Reform UK Headlines — 18 Oct 2026

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? Latest Developments

ITV *Undercover: A Year in Reform* airs TONIGHT — fresh revelations already force a suspension and two new probes

The full 90-minute Exposure documentary (ITV1/ITVX, Sunday evening) lands tonight, and pre-broadcast revelations moved the story on again over the last 24 hours.

- **Aspiring MP Jason Powell suspended.** The party activist, who has applied to be a Reform parliamentary candidate and says he passed vetting, was recorded telling an undercover reporter: **"You cannot be a Muslim and British, it's like oil and water"** — adding that if a Muslim "wants to remain faithful to Islam" he would have disagreements, and name-checking Reform home affairs spokesman Zia Yusuf as a Muslim. On small-boat arrivals he said: **"In the first week of election, build concentration camps, and everyone who comes across on the Channel, you're in there."** Powell told ITV his views are those of British people in general and are not extremist. Reform has suspended him. (BBC — Iain Watson, Nation.Cymru/PA, The National, The Independent, ITV)
- **Two councillors investigated over "mass shooting" remarks.** Hounslow councillors **Adam Parkins and David Kerr** appear in the footage; Parkins said he would **"quite happily do Sunday morning Rose Garden executions"** for grooming-gang

perpetrators, while Kerr, discussing reversing immigration, said "there's no way you're going to be able to even discuss a tenable solution without being called a f***ing Nazi." Parkins says his view is simply that grooming gangs should face the toughest sentences under British law; Kerr did not respond. Reform is investigating both. (Mirror, BBC)

- **Board member Gawain Towler on tape:** "I was racist every single day against a friend… I was racist every single day" at school — he told ITV those childhood views were wrong and he is appalled by them now. (Mirror)
- **Reform is suing.** A party spokesperson confirmed Reform is **pursuing legal action against ITV and the documentary's production company** (Hardcash) over the undercover reporting, while maintaining "no room for racism" and that investigations have commenced where members "clearly behaved inappropriately." (BBC)
- **Sarah Pochin, "chauvinistic" tape — the local angle.** The Ross Gazette profiles Reform's **first-ever woman MP** (Runcorn & Helsby), a former Monmouth School for Girls pupil from **Lydbrook**, filmed at a Reform Christmas party telling an undercover reporter posing as a press officer: "We so need women press officers… They are so f***ing chauvinistic… they just exclude you if you're a woman," and describing the party as full of** "alpha male sh**t."** (Ross Gazette)
- **Alan Feeney's resignation (confirmed Saturday):** the councillor filmed calling Asian homeowners "parasites" and saying no more than 1% of the UK should be non-white quit **every post on Solihull and Birmingham City councils**, saying his remarks were "wrong, offensive and completely unacceptable… There is no excuse." He had been deputy mayor of Solihull. (The Independent)

Hull mayor Luke Campbell under police investigation for alleged cyber-flashing

- **Luke Campbell**, the Olympic gold-medal boxer turned **Reform mayor of Hull & East Yorkshire**, is under investigation by **Humberside Police** over an allegation he showed a female colleague **"naked and sexualised images"** of himself (first reported by the Observer, based on reports from the woman and witnesses submitted to an **employment tribunal**). He has been interviewed; **no charges or arrests** have been made. Reform's line: Campbell **"firmly denies"** the allegation, which it says "comes from a disgruntled employee attempting to leverage a settlement in a meritless workplace dispute." (Leeds Live/Hull Live, Observer, MailOnline, i Paper — all within 24h)

Raheem Kassam's "Nigerian scammer" jibe at Badenoch — Tories demand Farage "come clean"

- **Raheem Kassam**, Farage's long-standing adviser and former UKIP chief of staff, posted on X: **"How are people still falling for this Nigerian scammer? Don't give her your**

credit card number and bank account details!" about Kemi Badenoch — plus "So Kemi, tell us the truth. Are you a walking gaffe or an illegal immigrant?", pointedly using her full name (Olukemi Olufunto Adegoke Badenoch). Tory chairman **Kevin Hollinrake** accused him of "launching racist slurs" and demands Farage clarify whether Kassam holds a paid position or informal advisory role — noting he was in Reform's London HQ as recently as last week while the party denies any formal role. Kassam's defence: **"I'm Indian, but I don't think it is racist to call me Indian. Kemi is a compulsive liar. She is, without doubt, a scammer."** Comes days after the ITV racism sting and amid accusations Reform pursues an "ethno-nationalist" strategy. (Mail on Sunday via MailOnline)

"Inside Westminster": donations D-Day, Mayfair sex-scandal rumours, and "life after Nigel"

The Mail's Sunday insider column stacks Reform's crises into one picture:

- **£5m Harborne donation:** Farage is said to be tensing for the outcome of the **parliamentary standards commissioner's investigation into the £5 million donation from crypto magnate Christopher Harborne** — the "dodgy donations D-Day."
- **Mayfair scandal rumours:** "lurid gossip" circulates about a **senior Reform figure said to be on the brink of exposure over "inappropriate behaviour" in a Mayfair club**.
- **Family want him out:** the combined crises have sapped Farage's exuberance to the extent **he has admitted his family want him to quit**.
- **The Lowe threat:** Rupert Lowe's breakaway **Restore Britain** is framed as "possibly existential" revenge — electoral modelling cited by the Mail suggests that if Farage resigned, **Reform would fall from the low 20s to the mid-teens and Restore would rise to 8%+**, handing the Tories an unchallenged opposition lead. Sources say Lowe has used recent dinners to imply Farage will soon leave and that he could engineer a **"reverse takeover"** or act as kingmaker. Lowe: "Who told you that? Non-story." (MailOnline — Inside Westminster)
- The Mirror separately reports Farage is **accused of "sitting on his hands"** as allegations soar; Labour chair **Bridget Phillipson**: "Bad apples don't fall far from the tree… Farage has sat on his hands and desperately tried to deflect over and over again because he's completely unfit to lead."

Defector: party responds to criticism "like an abuser"

- **Sarah Cooper-Lesadd**, MS for Pen-y-bont Bro Morgannwg, elected for Reform in May and defected to **Plaid Cymru** in September, told BBC/Newyddion S4C the party's response to criticism is **"like an abuser in a domestic abuse relationship"**, and said

she was "not surprised" by the sexism/misogyny allegations — she was "on the receiving end" of such comments. Reform says she should resign and calls her claims **"outright fabrications."** (BBC)

Police Scotland examines Reform Holyrood campaign spending

- Following a Ferret investigation, **Police Scotland is assessing whether nine Reform UK candidates** in the Scottish Parliament election broke spending law: **four apparently never submitted returns** detailing spending/donations, and **five who did submit apparently failed to sign them off properly**. All other parties' candidates complied. (The Ferret)

?? Policy / Controversy

- **"The Reformer" — Farage's free newspaper to 15m homes.** Per the Spectator, Reform is preparing an **eight-page newspaper delivered to 15 million households** — reach exceeding Metro — with party policies, announcements and Farage comment pieces; former Spiked editor **Mick Hume** expected to play a leading role. The Mirror calls it a **"desperate distraction"** from the scandals; Left Foot Forward's Right-Wing Watch piece frames it as a propaganda operation drawing parallels to Mussolini's *Il Popolo d'Italia* and Trump's Truth Social, raising "urgent questions about political propaganda and independent scrutiny" and the party's "vast war chest." (LFF, Mirror, Spectator)
- **Staffordshire libraries: Pride stays off the schedule.** Reform-led Staffordshire County Council's draft library-display guidance — four months after banning Pride displays (Stafford Pride: a "vile decision") — lists local history, **St George's Day, Remembrance Day, Armed Forces Day**, fostering and recycling… but **no Pride, Black History Month or non-Christian cultural events**. The council wants libraries to be "politically neutral spaces"; LGBTQ+ books remain borrowable; scrutiny committee Thursday, council vote in November. (BBC)
- **Kirklees climate rollback advances.** Reform-run Kirklees Council's move to **scrap the climate emergency declaration and 2038 net-zero target** — branded "dangerous" — follows the same pattern in Reform-controlled **Sandwell** and **Nuneaton & Bedworth** (where it sparked an ageism row), with a fresh Halesowen/Dudley item Saturday ("Reform to axe climate emergency declaration"). (Huddersfield Hub, Yorkshire Live, Birmingham Live)
- **Senedd smart-glasses row.** Reform MS **Jason O'Connell** (Pontypridd Cynon Merthyr) confirms he uses **smart glasses with a built-in autocue** (text scrolls on the lenses, controlled by a finger ring) to deliver Senedd speeches: "I'm delivering my words in the manner that I see fit." The **Welsh Lib Dem leader wants them banned** in the chamber and a Senedd spokesperson says a review is under way; the Pembrokeshire Herald ties it to wider Westminster security fears over camera-equipped glasses. Note: O'Connell is the

MS who previously employed Martin Roberts, filmed using racial slurs. (BBC, Pembrokeshire Herald)
- **"Bad eggs, but no worse than the others."** Wiltshire's sole Reform MP **Danny Kruger** (East Wiltshire, Head of Preparing for Government) admits the party has "bad eggs" who said "stupid, nasty things… totally unacceptable" — but argues Reform is attacked because of the changes it wants, and "it's no worse than the other parties I know well." (Wilts & Gloucestershire Standard/LDR)
- **Analysis — "Is the Reform project unravelling?"** Politics.co.uk (Josh Self): Reform led the polls uninterrupted May 2025–July 2026, but its model — rapid growth, loose organisation, extreme centralisation around Farage — could win the news agenda, not government. The attempted transition "from protest vehicle to prospective party of government" is where today's diminished polling and vetting failures come from: "the attempt to derive discipline from insurgency" is the party's core contradiction. (Politics.co.uk)
- **Polling picture:** the New Statesman reports **"Reform slips to third in the polls"** (fetch 403 — headline-level); the i Paper runs "the poll that shows how the **Badenoch bounce is punishing Reform**" (Ipsos main-opposition flip: Tories 35, Reform 32 — first time Reform has fallen to third since 2024 per Left Foot Forward); HuffPost counters that "Reform and the Greens aren't going anywhere… two-party politics isn't back."
- **Press-taming:** Adam Bienkov's *Folded* newsletter — "How Nigel Farage Tamed the 'Feral' Press" — examines Reform's media strategy as the documentary airs (headline-level).

? Key Contradictions & Points of Interest

1. **"No room for racism" vs the inner circle:** Reform's stock line collides with a Farage crony (Kassam) calling the Opposition Leader a "Nigerian scammer" — while the party denies he holds any role, despite him being at HQ last week.
2. **Vetting that "passed" Powell:** the concentration-camps activist says he cleared Reform vetting — the party is simultaneously suing ITV for asking the question.
3. **Suing the messenger:** legal action against ITV/Hardcash mirrors Tice's "probable criminal activity" and Madgwick's "vote interference" framing — the offence is the undercover journalism, not the recorded remarks.
4. **Disgraced-employee defence, twice in 24h:** Campbell's cyber-flashing denial ("disgruntled employee… meritless workplace dispute") rhymes with Reform's Cooper-Lesadd response ("outright fabrications", she should resign).
5. **"Politically neutral" libraries** schedule St George's Day and Armed Forces Day but neither Pride nor Black History Month.
6. **Kruger's "no worse than other parties"** sits alongside Police Scotland examining *nine* Reform candidates' spending returns — a compliance gap no other party showed.
7. **The Mail's own framing:** the paper that gave Farage friendly coverage now runs "sex scandal rumours, dodgy donations D-Day, polls plunging — how much can Nigel's ailing

party take?" and floats Lowe as kingmaker.

? Quick Summary

Story	Status	Key fact
ITV *Undercover: A Year in Reform*	Airs tonight (Sun 18 Oct)	Powell suspended; Parkins/Kerr probed; Reform suing ITV/Hardcash
Jason Powell	Suspended	"Cannot be Muslim and British"; "build concentration camps"
Luke Campbell (Hull mayor)	Police investigation	Alleged cyber-flashing; interviewed, no charges; "firmly denies"
Raheem Kassam	"Nigerian scammer" jibe	Hollinrake: Farage must "come clean" on his role
Harborne £5m donation	Standards commissioner probe	"D-Day looming" per Mail's Inside Westminster
Rupert Lowe / Restore Britain	Kingmaker talk	Modelling: Farage exit → Reform mid-teens, Restore 8%+
Cooper-Lesadd (Plaid defector)	"Like an abuser"	Reform: "outright fabrications"
Holyrood spending	Police Scotland assessing	9 Reform candidates: 4 no returns, 5 unsigned
"The Reformer" newspaper	15m households planned	Mick Hume role; Mirror: "desperate distraction"
Staffordshire libraries	Draft guidance, Nov vote	St George's/Remembrance in; Pride/BHM out
Senedd smart glasses	Under review	Lib Dems want ban; O'Connell defends autocue glasses
Polls	Reform third	Ipsos main-opposition flip: Tories 35, Reform 32

? Source Links

Fetched & verified this run:

- BBC — Reform activist suspended after reportedly saying Muslims cannot be British: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr3elnevylywo
- BBC — Ex-Reform politician likens party's response to criticism to an abuser: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cmd6dglnvq63o

- BBC — New rules for Reform-run libraries after Pride row: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cmz98k2q18pko
- BBC — Reform politician says smart glasses help him make speeches in the Senedd: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cmp8g2kk3392o
- Nation.Cymru/PA — Undercover footage shows Reform activist claiming Muslims cannot be British: https://nation.cymru/news/undercover-footage-shows-reform-activist-claiming-muslims-cannot-be-british/
- The National — Reform UK hopeful says Muslims 'cannot be British' in ITV footage: https://www.thenational.scot/news/26646752.reform-uk-hopeful-says-muslims-cannot-british-itv-footage/
- The Mirror — Farage's fresh crisis as aspiring Reform MP calls for 'concentration camps': https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/farage-reform-sting-documentary-racism-37783088
- The Independent — Reform councillor Alan Feeney resigns after racist remarks: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/reform-resign-councillor-alan-feeney-itv-b3068451.html
- Leeds Live/Hull Live — Luke Campbell 'firmly denies' cyber-flashing claims: https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/news/local-news/luke-campbell-firmly-denies-cyber-34780997
- The Ferret — Police assessing whether Reform UK Holyrood candidates broke campaign spending laws: https://www.theferret.scot/police-assessing-whether-reform-uk-holyrood-candidates-broke-campaign-spending-laws/
- Ross Gazette — Reform's first woman MP from Lydbrook filmed slamming 'chauvinistic' party: https://www.rossgazette.com/news/reforms-first-woman-mp-from-lydbrook-filmed-slamming-chauvinistic-party-964661
- Wilts & Gloucestershire Standard — Danny Kruger admits Reform has 'bad eggs': https://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/26643168.wiltshire-mp-danny-kruger-admits-reform-bad-eggs/
- Politics.co.uk — Is the Reform project unravelling?: https://www.politics.co.uk/2026/10/is-the-reform-project-unravelling/
- Left Foot Forward — Farage's propaganda machine sets its sight on 15 million homes: https://leftfootforward.org/2026/10/farages-propaganda-machine-sets-its-sight-on-15-million-homes/
- MailOnline (via NewsNow /A/3/1327342445) — Kassam 'Nigerian scammer' jibe at Badenoch: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1327342445
- MailOnline (via NewsNow /A/3/1327343112) — Inside Westminster: sex scandal rumours, donations D-Day, polls plunging: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1327343112

Headline-level only (fetch blocked / resolver trap):

- The Observer — Reform mayor under police investigation for alleged cyberflashing (Paywall; substance via Leeds Live above, NewsNow id 1327314877)
- The i Paper — Reform mayor investigated for 'cyberflashing a female member of staff' (ConsentPaywall, id 1327326478); The poll that shows how the Badenoch bounce is punishing Reform (id 1327318286)
- MailOnline — Luke Campbell 'showed naked pictures…' (ConsentPaywall, id 1327325520)
- New Statesman — Reform slips to third in the polls (403 via /A/3/1327326132)

- ITV — The latest headlines: ITV Exposure uncovers further Reform UK failures (/A/3/ resolver returned no body — known ITV id trap)
- Northamptonshire Telegraph — ITV Exposure features Wellingborough Reform councillor (Cloudflare 5.7KB shell, id 1327351546)
- The Mirror — Farage newspaper plan is 'desperate distraction' (id 1327306430); The Spectator — Zia Yusuf small-boats plan "doesn't hold water" (Paywall, id 1326951726)
- Folded (Adam Bienkov) — How Nigel Farage Tamed the 'Feral' Press (id 1327309050)
- HuffPost UK — Reform and the Greens aren't going anywhere (id 1327261845)

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