

**Sir Stephen Watson QPM
Chief Constable**

Professor Nicola Pratt
BRISMES President

Sent by Email: office@brismes.org

19th February 2026

Dear Prof Pratt

I write in response to your letter dated 23rd January 2026. Please accept my apologies for the time taken to reply.

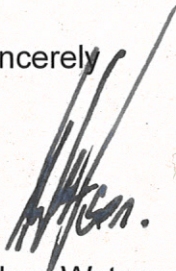
I appreciate your efforts in setting forth the literal and common meaning of various Arabic terms and phrases. It is of course valuable to understand the etymology of various words which can be rendered contentious by dint of the same entering into contemporary political discourse and protest. Such a detailed understanding of various words and phrases however only assists to a degree in the policing of protest. Notwithstanding the literal meaning of a particular word or phrase, the intent of the individual(s) deploying such phrases together with the prevalent context of any such usage also need to be weighed in the exercise of ensuring that legitimate protest does not descend into unlawful intimidation and / or a means of inciting racial hatred toward any other grouping.

Whilst not referenced at all within your letter; an important element of local context relates to the recent terrorist attack at a Manchester Synagogue where innocents were injured and murdered purely for being Jewish. Taken together with the recent conviction and sentencing of 3 Islamist terrorists, who were prevented from committing mass murder on the streets of Manchester; it is the case that the local Jewish community are currently forced to live in a state of constant and justified fear.

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) recognise and respect the right to lawful protest and will always strive to uphold the same. Our approach will always endeavour to be entirely lawful; impartial and fair. The local context as outlined above brings about an enduring need to be particularly vigilant in guarding against the possibility that legitimate protest may be subverted by some to provide a vehicle for thinly disguised anti-Semitism.

Whilst you may disagree with the approach adopted by GMP, any actions taken by the force are subject to rigorous external scrutiny. Ultimately, it is for the courts, not the police, to determine whether an individual is guilty of a criminal offence.

Yours sincerely



Sir Stephen Watson
Chief Constable