Reform UK Headlines — 30 Oct 2026

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? Top Story: Farage accused of shoving Lib Dem MP Caroline Voaden

The MP at the centre of Nigel Farage's claim that he skipped Wednesday's Budget to avoid a "physical altercation" has come forward: **Caroline Voaden, Lib Dem MP for South Devon**, says Farage "shoved" her on the staircase during the State Opening of Parliament procession in May.

- **How it emerged:** Pressed on why he was absent from the Commons for John Healey's Budget, Farage said: "At the State Opening of Parliament, I got involved… I didn't want to… but I got involved in a physical altercation with an MP in the chamber. I didn't make a fuss about it, I didn't complain, but I could see given that my prayer card had…" — citing it as the reason he avoided the Chamber this week. (BBC, Left Foot Forward)
- **Voaden's account (to The Guardian):** "He was trying to get out of the chamber and instead of just asking if he could go past, he said: 'Let me past' [sic]. I turned round and said: 'No, you can wait your turn like everyone else'. He grabbed me by the arm or the shoulder, pushed me to one side and tried to push past me. One of my colleagues tried to stop him because he thought I was going to fall down the stairs… Quite deliberately, he grabbed me by the arm from behind and pushed me to one side so that I fell into a colleague or the wall on the other side." (PRSD)
- **Her statement:** "On the day of the King's Speech, Farage missed his chance to process with the other party leaders to the Lords, and rather than queue with the rest of us, he shoved me out of the way to barge past. Such behaviour is unacceptable in any workplace, and it has no place in the House of Commons. Shoving a colleague out of the way on a staircase just shows the complete disdain he has for Parliament and for other MPs." She says she is "shocked and bloody angry" and "still waiting for the apology you

were told to give" — she told the BBC Farage **was ordered to apologise after she complained to Commons authorities** (the House of Commons would not comment). It is "very strange that Farage has dredged up this incident, which happened five months ago, while scrambling for an excuse as to why he wasn't in the Chamber for the Budget speech." (Mirror, BBC, Standard)
- **Reform's response:** A Reform source accused the Lib Dems of "lying": "The Lib Dems were claiming Nigel shoved her and that she was shaken, the video disproves that clearly." Footage first unearthed by the Daily Telegraph shows the pair leaving the chamber together with no visible major altercation — but Voaden says the incident is not shown in that clip, and it does not appear on Parliament's official State Opening feed. Farage denies wrongdoing. (BBC, South Hams Gazette)
- **Daisy Cooper (Lib Dem deputy leader, Sky News):** "My understanding — I didn't see it, I wasn't there — is that he physically shoved one of our female MPs out of the way, and that one of our male MPs then challenged him on that." (BBC)
- **Robert Jenrick (Sky):** "I am sick to death of these pathetic Westminster debates." (BBC)
- The Standard notes Voaden and Farage were **members of the European Parliament at the same time**.

Why it matters: Yesterday's story was Farage's unusual admission of an "altercation" to excuse his Budget absence (the Commons record shows his prayer card lacked a valid date stamp, and HuffPost reported he never attended prayers). Today it has mutated into a cross-party row about physical conduct towards a female MP — with Reform calling the accusers liars and the Lib Dems publicising an ordered-but-never-delivered apology.

? Question Time fallout: Campbell calls Reform "a bunch of conmen", Yusuf fires back over Iraq

BBC Question Time broadcast from **Warwick** last night (panel: Chief Secretary to the Treasury **Emma Reynolds**, Shadow Defence Secretary **James Cartlidge**, Lib Dem deputy leader **Daisy Cooper**, Reform home affairs spokesperson **Zia Yusuf**, and **Alastair Campbell**; presented by Fiona Bruce).

- **Campbell:** "Brexit has taken 6-8% out of our economy, if we had not left the chancellor today would have had £90 billion more to spend. He could have doubled the defence budget… They [Reform] can sit there. The people who gave us Brexit and they now want to give you another set of false promises. Do not fall for them because **they are a bunch of conmen, they're being found out** and it's one reason why Nigel Farage will never be Prime Minister of this country." The Mirror reports Yusuf was seen **smirking seconds before** the "conmen" jibe landed.

- **Yusuf's Iraq riposte:** "Alastair Campbell is calling other people liars, saying they don't apologise and take accountability. As far as I remember, Alastair, you were the person who presented a dossier to the British people claiming Saddam Hussein could launch weapons of mass destruction within 45 minutes. We now know there were no WMDs of any sort. You deceived the British people…" (Spectator's Steerpike flagged it approvingly; a clip circulated widely on X.)
- **Yusuf on Brexit economics:** "The promise of Brexit has been betrayed by a conga line of incompetent Tory prime ministers… We can cut spending… we need to secure our borders and stop sending money abroad. We can do all of those things without joining the European Union." **Cooper's interjection:** "Some of whom are now part of Reform in very senior positions."
- **Fact-check note:** host Fiona Bruce pushed back on Campbell's £90bn figure — "That is a projection Alastair, no-one can be sure about that."

?? Jenrick fumes at "defector's remorse" question

On Good Morning Britain (Thu 29 Oct), presenter **Paul Brand** asked Robert Jenrick whether he felt "**defector's remorse**" after new Ipsos polling (25 Oct) showed Reform down three points, with just **19% of adults believing Reform is ready to form a government** (22% in September, 29% in September 2025) — and raised the rows of empty seats at Monday's pre-Budget event. Jenrick: "**Paul, you are a left-wing commentator and activist… You obviously don't want Reform to succeed… You always just ask negative questions about Reform.**" (Independent; HuffPost carried the same clash — its page would not load this run.)

?? Badenoch: Reform's "racist attacks… are not going to work"

Kemi Badenoch answered Raheem Kassam's "Nigerian scammer" jibes and Jenrick's refusal to condemn them (GMB, via Nation.Cymru/ITV/PA):

- "I think it just shows the sort of people they are… This is what they're spending their time on. They're not talking about how they're going to make people's lives better… You'd think that I was the prime minister. I think they think that maybe **using my race is a way for them to improve their standing**. Britain is not a racist country and because it's not a racist country, their racist attacks and using my race as an attack form is not going to work."
- On Jenrick (who again refused to call the posts racist — "were they unpleasant or were they rude? Maybe, but it's not my place to police everybody's tweets"): "**He's not one of**

my MPs. He's not my problem anymore. He's Nigel Farage's problem." Jenrick also repeated his claim that Badenoch told "appalling lies" about a Stanford pre-med scholarship offer (she says she received an offer at 16 but no longer has the documents).
- Farage's position, for the record: "Do I think the comment was over the top? Yes, I do. Do I think it was intentionally racist? No, I don't."
- **ConservativeHome (Sir Conor Burns)** devotes today's column to the same theme: the growing obsession with Badenoch's heritage — "where she comes from, the circumstances of her birth, her Nigerian heritage and, increasingly, whether she is entitled to regard herself as British" — which he calls "more troubling" when it comes from figures associated with the mainstream right.

?? By-elections: Restore Britain flops in its Scottish debut; Reform takes its first Lib Dem seat since May

- **Mid Argyll (Argyll & Bute):** the SNP's **Andy Buntin won 46.1%** of first preferences (+~15pts vs 2022), gaining from an Independent. **Rupert Lowe's Restore Britain** — in its first Scottish electoral contest — finished **fifth with 7%** (George Love, 124 votes); **Reform fourth with 8.5%** (Kaine McConnell, 151). The two right-wing parties took **275 votes between them vs the SNP's 820**, both finishing behind the Lib Dems (Douglas Macdonald, 17.4%) and Conservatives (Colvin Osborn, 12.9%). Restore's Scottish build-out is also struggling: its new Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock branch has been appealing for an affordable meeting venue. (The National)
- **Beechwood & Heath (Halton): Reform's first gain from the Lib Dems since May** — Reform 35.3% (−4.2), Lib Dem 26.3% (−18.3), Labour 25.2% (new), Conservatives 2.6%. Mark Pack notes the context: the seat's Lib Dem hold was weakened by the death in August of long-serving group leader Margaret Ratcliffe. Six principal-authority by-elections took place this week overall. (Mark Pack's Blog)

?? Local government roundup

- **Leicestershire — Harrison survives by one vote, pressure mounts (LDRS, Chris Harper):** Reform councillors met Tuesday 27 Oct over the county council's direction under leader **Dan Harrison**; a secret confidence vote passed **by a majority of one**. Sources cite a "lack of direction" and by-election losses (Labour snatched the Shepshed county seat after a Reform resignation). Harrison: "There are those wanting to do things and wanting to see me go and hope their chances will improve. It's simple politics." He admits by-election tactics "hadn't been working", insists "head office is pleased" and says disgruntled members want policies that are "more Reform". Former acting leader

Deborah Taylor is now opposition leader. (Harborough Mail)

- **West Northamptonshire — £500m debt-relief demand (NN Journal/LDRS):** Reform leader **Mark Arnull** has written to local government secretary **Angela Rayner** asking her to review and cancel the £500m+ historic debt inherited from the failed old Northamptonshire County Council (£553m total; £237m on the North unitary's books; ~£10m/yr in interest, per finance holder John Slope). Arnull wants the same treatment "now applying in Surrey". Notable detail: **since Reform took control in May 2025 the authority has added £143m of its own debt** (2025/26 accounts), largely by switching from internal reserves to external borrowing for capital projects. The council is also at odds with government over asylum hotels, its local plan and devolution.
- **Suffolk — MPs demand children's cuts U-turn (EADT/Lowestoft Journal):** Labour MPs **Jack Abbott, Jess Asato, Jenny Riddell-Carpenter and Peter Prinsley** have written to Reform leader **Michael Hadwen** urging him to scrap proposed cuts to the Healthy Child Programme (health visiting, school nursing) and family hubs, arguing the plans **break Reform's May pledge not to cut frontline services**.
- **Bradford — £14m Squire Lane row settled against Reform (T&A):** The £14m allocated to the scrapped Squire Lane Leisure Centre **can be used elsewhere in Bradford**, despite Reform leader **Stephen Place** recently saying that was "categorically untrue" — vindicating Shipley MP Anna Dixon (Labour) in their weeks-long spat.
- **Essex — Byline Times exclusive on the Quirk poll:** Deputy leader of Reform-run Essex CC **Russell Quirk** defended the £150k "Operation Vanguard" private security patrols (Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester — towns visited by asylum seekers from the Wethersfield base) by citing a Find Out Now poll and telling Colchester's crime committee to "**take our word for it**". Byline found the poll **asked about police, not security guards**, was **commissioned through Quirk's own PR company**, and had **barely half the participants he claimed**; the polling firm has distanced itself.
- **Bury — market funding row (Bury Times):** Reform councillors **Jack Rydeheard and Jerome Roith** welcomed the Chancellor's £10m pledge to repair the Indoor Market Hall (closed 2023) but used it to attack "years of Labour failures".

? Money & democracy: the £72m donations under scrutiny

The **International Bar Association** examines Reform's record-smashing twin £36m donations from crypto billionaires **Christopher Harborne and Ben Delo**: electoral-law expert **Gavin Millar KC** (Matrix Chambers) warns such sums risk "undue influence" — "The argument in the case of these people is that their huge donations will influence a pro-crypto policy if Reform gets into government." The piece frames the donations as a rule-of-law stress test for UK democracy. (Context this week: Reuters/Gulf Times reported Reform's £72m media fightback plans, funded by the same donors.)

? Opinion & comment

- **Freedom Press** (anarchist news review podcast, "Budget bombs and rotting Reform"): Healey's first Budget, Reform's dipping support, and why Britain isn't protesting like the rest of Europe.
- **Conor Burns (ConservativeHome)** — see Badenoch section above.

? Quick Summary

Story	Status	Key fact
Farage–Voaden shove row	Developing	Voaden: grabbed from behind, pushed into wall; ordered apology never given; Reform: Lib Dems "lying"
Question Time (Warwick)	Aired last night	Campbell: Reform "a bunch of conmen"; Yusuf: Campbell "deceived the British people" over Iraq WMD dossier
Jenrick on GMB	Aired 29 Oct	"Defector's remorse" question; Ipsos readiness 19% (was 29% a year ago); Jenrick calls Brand "left-wing activist"
Badenoch vs Kassam jibes	Ongoing	"Racist attacks... not going to work"; Jenrick: "He's Nigel Farage's problem"
Mid Argyll by-election	Result	SNP 46.1%; Restore Britain 5th (7%) in Scottish debut; Reform 4th (8.5%)
Halton by-election	Result	Reform's first Lib Dem gain since May (35.3% vs 26.3%)
Leics leadership vote	Survived	Harrison wins confidence by ONE vote
West Northants	Escalating	Arnull asks Rayner to cancel £500m+ legacy debt; council itself +£143m under Reform
Suffolk children's cuts	Pressure	4 Labour MPs: cuts break Reform's no-frontline-cuts pledge
Essex Operation Vanguard	Exposé	Byline: poll cited by Quirk asked about police, run via his own PR firm, half the claimed sample
£72m donations	Analysis	IBA/Gavin Millar KC: undue influence risk, pro-crypto policy fears

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? Source Links

- BBC — Lib Dems and Reform UK in war of words over alleged shove: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwg7x3kegymvo
- Mirror — Lib Dem MP says Farage shoved her in 'unacceptable' altercation: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/lib-dem-mp-shocked-bloody-37823783
- Standard — Caroline Voaden says Farage 'shoved me': https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/nigel-farage-parliament-daisy-cooper-reform-uk-budget-b1302874.html
- PRSD — "It was rude. It was nasty." (Guardian quotes): https://www.theprsd.co.uk/2026/10/29/it-was-rude-it-was-nasty-female-mp-says-nigel-farage-shoved-her-in-parlia
- South Hams Gazette — Farage cites 'altercation' with South Devon MP: https://www.southhams-today.co.uk/news/nigel-farage-caroline-voaden-968313
- Mirror — Zia Yusuf's Question Time reaction: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/bbc-question-time-zia-yusuf-37825048
- Spectator — Watch: Zia Yusuf reminds Alastair Campbell about Iraq: https://spectator.com/article/watch-zia-yusuf-reminds-alastair-campbell-about-iraq/
- The National — Question Time panel, Warwick: https://www.thenational.scot/news/26681550.bbc-question-time-panel-warwick-tonight/
- Independent — Jenrick clashes with ITV's Paul Brand: https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/itv-reform-robert-jenrick-paul-brand-video-b3075534.html
- Nation.Cymru — Badenoch on Reform's 'racist attacks': https://nation.cymru/news/badenoch-says-reforms-racist-attacks-will-not-work-after-nigerian-scammer-comments/
- ConservativeHome — Conor Burns on Badenoch's heritage: https://conservativehome.com/2026/10/30/conor-burns-as-her-personal-popularity-rises-some-have-obsessed-over-b
- The National — Restore Britain beaten by SNP in Mid Argyll: https://www.thenational.scot/news/26683392.rupert-lowes-restore-britain-beaten-snp-mid-argyll-by-election/
- Mark Pack — Reform's first gain from the Lib Dems since May: https://www.markpack.org.uk/177647/reforms-first-gain-from-the-lib-dems-since-may/
- Harborough Mail (LDRS) — Leics Reform leader faces pressure to step down: https://www.harboroughmail.co.uk/news/politics/council/leicestershire-county-councils-reform-leader-faces-mounting-pressure-to-step-down-as-internal-leadership-vote-lays-bare-deep-divisions-within-party-9318019
- NN Journal (LDRS) — West Northants historic debt battleground: https://www.nnjournal.co.uk/p/historic-debt-relief-becomes-reform
- EADT/Lowestoft Journal — Suffolk MPs urge Reform to scrap children's cuts: https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/26680481.suffolk-mps-urge-reform-scrap-childrens-service-cuts/
- T&A — £14m for scrapped Bradford leisure centre: https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/26682276.14-million-scrapped-leisure-

centre-used-elsewhere/
- Byline Times — Essex Reform deputy's poll: https://bylinetimes.com/2026/10/29/local-reform-deputy-accused-of-misleading-councillors-over-poll-used-to-def
- Bury Times — £10m Bury Market rescue row: https://www.burytimes.co.uk/news/26680551.reform-uk-welcomed-10m-bury-market-repair-funding-pledge/
- IBA — £72m donations and UK democracy: https://www.ibanet.org/Rule-of-law-record-breaking-72m-donations-put-UK-democracy-under-pressure
- Freedom Press — Budget bombs and rotting Reform: https://freedompress.org.uk/2026/10/30/budget-bombs-and-rotting-reform/

Compiled 30/10/2026 by the Reform UK NewsNow sweep. Items already covered in the 29 Oct run (Tommy Robinson comments fallout, Budget-absence original story, HTFP Kate Cronin abuse, Oldham leader profile, Kent complaints) are referenced only as context.

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