1. Do you agree with the proposal in the Bill to repeal the 2012 Act? What are your reasons for coming to this view?

I fully support the bill to repeal the 2012 Act. I believe the Act is an attack on civil liberties. The police have used the Act to harass and criminalise young working class football supporters. The term ‘offensive behaviour’ is way too broad and the law has to be more specific as to what is offensive or not. Furthermore, there are already laws which criminalise racist, sectarian, homophobic behaviour. The fact that you can be arrested and charged for ‘offensive behaviour’ when someone doesn’t even need to be offended is ludicrous and shouldn’t be tolerated or allowed in modern day society. I believe the police have used the 2012 Act to push and enforce their hidden agendas of targeting any football fans who want to create an atmosphere. At grounds across Scotland the police are now positioning themselves in sections of the crowd to intimidate football supporters. There are examples every week of football supporters being harassed by the Police, whether that’s filming the crowd when no offence is being committed, or bullying young fans who only wish to support their team.

2. Did you support the original legislation?

NO

3. Do you consider that other existing provisions of criminal law are sufficient to prosecute offensive behaviour related to football which leads to public disorder? If so, could you specify the criminal law provisions? Or does repeal of section 1 risk creating a gap in the criminal law?

Yes, I believe that other existing laws are sufficient to prosecute offensive and illegal behaviour relation to football which leads to public disorder. Laws such as breach of the peace, section 74 of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003, section 38 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 provide adequate threat that illegal and offensive behaviour relating to football games won’t be tolerated.

4. Do you have a view on the focus of section 1 of the 2012 Act, which criminalises behaviour surrounding watching, attending or travelling to or from football matches, which may not be criminalised in other settings?

I think it is absolutely wrong and disgraceful to have a law dedicated to harass and criminalise a section of society purely because of the sport that they love and pay a lot of money to watch.
5. Do you consider that other existing provisions of criminal law are sufficient to prosecute threats made with the intent of causing a person or persons fear or alarm or inciting religious hatred? If so, could you specify the criminal law provisions? Or does repeal of section 6 risk creating a gap in the criminal law?

Police and prosecutors regularly use other legislation such as the Communications Act 2003 so I don’t believe that the repeal of section 6 would risk creating a gap in the criminal law.

6. Do you have a view on the proposed transitional arrangements in the Bill: that there should be no further convictions for section 1 and 6 offences from the date on which the repeal of those offences takes effect; and that the police will cease issuing fixed penalty notices at least from the point at which the Bill is passed?

I fully support the repeal of the 2012 Act and also believe any previous convictions and ongoing cases should be quashed with immediate effect.

7. To what extent do you consider that the 2012 Act has assisted in tackling sectarianism?

I believe the Act hasn’t tackled the problem of sectarianism whatsoever. The Police enforcing the 2012 Act has frightened young fans away from Scottish football grounds. There is sufficient legislation to tackle sectarianism and the poorly thought out; the illiberal 2012 Act should be repealed as soon as possible with immediate effect.

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