

EXPOSED: Government's Secretive Anti-Hate Working Group Operates in the Shadows

A Tameside Independent Special Report lays bare the full details of a secretive government body operating under the direct oversight of Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner. The group's work is a case study in political evasion and a test of public trust.



By Jason Nield

In the wake of a national crisis and a record number of anti-Muslim hate crimes in 2024, the government established a working group tasked with a crucial objective: to define anti-Muslim hatred. But from its very inception, this body was designed to operate in secrecy, providing private advice to ministers without public scrutiny. This is not a story of political convenience; it is a full, in-depth account of a government body created in the shadow of a national crisis.



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A Confidential Mandate

The Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group was created to provide advice to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. Its official purpose is to develop a "non-

statutory definition" of Anti-Muslim hatred, with the stated goal of helping government bodies understand "unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate."

While its mission appears noble, the terms of reference contain a crucial clause that

shapes its entire work: any definition "must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression." This includes the right to "criticise, express dislike of, or insult religions and/or the beliefs and practices of adherents."

The Unaccountable Membership

The group's structure has drawn significant scrutiny, revealing a composition that critics argue is unrepresentative and unaccountable. It is led by Dominic Grieve KC, a barrister and former Conservative Attorney General. The four

members are described as "technical experts," comprising key figures from specific Muslim community groups. While they are not remunerated, they can claim expenses. Critically, their advice is designated as "private for Ministers and will not be

made public," with an expected workload of 5-10 hours per month. This composition and lack of public accountability have led to serious questions about the group's impartiality and its ability to represent the diversity of views across the country.

The Role of Secrecy and Why It Matters

The government's decision to keep the group's work private is a central pillar of this controversy. The terms of reference explicitly state that all advice provided by the group will never be made public.

This lack of transparency means there will be no way for

the public to know what evidence the group used to reach its conclusions, what arguments were made, or whether the final definition was influenced by political pressure. Any Freedom of Information (FOI) request for the final report or the minutes

of meetings would likely be refused.

This secrecy is part of a wider, troubling pattern of government evasion and a failure to be transparent on matters of national security and public trust.

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As Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner is at the helm of a secretive national working group, addressing issues of significant national import. Yet, closer to home, the very fabric of community well-

being in Tameside faces a severe challenge, with accusations levelled against Ms. Rayner for a perceived inaction regarding the escalating housing crisis within her own constituency.

This disparity between national responsibility and local reality has prompted considerable scrutiny from observers and constituents alike.

The Deepening Tameside Housing Crisis

Recent reports, corroborated by independent analysis, paint a concerning picture of a significant and growing housing crisis in Tameside. The region grapples with a critical shortage of social

housing, a fundamental component of stable community infrastructure. Critics point to an alarming absence of publicly accessible plans, suggesting a systemic failure to adequately address

this pressing need. The lack of clear, published strategies leaves many questioning the commitment to alleviating the severe housing pressures faced by local residents.

National Directives vs. Local Realities

While the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), a department within Ms. Rayner’s broader portfolio, champions ambitious national targets designed to alleviate

housing pressures across the United Kingdom, the stark reality on the ground in Tameside appears to be one of institutional denial and political inertia. This disconnect raises serious

questions about the efficacy of national policy implementation at the local level and the prioritisation of local needs within a broader governmental framework.

Calls for Accountability and Transparency

The inherent contradiction of a high-ranking minister engaging in high-level, covert discussions on national matters while simultaneously facing accusations of neglecting a foundational public issue in her own area

represents more than just a local grievance. It is, as some observers contend, a matter that impinges upon national security and erodes public trust, demanding a level of transparency and accountability that, to date,

remains conspicuously absent. The Tameside Independent will continue to monitor this critical situation, seeking clarity and advocating for the necessary public discourse on these pressing issues.