

## ELON MUSK NOW MANIPULATING POLITICS AROUND THE GLOBE

Elon Musk has called for Nigel Farage to be replaced as leader of Reform UK, just weeks after reports the multi-billionaire was in talks to donate to the party.

In a post on his social media site X, Musk said Farage "doesn't have what it takes" to lead the party - but did not explain his reasoning.

Farage suggested this was due to a disagreement over Musk's support for far-right activist Tommy Robinson

Robinson **admitted** in court to breaching an injunction against repeating claims about a Syrian refugee schoolboy after losing a 2021 libel case.

In **a social media post on Sunday in response to Musk's comment**, Farage said: "Elon is a remarkable individual but on this I am afraid I disagree".

"My view remains that Tommy Robinson is not right for Reform and I never sell out my principles."

Minutes after Farage made his statement, Musk posted on X: "Free Tommy Robinson now."

In the interview broadcast earlier on Sunday, Farage called Musk a "hero" who makes Reform UK "look cool".

But he added that Musk's support "doesn't mean I have to agree with every single statement he makes on X".

Farage said he planned to "have a conversation with (Musk) on a variety of things" - including Robinson - at the inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump.

Farage has maintained close ties to Trump, who has given Musk a role in his administration.

The question now is whether Farage's friendship with the president-elect is affected.

Farage founded Reform UK in 2018, then called the Brexit Party, and returned as the party's leader before being elected as an MP in 2024.

**Farage defends Musk after grooming gangs posts**

**Starmer criticises 'lies and misinformation' over child sexual abuse as he hits back at Musk**

**How Trump and Musk's interventions prompt fresh diplomatic challenge**

In December, Farage, along with Reform's new party treasurer Nick Candy, met Musk at Mar-a-Lago for an hour-long meeting, and began "open negotiations" about a donation to the party.

Musk's father Errol has suggested the SpaceX and Tesla mogul might even be prepared to become a UK citizen to make a \$100m (£80.5 m) donation to Reform UK. Farage later said speculation about the figure was "for the birds". As a US citizen, Musk cannot make personal political donations in the UK - but could make one through the British branch of his company X.

For now, at least it seems the rumours of a large donation from Musk to Reform are on ice.

Since his meeting with Farage, Musk has increasingly taken an interest in UK politics - focusing on criticism of Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer.

Musk has spent the week amplifying **calls by Reform UK and the Conservative Party for a national inquiry into grooming gangs.**

The calls came after the government turned down a request to conduct an inquiry into historical cases of sexual abuse in Oldham, saying the council should lead it instead.

This prompted Musk to accuse Sir Keir of failing to properly prosecute "rape gangs" while he was director of public prosecutions.

Musk also said Safeguarding Minister Jess Phillips "deserves to be in prison" and called her a "rape genocide apologist".

Asked about Musk's comments on Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg, Farage said the CEO had used "very tough terms, but that "free speech was back" on X under his ownership.

In 2022, an independent inquiry by Greater Manchester Combined Authority found that vulnerable children were left exposed to sexual exploitation in Oldham because of "serious failings" by the police and council.

The government has rejected the calls for a national inquiry, instead asking Oldham Council to set up its own. The previous Conservative government turned down a similar request in 2022.

Phillips and Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said in a letter to the Conservatives that the local authority had already started setting up an inquiry.

The letter also pointed to the 2022 Child Sexual Abuse Inquiry, which investigated abuse in care homes, churches, homes or by grooming gangs. The report knitted several previous inquiries into grooming gangs together, including in Rotherham, Rochdale and Telford, alongside its own investigations.

Speaking on Sunday, Health Secretary Wes Streeting said the government was prioritising "getting on with" implementing the report's 20 recommendations to combat child sexual abuse.

He told the BBC that Musk's criticism of Phillips was a "disgraceful smear" and said "people like Keir Starmer and Jess Phillips have done the hard yards of actually locking up wife beaters, rapists and paedophiles".