Reform UK Headlines — 28 Oct 2026

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? Top Story: Farage's Money Man — BBC Ties Reform's Largest Donor to £16m of Guernsey Property

A BBC Guernsey investigation published this morning links **Christopher Harborne**, the British-Thai billionaire who gave Reform UK £36m in September (matching crypto entrepreneur Ben Delo's record donation the day before), to **more than £16m of property and land across Guernsey** — seven properties, several plots of land, private jets and an aircraft hangar development at Guernsey Airport.

The sharpest detail is the **former Octopus restaurant site in St Peter Port**, destroyed in a large fire in February 2024. Guernsey Police found no evidence of foul play and closed the investigation in March 2024; the then-owner, Deputy Yvonne Burford, subsequently sold the land for **£1** to the restaurant operators. Conveyance deeds reviewed by the BBC show it was sold again in **July 2026 for £2.555m** to **Marbel Leopard Ltd**, a British Virgin Islands company listed at the same address as other Harborne-linked holdings. Its correspondence contact, Rumrada Suppadit, works for Harborne's Sherriff Global Private Limited and sits on the board of Kamalaya, his wellness resort on Koh Samui.

Elsewhere in St Peter Port's Hauteville — the street where Victor Hugo lived — deeds and planning applications connect Harborne to **three neighbouring properties**. Two were bought in his own

name; he later transferred one to a BVI company for £1. Planning drawings for one show an office, an eight-person boardroom and, below ground, a wellness suite with a **hyperbaric chamber, sauna and cold plunge**; the architect recorded that his client was an "avid exerciser" who wanted the house usable throughout his "entire lifespan". His aviation network runs through Sundance Operations (formerly Sherriff Aviation), linked to the land purchase and two new hangars at Guernsey Airport.

Harborne's lawyers did not respond to the BBC's questions on whether he was behind the purchases or on redevelopment plans. He has previously given to Reform, the Brexit Party and the Conservatives, and made Nigel Farage a personal **£5m gift in 2024 that remains subject to a parliamentary standards investigation**. He wrote in the Telegraph that he expected "nothing personally" in return for the £36m.

> **Why it matters:** This lands the day after Reform unveiled its own pre-Budget "Teal Budget" and while the party sits at its lowest polling since January 2025. Reform's counter-narrative has been that it is the party of ordinary donors against Westminster money; the two largest donations in British political history, both given within 24 hours of each other in September, came from a crypto billionaire and an offshore-property investor whose £5m personal gift to the leader is under a standards investigation.

? Polls: Reform at Its Lowest Since January 2025, and Farage Is Now the Liability

YouGov (MailOnline, 27 Oct): Reform UK on **20%**, down two points on the week — the lowest vote share recorded since the pollster's voting-intention tracker restarted in January 2025. Labour hold **27%** under new PM Andy Burnham, a five-point lead over the Conservatives on **22%** (down one). Lib Dems 11%, Greens 10%, and **Rupert Lowe's Restore Britain up one to 4%** — now a fifth of Reform's total and still climbing.

Farage's response to reporters was revealing on two counts. On the slide: "*Markets are volatile. Markets go up, markets go down. We've had a difficult summer, of that there is no doubt. But are we optimistic? Yeah. A lot of our voters are just sitting back on their heels at the moment. Our job is to energise them and get them back. And maybe a general election in which Europe and immigration are top of the agenda may be just the thing to do that.*" On the half-empty hall at Monday's pre-Budget event: "*well, staff incompetence*" — adding that "*our party conferences etc., we get crowds like no other British political party has done in modern times.*" The TUC's response, quoted by LabourList: **"A bad boss always blames his staff."**

Lord Ashcroft's pre-Budget polling (ConservativeHome, 27 Oct) is the more damaging read. His team asked about party and leader *together*, and found Reform's structural problem:

Finding	Figure
Public holding the **same view** of Reform UK and of Farage	**79%** (vs ~3 in 5 for Labour and the Tories)
Direction of the gap where one exists	Against Farage — more people like Reform but not him than the reverse
Reform's share among people who like the party **but not** Farage	**one third**
Farage's leader "penalty"	**38 points** — in the same territory as Starmer's 40-point penalty in April
Potential Reform voters (scoring the party 25–50)	**8%** of the population, vs 15% each for Labour and the Tories
Farage's effect on those potential voters	He **repels nearly five times as many as he attracts**
Barrier to conversion — "not competent to govern"	**27%** of potential Reform voters
Barrier — like it but think another party would do better	**25%**
Barrier — doubt Farage as PM	**15%**

Ashcroft's summary line: "*Burnham is carrying his party... Badenoch is carrying hers too, but it is a heavier load...* ***Farage, for the first time, is being carried by his.***" He also notes Reform is "*a far more serious rival to the Conservatives*" than to Labour — two in five people who like the Tories and Badenoch also like Reform and Farage, and within that ~9% overlap **Reform leads the Conservatives 55% to 35%**. Conversely, the small group who like Farage but not Reform sit in the centre of Conservative territory and vote Tory 64% to Reform's 6%.

> **Contradiction:** Reform's own messaging has been that Farage is its greatest asset. Ashcroft's data says the opposite for the first time — the voters Reform needs to convert are precisely the ones Farage puts off. That is a different problem from a bad summer, and it is not solved by an election on Europe and immigration.

?? Staffordshire: Fourth Leader in 18 Months, and the Racism Thread Runs Through All of It

Martin Murray resigned as leader of Staffordshire County Council and of its Reform group on Tuesday, after seven months, saying only that he had "*concluded it is in the best interests of Staffordshire, our residents and this county council for me to step down*" and that he did so "*with a clear conscience and immense pride in what we achieved together.*" He gave no reason, declined to elaborate, and remains a ward councillor for Stafford town. **Hayley Coles**, previously deputy leader, takes over with immediate effect; Sean Bagguley (Stone Rural North) is acting deputy. A formal selection of leader and deputy will be held at full council on **10 December**.

The MailOnline reports the context Murray's statement omits: **he quit days after his party membership was revoked over allegations he posted racist comments on social media.** The run-up to him is no cleaner. Ian Cooper quit in December over a social media probe. Chris Large was elected in his place and resigned in February following allegedly racist activity on a TikTok account bearing his name (he denied responsibility, saying several people had access; the account has since been deleted). Large never actually took up the leadership. Murray was appointed in March.

Staffordshire's six Labour MPs — Leigh Ingham (Stafford), Dave Robertson (Lichfield), Josh Newbury (Cannock Chase), Jacob Collier (Burton and Uttoxeter), Adam Jogee (Newcastle-under-Lyme) and Sarah Edwards (Tamworth) — issued a joint statement via the Express & Star: "*Reform's leadership shambles and a succession of serious racism scandals are an embarrassment to our proud county. Their vetting has failed Staffordshire, and while they tie themselves in knots, residents are left wondering who is actually in charge. Staffordshire needs a council focused on fixing the roads, the crisis in SEND and buses that don't turn up — not more Reform chaos and months of uncertainty. The council's motto is 'The knot unites', but Reform's record has been one of chaos and division.*"

> **The pattern:** vetting failures are now the consistent thread across Staffordshire's four leaders, two of whom left over racism allegations, one over a social media probe. Reform took the county from the Tories in May 2025 as one of its flagship local-government breakthroughs.

??????? Holyrood: Offord Hands Over the Economy Brief After Bland's Exit

Malcolm Offord has reshuffled his front bench following **Amanda Bland's** departure — the Central Scotland and Lothians West MSP quit five months after election and now sits as an independent, having compared sitting in the Reform group to being in a **"coercively controlled relationship."** Her exit dropped Reform from level pegging with Labour to **third largest group on 16 MSPs**, one behind Labour on 17.

The substantive change is that **Offord has relinquished the economy brief to Angela Ross**, who also takes education. A party spokesman said Offord "*would follow other party leaders by focusing purely on the leadership*", explaining that he had originally split a large brief into finance and economy to shoulder the load himself but "*six months on he recognises other leaders don't take on a separate brief on top of leadership duties.*"

Other moves: **Kim Schmulian** to justice (Bland's old brief) as Shadow Lord Advocate for criminal justice and victims; **Max Bannerman** to public sector reform; deputy **Thomas Kerr** takes housing, community cohesion, public safety and drugs; **Senga Beresford** to children, young people and tertiary education, handing the constitution to **Vic Currie**; **Graham Simpson** adds tourism to transport; **Amanda Lindsay** adds education to a portfolio retooled away from "*women and equalities*" to **"women and girls"**; **David Smith** keeps veterans, swaps community care for social mobility and takes neurodiversity, mental health and population health; **Mark Simpson** moves from victims and community justice to business and work. Kirkwood (innovation/technology), Julie McDougall (local government), Massey (energy) and McDade (health) are unchanged.

Offord, who had accused Bland of **"squatting"** in her seat, said the reshuffle would let the party benefit from its "*great mix of experience, skill and determination*" and that its objective for the seventh parliament is "*to prioritise an alternative vision for a prosperous Scotland — this is the only way to re-engage with the two million Scots who did not vote in May.*"

> **Note the portfolio rename:** "women and equalities" becoming "women and girls" is a deliberate signal, not a clerical change, and follows Reform's broader repositioning on sex- and gender-based policy.

??????? Wales: Joe Martin Deletes 'Rule, Britannia!' Post Mocking a Black Woman's Statue

Nation.Cymru reports that **Caerdydd Penarth MS Joe Martin**, Reform's shadow minister without portfolio, published a Facebook post on Monday afternoon (26 October) captioning four images of Trafalgar Square statues **"Our nation's capital. Spot the odd one out."** — soundtracked with 'Rule, Britannia!' performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Three of the statues depicted white men (General Henry Havelock, King George IV, Charles James Napier); the fourth was the recently unveiled **'Lady in Blue'**, Tschabalala Self's sculpture of an anonymous Black woman. **It was deleted less than a day later.**

Critics pointed out that Martin represents Wales, whose capital is Cardiff. Nation.Cymru quotes a political source suggesting the deletion may have been because it failed to draw the reaction he

hoped for. The artist has acknowledged people have different tastes in art but has identified **racism as a driving force behind the hostility and violence directed at her work**.

This is a pattern, not an incident. Earlier this month Martin posted Ring doorbell footage he said he obtained from a friend, of a Black man on crutches apparently experiencing a mental health crisis; it was up for a few hours before deletion. He had also deleted a video suggesting a **75-year-old Filipino woman was draining British taxpayers' money**, after footage of her praising the NHS went viral. It later emerged she had lived in the UK for decades, spent most of her working life at a British university and paid substantial taxes before retiring.

> **Contradiction with the party line:** Martin's deletions follow Reform's response to the ITV documentary — "*there is no room for racism in Reform UK.*" He is a serving MS and shadow minister, not a backbench councillor, and the posts were made after that statement.

? Dudley: The Ashman Case and a Council That Says It Cannot Act

Two Newsquest titles covered the same story from different ends today.

Halesowen MP Alex Ballinger has written to Nigel Farage calling for an investigation into **Caley Ashman**, Reform councillor for Cradley North and Wollescote. His letter reads: "*Given the party's response to the recent ITV News documentary was to state that 'there is no room for racism in Reform UK,' it is now time for Reform UK to take immediate action against Cllr Ashman and condemn his vile racist and homophobic rhetoric. That is why today I am again calling on Nigel Farage MP to condemn Cllr Ashman's comments, take immediate action against him, and condemn this behaviour.*"

The posts in question include the antisemitic slur **"goy-slop"**, a statement that **"you shouldn't let foreigners look after the young or old as they don't care about you"**, and reportedly an offensive post about the gay Scottish Conservative commentator Douglas Murray. Ballinger, with fellow Dudley Labour MPs **Cat Eccles and Sonia Kumar**, first wrote to Farage in May and **received no response from Reform UK**.

Dudley Council has now clarified it cannot act. Monitoring officer **Aftab Razzaq**: "*The council is very clear with members about their responsibilities and standards of conduct and behaviour, including when posting on social media. This is reflected in the proposed Members' Pledge to be signed by all councillors... The council can only take action in respect of conduct undertaken whilst being a councillor. Any action prior to this does not fall within the standards regime to which each councillor agrees to abide by when taking up office.*" Ashman had not yet been elected when he

made the comments. He has not responded to press requests.

Reform's Marco Longhi (Upper Gornal and Woodsetton) counter-attacked rather than addressed the posts: "*Instead of writing desperate letters, Mr Ballinger should look closer to home. Only two parties have been condemned by the EHRC for antisemitism: the BNP and Labour. Yet he continues to sit on the same benches as Labour MPs such as Diane Abbott who continue to deny that anti-Jewish racism exists.*"

> **The gap this exposes:** the standards regime cannot reach pre-election conduct, and Reform has not acted on its own. A councillor's antisemitic and anti-foreigner posts therefore sit outside both the local authority's jurisdiction and — so far — the party's.

?? Bradford's First Reform Budget: The 4.99% Rise They Used to Blame on Labour

Bradford Council's first budget since Reform took control assumes a **4.99% Council Tax rise from April — the highest permitted without a local referendum** — plus **£50m of savings across 42 proposals**, leisure-centre price increases, a **3% rise in council fees** generating £2.87m, **£500,000 cut from the Localities Team staffing budget**, and £1.18m of Clean Air Zone income redirected to air-quality and sustainable-transport schemes. It will be the first budget since 2022/23 not requiring Exceptional Financial Support to balance. Public consultation on the 2027/28 budget opens next week; Reform's Executive discusses it on Tuesday.

Leader **Stephen Place** had already confirmed council tax would not be frozen — "*It's not going to happen*" — and said in July he would "*love*" to cut it but "*unfortunately under the EFS we're not allowed to.*"

Suhail Choudhry, deputy leader of Bradford's Labour group: "*For months, Reform told Bradford that council tax rises came from Labour arrogance and incompetence. Now their first budget plans assume another 4.99 per cent rise, the highest allowed without a local referendum. Families will also pay more to use leisure centres. Fees go up across council services, and the neighbourhood teams who tackle problems on our streets face a £700,000 cut. Reform says frontline services won't be affected. For residents who rely on them, fewer neighbourhood staff and dearer leisure centres are frontline services... Reform is following Labour's savings plan while making residents pay more for less.*"

Executive member for corporate resources **Ian Eglin** defended it as "*an important step towards balancing our budget without needing exceptional government financial support*", saying the council is "*on track to end the need for exceptional financial support two years earlier than originally planned.*"

> **Direct contradiction, documented:** the 4.99% ceiling is exactly the figure Reform criticised Labour over. Note too that Place separately defied the party line this month by backing the National Planning Reform position against Richard Tice.

Also on Bradford's Reform group this week: Keighley News reports Reform councillors urging a Government U-turn on what they call a **"planning power grab"**.

? Local Government Roundup

Leicestershire — Joseph Boam found in breach (BBC). Investigations conclude the Reform county councillor for Whitwick **failed to treat former monitoring officer Lauren Haslam with respect** and, separately, **brought the authority into disrepute** with posts about a bus-routes row. Two complaints — one from Haslam, one from former Conservative highways cabinet member **Ozzy O'Shea** — go to member conduct panel hearings on **Friday**. Boam published a clip of a council meeting in which he asked Haslam whether a rise in complaints came "*from far-left activists trying to cancel and silence Reform UK councillors*"; she replied "*No, I wouldn't agree with that statement, thank you.*" Investigators found he **published only her initial three-second reply and deliberately omitted the explanation that followed**, after which she was accused of bias and of being a "nasty piece of work" in the comments. She asked him to remove it; he neither responded nor removed it. Haslam, with over 25 years' service, said the posts caused her "*a lot of upset*" and **contributed to her decision to resign** — she "*could not bear to view his Facebook post*" and asked her husband to monitor the 70+ comments rather than show her. Boam denies any breach, calls the process "*a ridiculous waste of taxpayer money*", says he simply "*clicked screen record*" with "*no editing*", declined to apologise and "*refused to engage with the investigation in any meaningful way.*" On the O'Shea complaint — posts "*unfairly and inaccurately*" blaming him for the Whitwick bus rerouting, including a digitally-created caricature — investigators judged he had **not** failed to treat O'Shea with respect, but independent adviser **Pamela Roberts** found the disrepute limb significant: "*The tone, content and lack of veracity of councillor Boam's posts could lower public confidence in the council's ability to carry out its functions and bring the office of councillor into disrepute.*"

Sandwell — a cabinet member's own cafe approved by his colleagues (Birmingham Live, Express & Star). Reform councillor **Ritchie Massey**, cabinet member for adult services, health and wellbeing, opened Massey's Cafe in a former clothes-recycling centre on Fountain Lane, Oldbury at the end of 2024 **without planning permission**. Sandwell Council itself objected in

2025 over harm to Oldbury town-centre businesses and insufficient parking. He was refused retrospective permission in 2025, then reapplied in June — two months after being elected. At the 21 October hearing, Cllr **Luke Cotterill** (Labour, Old Warley) said he had "*quite a few concerns about the planning process associated with the application*" and withdrew as it was "*inappropriate to participate*"; the four Labour members informed chair **Paul Snape (Reform, Wednesbury)** they would abstain and were asked to leave the room. Massey said he had "*nothing further to add*", and **the five remaining Reform councillors approved the retrospective application without debate.** Planners had recommended approval.

Basildon/Essex — cabinet resignation over SEND handling (Echo News). Sam Journet, Reform county councillor for Vange, quits as Essex cabinet member for education, SEND and skills on **6 November**, citing his new role leading Reform's 12-strong opposition group at Basildon Council — now level with Labour after former independent Valerie Robbins joined. His resignation letter to county leader Peter Harris is pointed: "*Some of what I've seen from civil servants has shocked me and doesn't sit comfortably with me. EHCP requests have been refused, and there have been cases where I directed officers that a decision be reconsidered and that did not happen. I was asking for decisions to be looked at again because of the struggles SEND children and their families are facing in our community.*" He closes that he must "*protect my own morals and integrity whilst working in public life.*" Essex CC thanked him for helping clear the EHCP backlog and said the role was "*demanding and time-consuming.*"

Blackpool — 'cunning plan' for a PACT meeting (Blackpool Gazette). Mark Butcher, chair of Reform's Blackpool South branch, was shown to have sent a WhatsApp message describing Reform's "*cunning plan*" to run an **independent candidate friendly to the party** against Labour for chairman of the **Claremont PACT** (Police and Communities Together) meeting — rather than a Reform member, because a Reform candidate would be "*counter productive in the long term*" given Labour figures would "*block anything good that we do.*" PACT chairs are normally voted by local residents and regular attendees; Claremont was recently the site of a by-election. Critics call it a false-flag tactic amounting to voter manipulation. Butcher **vehemently denies wrongdoing** and says the fact a private message was made public shows opponents are "*worried and prepared to use grubby tactics to try and discredit him.*" The Blackpool Lead reports the plan **failed before the meeting**.

Liverpool — false 'shooting' claim shared by a Reform branch (Liverpool Echo). Reform UK **West Derby** branch shared a video on Facebook on 25 October claiming a man had been **shot** and killed and that the property was an "*alleged HMO*", after footage of police entering a house with loud bangs inside. Both claims were false: Merseyside Police confirmed officers responded to a **concern for a man's safety** on Balmoral Road in **Fairfield** (not Windsor Road in Tuebrook) on Thursday 22 October, that **no-one was shot**, and that the property is **not a Home Office HMO**. Three men were arrested; Adrian Mucha, 19, of no fixed abode, was charged with blackmail and remanded, and two men aged 60 and 36 were bailed on suspicion of false imprisonment. The post was viewed around **119,000 times**; the branch chair has apologised.

Oldham — third leader in weeks, with a fedora (Manchester Evening News). Paul Taylor, described as "*hard edged*" and not one to "*suffer fools*", is Reform's third Oldham leader in a matter of weeks after **Lewis Quigg** resigned mid-investigation and **Mark Wilkinson** left for health

reasons; **Gary Tarbuck** (St James) is suspended pending investigation. Reform won 13 seats in May, taking them to 16 — two behind Labour — but the council has been **locked in stalemate with no political leader** since, as no party holds more than a third of seats. Taylor faces a **Failsworth West by-election next month** and an expected one in **Royton North**, both Reform's to lose, and says he is glad certain people have left the party. He has issued an ultimatum he hopes will change the borough's politics permanently by May 2027, when Labour may cease to be the largest party for the first time since 2010.

West Northamptonshire — Local Plan stand-off continues (Northampton Chronicle & Echo). An independent Planning Inspectorate advisory visit is scheduled during the public consultation on a plan determining where thousands of homes could be built to **2043**. Housing and planning minister **Matthew Pennycook** intervened last month using statutory powers to **overturn the Reform-led council's decision to abandon years of work and restart**, after its Planning Policy Committee voted to begin again. The council formally opposed the intervention. Leader **Mark Arnull**: "*We welcome the opportunity for an independent Planning Inspector to conduct the advisory visit... members wanted greater confidence that important matters, including infrastructure requirements and future growth options, had been fully considered.*" Arnull has accused the Labour Government of overriding local democracy; Labour opposition leader **Sally Keeble** called the restart decision "*reckless*" and warned it would cost over £1m. The Government has directed WNC to launch its Regulation consultation despite the council's objections.

Calderdale — Reform's Green Belt record questioned (Yorkshire Live/Examiner Live). Bradshaw villagers, west of Queensbury, criticise **four Reform councillors who could have used their majority to block** approval in principle for seven to nine homes on grazing land between the Golden Fleece pub and Bradshaw Primary School on Bradshaw Lane — formerly Green Belt, with **39 letters of objection** citing flood risk, traffic and harm to rural character, on a street residents say already sees "*raw sewage*" flowing through it when it floods. Retiree Graham Sellers, 74: "*[Calderdale leader] Dan Sutherland said he would oppose anything in terms of building on Green Belt. They use the excuse that in 2023 Labour changed certain parts of the Green Belt to Grey Belt. But whatever is happening we should still expect Reform to oppose building on it.*" Cllrs Katie Kimber (Labour, Luddendenfoot) and Jamie Furlong (Green, Todmorden West) backed the scheme on 20 October after assurances flood concerns could be mitigated with underground water storage. The site belongs to winemaker Jason Robertshaw, who says the development "*will reduce existing flood risk.*"

? Policy: Jenrick's CBAM Position vs His Own MP's, and the Leaked 100-Days Guide

Reform accused of being happy for British refineries to be undercut (The Scotsman). Labour MP **Euan Stainbank** (Falkirk) says Reform "*owe refinery workers an answer*" after Treasury

spokesperson **Robert Jenrick** listed **halting the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism** among his "pro-growth" measures were he Chancellor. CBAM would tax certain imports at the same level as domestic production. A cross-party group including Stainbank and **Reform MP Sarah Pochin** has called for refined products to be *included* in the mechanism. Stainbank: "*Had Robert Jenrick and his Tory colleagues acted in government to stop British refineries being undercut by imports facing lower carbon costs, Grangemouth might still be refining today. Now Reform wants to pause the very policy its own MP, Sarah Pochin, joined me in urging the Chancellor to extend to refining earlier this year.* ***They demanded action in April and oppose it in October. Which is it?*** *Do they back British refining, or are they happy to let overseas producers undercut it?*" Scotland's only oil refinery, Grangemouth, ceased crude processing last year after a century of operation.

> **Intra-party contradiction, on the record:** Reform's Treasury spokesperson proposes scrapping a mechanism his own backbencher campaigned to extend — seven months apart, on an issue where the party's base includes unionised refinery workers.

Leaked guidance: do as little as possible (Left Foot Forward, via the Independent). Leaked guidance from Reform to its councillors asks them to do **"as little as possible in their first 100 days in office"**, to "*resist making major changes*" and instead prioritise "*listen, learn and understand.*" A section headed **"Don't Rush Into Big Changes"** advises: "*Resist making major changes before you fully understand the service. Spend your first 100 days asking good questions rather than trying to provide all the answers.*" The guide was written by **Cllr Diane Morton**, chair of Reform's adult social care network and former Kent CC cabinet member for adult social care and public health, and is titled "*Leading Adult Social Care: A Practical Guide for Reform UK Cabinet Members.*"

This **directly contradicts** Farage's September Birmingham conference, itself branded "*The First 100 Days*", where he promised that on winning a general election he would **declare a national emergency, cancel parliamentary recesses** and if necessary require Parliament to sit "*24 hours a day, six days a week*" to force the programme through at pace.

Reform's "grievance Budget wishlist" (LabourList, opinion). Ahead of Chancellor John Healey's Budget today, the piece catalogues Reform's pre-Budget proposals as "*boomer slop*": ripping up environmental protections, **scrapping the Renters' Rights Act and the Employment Rights Act**, junking net-zero legislation, repealing board diversity and inclusion rules, and **"relegalising" Imperial measurements** — argued to read less as a plan for government than as grievances.

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- Sandwell Reform councillor handed reprieve — Express & Star, 28 Oct (NewsNow record: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1328220429)
- Reform councillor quits county cabinet amid SEND concerns — Echo News, 27 Oct: https://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/26673780.basildon-reform-councillor-quit-cabinet-send-concerns/

- Blackpool Reform leader responds to PACT voter manipulation accusations — Blackpool Gazette, 27 Oct: https://www.blackpoolgazette.co.uk/news/blackpool-reform-uk-accusations-voter-manipulation-key-pact-meeting-claremont-9312073
- Reform UK's 'cunning plan' for Claremont PACT meeting fails — The Blackpool Lead: https://blackpool.thelead.uk/p/reform-uks-cunning-plan-for-claremont-pact-group-mark-butcher-labour-lynn-williams
- Reform UK branch shared false claims over a 'shooting' in Liverpool — Liverpool Echo, 27 Oct: https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/reform-uk-branch-shared-false-34823081
- Oldham Reform's third leader in weeks on toxic politics — Manchester Evening News, 28 Oct: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/oldham-reforms-third-leader-weeks-34826068
- Reform council welcomes planning inspector's visit — Northampton Chronicle & Echo, 28 Oct: https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/politics/reform-council-welcomes-planning-inspectors-visit-amid-ongoing-row-with-government-over-local-plan-9313366
- West Northamptonshire Council Leader welcomes independent review — WNC: https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/news/west-northamptonshire-council-leader-welcomes-independent-review-local-plan-issues
- 'Disappointed' villagers hit out at Calderdale plans — Examiner Live, 28 Oct: https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/news/west-yorkshire-news/disappointed-villagers-hit-out-calderdale-34825038

Policy

- Leaked guidance shows Reform asking councillors to do as little as possible — Left Foot Forward, 27 Oct: https://leftfootforward.org/2026/10/leaked-guidance-shows-reform-asking-councillors-to-do-as-little-as-possible-in-first-100-days/
- Reform's grievance Budget wishlist — LabourList, 27 Oct: https://labourlist.org/2026/10/reforms-empty-room-and-empty-promises/
- Nigel Farage blames 'staff's incompetence' for half-empty hall — Left Foot Forward, 27 Oct (NewsNow record: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1328140467)
- Farage and Jenrick mocked for sea of empty seats — HuffPost UK, 26 Oct (NewsNow record: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1328079668)

Also indexed today, not separately reported above

- Tories and Reform launch bids to oust Southend Council leader over local plan — Echo News, 26 Oct (NewsNow record: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1328091041)
- Parties launch separate bids to oust Southend Council leader — Yellow Advertiser, 26 Oct (NewsNow record: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1328097339)
- Jim Allister to face questions from Oxford students in 'future of unionism' talk — The Irish News, 27 Oct (NewsNow record: https://www.newsnow.co.uk/A/3/1328169454)

? Quick Summary

Thread	Today's position
Polling	YouGov: Reform 20% — lowest since Jan 2025. Labour 27%, Con 22%, LD 11%, Green 10%, Restore Britain 4%
Farage as asset/liability	Ashcroft: Farage repels ~5x as many potential Reform voters as he attracts; 38-point leader penalty; "*Farage is being carried by his party*"
Money	BBC ties largest donor Harborne to £16m+ Guernsey property, BVI companies, jets and hangars; his £5m gift to Farage under standards investigation
Staffordshire	4th leader in 18 months (Murray resigned days after membership revoked over racism allegations → Coles acting); six Labour MPs condemn "vetting failure"
Holyrood	Bland's exit leaves Reform 3rd on 16 MSPs; Offord hands economy brief to Ross; "women and equalities" renamed "women and girls"
Wales	MS Joe Martin deletes 'Rule, Britannia!' post mocking a Black woman's statue — third deleted post in weeks
Dudley	Ballinger writes to Farage over Cllr Ashman's "goy-slop" and anti-foreigner posts; council says it cannot act on pre-election conduct; Longhi counter-attacks
Bradford	First Reform budget: 4.99% council tax rise (max without referendum) + £50m cuts — the rise they blamed on Labour
Policy coherence	Jenrick wants CBAM halted; Reform MP Pochin campaigned to extend it. Leaked councillor guide says do as little as possible in 100 days; Farage promised 24/6 Parliament
Conduct findings	Leicestershire's Boam found in breach of the code on two counts; hearings Friday
Local disputes	Sandwell cabinet member's unpermitted cafe approved by five Reform members without debate; Essex cabinet member quits over SEND handling; Blackpool 'cunning plan' PACT charge; Liverpool branch's false 'shooting' post

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