ANDY BURNHAM
MAYOR OF GREATER MANCHESTER

Peter Tatchell
CEO, Peter Tatchell Foundation
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19 December 2025 Ref: AB/NE

Dear Peter

Re: Request for a Mayoral apology for Greater Manchester Police's historic persecution of LGBT+ people

I write in response to your letter of September 17th in respect of the above. Please accept my apologies in the delay in replying. I will outline my own position below, but it is important for me to point out that Mayors and Police and Crime commissioners have no statutory powers to instruct chief constables, as in law they are operationally independent.

Naturally, I have seen the response from Sir Stephen Watson and while I acknowledge your point that it did not accede to your request, I believe it was considered and respectful.

There is no doubt in my mind whatsoever that the LGBTQ+ community historically were treated shamefully by this country and clearly subject to discrimination in many ways. That discrimination did not only play out in policing, but in all public services and beyond, though I of course acknowledge the distinct consequences of discriminatory and targeted policing.

Fortunately, as you acknowledge, things have moved dramatically forward since the 1980s and 1990s.

As Mayor of Greater Manchester, I acknowledge the unacceptable discrimination and the pain and suffering it caused. I apologise to all LGBQT+ people in Greater Manchester and across the UK for the past failing of GMP in this regard.

In closing, may I once again acknowledge the position you have put forward and pay tribute to the work you have done over many years in advocating for the rights of, and equality for, our LGBQT+ communities.

Best wishes

Andy Burnham

Andy Burnham
Mayor of Greater Manchester

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