Statement to KCC in support of my petition: Kent County Council (KCC) to review and improve their response to 5th September Dover protest.

LAW and ORDER.

This is what this petition is about.

Law and order.

It is about making sure that Kent County Council is doing everything we can to protect residents and businesses from intimidation and serious disruption to nationally important infrastructure. It is a petition about learning lessons from the protest of 5th September that shut down the port of Dover for half a day.

And it is residents we must put front and centre. A female Dover resident recounts what happened that day:

"*Seeing hundreds of people dressed in black with balaclavas descend upon the area I grew up in made me feel unsafe and intimidated. In a place that I've always equated with peace and tranquillity, I felt the exact opposite that day*"

So today over two thousand Kent Residents ask Reform-run Kent County Council, do you take law and order seriously? If so, will you review this Council's community safety response on the 5th of September, and implement any lessons learnt? And will KCC work with Kent Police to ensure joint response and communication strategies are in place to respond to large scale disruptive protests?

So down to the facts:

Kent County Council has statutory duties in regard to transport, communication and public safety. Kent County Council sits on the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum, which plans joint response to protest.

Kent Police were left heavily outnumbered on the 5th of September when just six policemen were outside Dover train station and had to try and manage hundreds of masked protestors arriving by train. This was mentioned at Dover District Councils scrutiny panel.

At 08:48 on 5th September, Kent Police posted on Facebook to say "*We are aware of a protest currently taking place at the Port of Dover. Officers are in attendance and engaging with protesters"*

At 12:52 on 5th September, Kent Highways and Transport team posted on Facebook telling residents travelling to or from Dover to "*check before they travel"* and *"allow extra time for your journey".* This was shared by the official KCC Facebook page. No further information given.

From a GB News TV interview on 5th September the leader of KCC says she was "*troubled*" and "disturbed" by British men wearing balaclavas and agreed that there was "*intimidation".*

The Leader of the Council did not condemn the actions of the protestors on her “Linden Kemkaren KCC” Facebook page, the Council’s official communication channels, or at full Council on the 17th of September, where she failed to include mention of it in the Leaders speech.

With the facts above, there is fear in the community that Kent County Council will not take far right protests seriously and may be supporting them. If the KCC Administration believe in law and order and protecting women and girls from intimidation, they will review this council’s role that day, and together with Kent Police learn the lessons that can prevent further intimidation to residents and disruption to nationally important infrastructure.