best For Britain tracker, Mirror); Huntingdonshire group leader **Ryan Coogan** arrested over nomination papers (LocalGov 06 Oct confirms bailed until 22 Dec, says he hasn't been told the details of the allegation); Question Time "audience plant" row (BBC formally hit back: everyone who attends is vetted, Reform's licence-fee threat noted); Zia Yusuf's "inciting disorder" accusation against PM Burnham over Gosport migrant landings (snippet-level — portsmouth.co.uk 403s in cron).

# ? Source Links

- Kerry in court over Farage terror plot (Standard): https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/ann-widdecombe-murder-suspect-farage-terror-joshua-kerry-b1299828.html
- Kerry charged (Devon Live): https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/ann-widdecombe-murder-suspect-charged-11187108
- Selby chair AI-article apology (York Press): https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/26609395.reform-selby-chair-apologises-ai-false-article/
- Badenoch rules out Reform deal (BBC): https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9x28ljj34lxo
- Open primary against Badenoch (Independent): https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/kemi-badenoch-essex-reform-farage-primary-b3062136.html
- Senedd smart-glasses rules (Nation.Cymru): https://nation.cymru/news/senedd-working-at-pace-on-smart-glasses-rules-after-reform-ms-uses-them-in-chamber/
- O'Connell "playing the victim" (Nation.Cymru): https://nation.cymru/news/for-mark-reform-ms-accused-of-playing-the-victim-after-vandalism-claim/
- Bradford sanctuary motion (Telegraph & Argus): https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/26610968.bradford-councillor-slams-reform-sanctuary-status-plan/
- SoE calls for ban reversal (InPublishing): https://www.inpublishing.co.uk/articles/society-calls-for-reversal-of-reform-uk-ban-in-derbyshire-26968

- NUJ response (press release, via NewsNow): https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1325892014 (NUJ: "cannot be right… pick and choose which journalists they want to deal with")
- Cornwall "doing nothing" (Cornwall Live): https://www.cornwalllive.com/news/cornwall-news/reform-uk-accused-doing-nothing-11186143
- Graves Bentley/SEND denial (Derbyshire Live): https://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/news/local-news/reform-uk-derbyshire-leader-denies-11184501
- 20mph debate (North Wales Live): https://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/news-opinion/we-need-common-sense-readers-34722105
- Coogan arrest (LocalGov): https://www.localgov.co.uk/Reform-UK-council-group-leader-arrested-over-nomination-papers/65055
- Newman on Camden (Standard): https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/reform-uk-pete-newman-holborn-st-pancras-by-election-b1299724.html
- Cunningham "Tokyo on steroids" (Standard): https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/london-reform-candidate-vows-to-run-capital-like-tokyo-on-steroids-b1299437.html
- NewsNow hub: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/h/UK/Politics/Reform+UK

# ? Quick Summary

| Story | Status | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Widdecombe murder suspect / Farage terror charge | Kerry at Westminster Magistrates' TODAY | CTP admitted the earlier Farage firebomb probe missed a relevant line of inquiry |
| AI-generated fake York Press article | Chairman apologised; maker unknown | Party-official misinformation row; 3,600 likes before removal |
| Badenoch rules out Reform deal | Stated on BBC at conference | "Neck deep in scandal" — Tory-Reform bridge burning |
| Open primary vs Badenoch's seat | Announced eve of her speech | Farage-hosted stunt targeting a 2,610 majority |
| Senedd smart glasses | Commission drafting rules "at pace" | O'Connell: second credibility row in a week (vandalism claim) |
| Bradford sanctuary status | Motion proceeding; "shameful" backlash | Third week; symbol-vs-services culture fight |
| Derbyshire LDR ban | SoE + NUJ demand reversal; justification collapsed | Press-freedom precedent; Reed admitted initial claim was wrong |
| Cornwall shadow cabinet failure | 18 months, none formed | Competence narrative; "sitting on their hands" |
| Graves Bentley/SEND meeting | Denied | Optics + road-safety question for a council leader |
| Polls (carry-over) | Lab 27, Ref 22, Con 20 (YouGov) | Reform's lead over Tories down to 2 points |

*Compiled Wednesday 07 October 2026, ~09:20 BST, from the NewsNow Reform UK topic hub (28 latest-tab cards + 12 top clusters parsed; 16 articles fetched in full via `/A/3/<id>`; HuffPost poll and Portsmouth News items recovered at snippet/syndication level — HuffPost via its Yahoo News UK mirror, portsmouth.co.uk 403s in cron).*

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Revision #2
Created 2026-10-07 08:08:34 UTC by Admin
Updated 2026-10-07 08:08:35 UTC by Admin