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

Yes it is too hard to police correctly and lots of unjustified innocent people like myself getting involved in something which we did not wish to be involved in.

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 the common law Breach of the Peace, Section 74 of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003, Section 38 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 is sufficient for minor instances at football matches.

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?

No because a football fan is no different to any other civilian. It would be discrimination against football fans to bring such laws into practice.

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?

Section 6 has hardly been used in the whole period since it was enacted and police and prosecutors regularly use other legislation e.g. Communications Act, 2003.

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?

The bill should be axed with immediate effect, all cases not heard yet dropped and any past cases, convictions quashed. The law was unjustly put into action in the first place.
7. To what extent do you consider that the 2012 Act has assisted in tackling sectarianism?

None whatsoever. The Orange Order still marches the streets with its sectarian hatred. Maybe if that was stopped then it might help with tackling sectarianism. But until such times then sectarianism will always exist.

Martin Lochran
18 August 2017