Glasgow rejects racism and far-right extremism – Motion as adjusted approved.

10 Councillor Aitken, seconded by Councillor Campbell, moved that:-

“Council acknowledges that these have been hugely challenging times for millions across our islands, as over 20 towns and cities across England and the North of Ireland erupted in violent riots as racist far-right agitators shamefully exploited the tragic murders of Bebe King, 6, Elsie Dot Stancombe, 7, and Alice Dasilva Aguiar, 9 in Southport. Council is appalled that there have been fire attacks on hotels housing asylum seekers; that Mosques, homes and businesses have been targeted by race hate thugs; and that members of the public have been assaulted on the streets because of the colour of their skin.

Council is clear that we cannot become complacent or assume that such events could never take place in Glasgow; notes that the same extreme anti-immigration, anti-refugee and Islamophobic rhetoric from certain sections of the press and social media that fuelled these riots elsewhere has also been spread in Glasgow; and that similar bad faith actors seeking to capitalise on heightened emotions have sought to create this type of division in our city.

Council declares its solidarity with Glasgow's global majority and migrant communities; deeply regrets the climate of fear and vulnerability that has been created; and is distressed to hear reports that they feel concerned about their own security and wellbeing in our city. Council records our thanks for the work of faith and community organisations, Council officers and Police Scotland to provide reassurance and ensure support is in place where it is needed.

Council condemns race hate in all its forms; unequivocally rejects far-right rhetoric and activity; and agrees that far-right ringleaders such as Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, known as Tommy Robinson, are not welcome in Glasgow. Council further deplores attempts by some Members of the UK Parliament and sections of the media to justify, excuse or downplay far-right activity.

Council thanks all Glaswegians and others from across Scotland who have come together to take a stand against racism and fascism and to celebrate our diverse, multicultural city. Council records our belief that inward migration has been and continues to be a positive force in Glasgow, enhancing our city socially, culturally and economically; and is proud of our record of strong community relations and of integration of asylum seekers and refugees, not only as the largest asylum dispersal authority in the UK, but also as a city that has itself been built and enriched by successive waves of migration. Council further believes that inward migration to the UK is not only positive but necessary and that policies which have set out to discourage people coming to live and work in the UK, such as Brexit and the so-called "hostile environment", have been deeply damaging to both the national economy and to social cohesion.

Council notes that National Hate Crime Awareness Week will take place 14 to 21 October 2024, and instructs officers to use this opportunity to partner with community and faith organisations, such as Glasgow Central Mosque and others, to further

publicise and disseminate the Council's work to prevent hate crimes and provide support to victims and vulnerable communities.

Council further acknowledges the 2023 update report from the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Tackling Islamophobia in Scotland; welcomes its recommendations; and instructs the Chief Executive to undertake a review of how effectively the Council is currently fulfilling the recommendations pertaining to local authorities and whether more could be done."

Bailie Raja, seconded by Councillor Braat, moved as an amendment that:-

(1) at paragraph 4 after “far-right ringleaders” delete “such as Stephen Yaxley Lennon, known as Tommy Robinson.”

(2) after paragraph 4 insert the following paragraph:

“Council calls for the Chief Executive to write to Police Scotland requesting adequately resourced policing to monitor criminal content online including racism, islamophobia, antisemitism and any form of hate. Furthermore, Police Scotland should be requested to designate an officer as a point of contact for reporting or information related to online hate crime”

(3) after the paragraph above, insert the following new paragraph:

“The Council is to setup an anti-racism and hate education working groups to be chaired by an education specialist. Council notes the work undertaken by Gus John. He recommends a change in curriculum, advocating that it should reflect the diverse histories and contributions from other racial and ethnic groups. In addition, he recommends that teachers and school staff receive training to recognise and challenge racist attitudes and practices.

(4) at the end of paragraph 8, after “vulnerable communities” insert the following:

“Council notes that this work isn’t reactive to the riots and applauds the good work being undertaken in Glasgow’s communities.

Council urges the UK Government to introduce and enforce stricter regulations for social media platforms to effectively address the spread of hate speech, misinformation, and extremist content. We advocate for the development of clear guidelines for the removal of harmful posts and the deplatforming of users who perpetuate hate and violence. Additionally, council requests that the UK Government engage directly with social media companies to create and implement comprehensive strategies for identifying and combating extremist and misleading content. Moreover, we also push for the establishment of transparent reporting mechanisms and accountability measures to ensure platforms take prompt and effective action against harmful content. Council welcomes and supports the Home Office in their efforts to inform a new government counter-extremism strategy on how best to tackle the threat posed by extremist ideologies online and offline.”

Council has long opposed far-right activities and frequently champions inclusivity and anti-racism efforts. Council condemns the far-right protest that took place on 7th September, which, despite attempts to incite division, was decisively outnumbered by ordinary Glaswegians, reflecting Glasgow's commitment to unity and solidarity. Council makes clear the importance of standing against hate and promoting unity within Glasgow."

Bailie Wardrop, seconded by Councillor Bruce, moved as an amendment that the following paragraphs be inserted between paragraph 5 beginning "Council thanks" and paragraph 6 beginning "Council notes":-

"Council stands with all Glaswegians who attended the anti-racist rally in George Square on the 7th of September. Council commends the continuous work undertaken by community organisations, trade unions and activist groups and commits to working on the ground with communities to help tackle all forms of racist abuse.

Council agrees that local elected members have a role to play in ensuring that the far right threat is unable to feed local division and to minimise their impact in Glasgow. Council supports the use of resources from Hope Not Hate including "Showing strong local leadership against the far right, a guide for local councillors" and that this is a key part of the training programme for councillors. Council believes far right recruitment can thrive on disenfranchisement; and local councillors being available to listen and respond to community's concerns will make it less likely that residents will look to other more extreme forms of representation.

Council also supports and commits to work with anti-racist charities and organisations like Show Racism The Red Card to help prevent racist rhetoric, behaviour and activity from happening within the city."

Councillor Aitken, with the agreement of her seconder, accepted the amendments by Bailie Raja and Bailie Wardrop, resulting in the following adjusted motion:-

"Council acknowledges that these have been hugely challenging times for millions across our islands, as over 20 towns and cities across England and the North of Ireland erupted in violent riots as racist far-right agitators shamefully exploited the tragic murders of Bebe King, 6, Elsie Dot Stancombe, 7, and Alice Dasilva Aguiar, 9 in Southport. Council is appalled that there have been fire attacks on hotels housing asylum seekers; that Mosques, homes and businesses have been targeted by race hate thugs; and that members of the public have been assaulted on the streets because of the colour of their skin.

Council is clear that we cannot become complacent or assume that such events could never take place in Glasgow; notes that the same extreme anti-immigration, anti-refugee and Islamophobic rhetoric from certain sections of the press and social media that fuelled these riots elsewhere has also been spread in Glasgow; and that similar bad faith actors seeking to capitalise on heightened emotions have sought to create this type of division in our city.

Council declares its solidarity with Glasgow's global majority and migrant communities; deeply regrets the climate of fear and vulnerability that has been created; and is distressed to hear reports that they feel concerned about their own security and wellbeing in our city. Council records our thanks for the work of faith and community organisations, Council officers and Police Scotland to provide reassurance and ensure support is in place where it is needed.

Council condemns race hate in all its forms; unequivocally rejects far-right rhetoric and activity; and agrees that far-right ringleaders such as Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, known as Tommy Robinson, are not welcome in Glasgow. Council further deplores attempts by some Members of the UK Parliament and sections of the media to justify, excuse or downplay far-right activity.

Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to Police Scotland requesting adequately resourced policing to monitor criminal content online including racism, Islamophobia, antisemitism and any form of hate and to ask them to designate an officer as a point of contact for reporting or information related to online hate crime.

Council thanks all Glaswegians and others from across Scotland who have come together to take a stand against racism and fascism and to celebrate our diverse, multicultural city. Council records our belief that inward migration has been and continues to be a positive force in Glasgow, enhancing our city socially, culturally and economically; and is proud of our record of strong community relations and of integration of asylum seekers and refugees, not only as the largest asylum dispersal authority in the UK, but also as a city that has itself been built and enriched by successive waves of migration. Council further believes that inward migration to the UK is not only positive but necessary and that policies which have set out to discourage people coming to live and work in the UK, such as Brexit and the so-called "hostile environment", have been deeply damaging to both the national economy and to social cohesion.

Council stands with all Glaswegians who attended the anti-racist rally in George Square on the 7th of September. Council commends the continuous work undertaken by community organisations, trade unions and activist groups and commits to working on the ground with communities to help tackle all forms of racist abuse.

Council agrees that local elected members have a role to play in ensuring that the far right threat is unable to feed local division and to minimise their impact in Glasgow. Council supports the use of resources from Hope Not Hate including "Showing strong local leadership against the far right, a guide for local councillors" and that this is a key part of the training programme for councillors. Council believes far right recruitment can thrive on disenfranchisement; and local councillors being available to listen and respond to community's concerns will make it less likely that residents will look to other more extreme forms of representation.

Council also supports and commits to work with anti-racist charities and organisations like Show Racism The Red Card to help prevent racist rhetoric, behaviour and activity from happening within the city.

Council urges the UK Government to introduce and enforce stricter regulations for social media platforms to effectively address the spread of hate speech, misinformation, and extremist content. We advocate for the development of clear guidelines for the removal of harmful posts and the deplatforming of users who perpetuate hate and violence. Additionally, council calls on the UK Government to engage directly with social media companies to create and implement comprehensive strategies for identifying and combating extremist and misleading content and to establish transparent reporting mechanisms and accountability measures to ensure platforms take prompt and effective action against harmful content.

Council notes that National Hate Crime Awareness Week will take place 14th to 21st October 2024, and instructs officers to use this opportunity to partner with community and faith organisations, such as Glasgow Central Mosque and others, to further publicise and disseminate the Council's work to prevent hate crimes and provide support to victims and vulnerable communities.

Council further acknowledges the 2023 update report from the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Tackling Islamaphobia in Scotland; welcomes its recommendations; and instructs the Chief Executive to undertake a review of how effectively the Council is currently fulfilling the recommendations pertaining to local authorities and whether more could be done."

The motion as adjusted was approved unanimously.

Adjournment.

11 In terms of Standing Order No 17, the Council agreed to adjourn the meeting at 1315 hours until 1415 hours.

Resumption of meeting.

12 The meeting resumed at 1415 hours and the sederunt was taken as follows:-

Present: The Depute Lord Provost, Christy Mearns (Chair).

SAQIB AHMED	STEPHEN DORNAN	ANNE McTAGGART
SUSAN AITKEN	SEAN FERGUSON	ANGUS MILLAR
BLAIR ANDERSON	ZEN GHANI	MALCOLM MITCHELL
KEN ANDREW	WILLIAM GRAHAM	JON MOLYNEUX
ALEXANDER BELIC	SHARON GREER	ROBERT MOONEY
RICHARD BELL	GREG HEPBURN	MARGARET MORGAN
DECLAN BLENCH	FIONA HIGGINS	EVA MURRAY
EVA BOLANDER	SEONAD HOY	CECILIA O'LONE
ABDUL BOSTANI	RASHID HUSSAIN	KEIRAN O'NEILL
PHILIP BRAAT	FYEZA IKHLAQ	JILL PIDGEON
JILL BROWN	EUNIS JASSEMI	LINDA PIKE
HOLLY BRUCE	ANN JENKINS	HANIF RAJA

BILL BUTLER	LILITH JOHNSTONE	THOMAS RANNACHAN
GRAHAM CAMPBELL	RUAIRI KELLY	GEORGE REDMOND
CHRISTINA CANNON	ALEX KERR	LANA REID-MCCONNELL
PAUL CAREY	THOMAS KERR	ROZA SALIH
JOHN CARSON	KEVIN LALLEY	FRANNY SCALLY
ANTHONY CARROLL	PAUL LEINSTER	JAMES SCANLON
ALLAN CASEY	FRANK McAVEETY	SORYIA SIDDIQUE
ANNETTE CHRISTIE	PAUL MCCABE	KIERAN TURNER
CHRIS CUNNINGHAM	ELAINE McDOUGALL	CATHERINE VALLIS
STEPHEN CURRAN	JACQUELINE McLAREN	MARTHA WARDROP
JOHN DALY	KENNY McLEAN	ALEX WILSON
AUDREY DEMPSEY	NORMAN MacLEOD	
STEPHEN DOCHERTY	ELAINE McSPORRAN	

Apologies: Imran Alam, Laura Doherty, Elaine Gallagher, Dan Hutchison, Matt Kerr and Leòdhas Massie.

Attending: M Millar, Director of Legal and Administration; S Millar, Chief Executive; D Hutchison, Executive Director of Education Services; M Booth, Executive Director of Finance; J Kerr, Interim Chief Officer, Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership; and C Edgar, Director of Communication and Corporate Governance.