



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

Chris Philp MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of
State for Tech and the Digital
Economy
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ

E: enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dcms

4 February 2022

MC2022/01666/DC

Professor Penney Lewis
Law Commission

penney.lewis@lawcommission.gov.uk

Dear Professor Lewis,

The Government's Interim Response to the Law Commission's 'Modernising Communications Offences' report.

I am writing to provide the government's interim response to the Law Commission's 'Modernising Communications Offences,' report published in July 2021.

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere thanks for all the work that the Commission has carried out as part of this review over the past four years. I welcome the Commission's detailed report which recommends the creation of seven new or replacement offences to address harmful online communications.

I am pleased to say that the government accepts the recommended harm-based communications offence, false communications offence and threatening communications offence, as laid out in the report. These new offences will help ensure that the criminal law is focused on the most harmful behaviour whilst protecting freedom of expression. They will also help deliver the government's objective of making the UK the safest place to be online. The offences will be brought into law through the Online Safety Bill which we are committed to introducing to Parliament as soon as possible.

In addition, as the Prime Minister has indicated, we welcome the recommended offence on cyberflashing and are carefully considering it.

The report recommends a further three offences. The Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport and Ministry of Justice are carefully considering the remaining offences and accompanying recommendations including the hoax calls offence, an offence for encouraging or assisting self-harm and an offence for epilepsy trolling. We will continue to assess these offences ahead of issuing a fuller response to you in due course.

I would like to congratulate you once again on your report.

With best wishes,

Chris Philp MP
Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy

