

**Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill**  
**Meeting with Anthony Horan, Director, Catholic Parliamentary Office**  
**26 February 2021**

**Attendees:**

Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice  
John McFarlane, Special Advisor, Scottish Government  
Anthony Horan, Catholic Church

**Summary**

During discussion, the following points were aired:

- It was noted that significant progress had been made in relation to the concerns the Catholic Church had raised.
- A recognition that anti-Catholic hatred continues to be a significant problem in Scotland.
- The Catholic Church wanted the SG to go further in relation to Freedom of Expression with a look to replicate similar wording to the religious Freedom of Expression clause for the other protected characteristics, particularly sexual orientation and transgender identity.
- It was suggested that the Cabinet Secretary consider Lord Advocate's Guidance similar to that which was issued in relation to the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014.
- The Cabinet Secretary offered to explore if further clarity could be provided in the explanatory notes post-Stage 3.