



## RE: APPG ON DEMOCRACY AND THE CONSTITUTION INQUIRY INTO POLICING OF CLAPHAM COMMON VIGIL

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### QUESTIONS FOR METROPOLITAN POLICE

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Many thanks for considering a submission to the APPG on Democracy and the Constitution's ("APPGDC") inquiry into the policing of the Clapham Common vigil on 13 March 2021. The APPG is seeking to understand whether and/or how important rights, including the right to free expression and peaceful assembly were respected and facilitated at the vigil. The APPG is interested in your recollection of the vigil and the events leading up to it.

The APPG would be grateful if you could include any documentary evidence (such as log-books, records, photographs, or recordings) to support or supplement your submissions.

You may wish to structure your response around the following questions:

- 1. Do you consider the law and guidance in place at the time to be sufficiently clear in respect of public gatherings for the purpose of protest/free expression/peaceful assembly during the coronavirus pandemic?**
- 2. In the week before the vigil what discussions were there between the MPS and organisers of the proposed vigil?** What was proposed? What did the MPS do or consider to facilitate the rights to free expression and peaceful assembly?
- 3. How did the MPS address the issues raised by the High Court's judgment on 12 March 2021?** Did the MPS hold further talks with organisers and was an announcement of the MPS stance on the vigil made while these were still ongoing?
- 4. How were attendees behaving at the vigil?** What specific breaches of the law (if any) occurred? Were social distancing and mask wearing observed? Did MPS actions cause a reduction in social distancing? Were attendees at any point violent or aggressive towards MPS officers?
- 5. How did the MPS seek to facilitate the rights to free expression and assembly at the vigil?** What was the operational plan and how did this change? Why were arrests made and how were particular individuals selected for arrest? What force was used and why?

Please add anything else you consider relevant.

Please submit your answers in writing to Sam Fowles, Counsel to the Inquiry at [sfowles@icdr.co.uk](mailto:sfowles@icdr.co.uk). The deadline for submissions is Wednesday 14 April.