

Suspension of Standing Order No 13 (3).

10 The Council agreed to suspend the provisions of Standing Order No 13 (3) on each of the emergency motions with debate restricted to the mover and seconder of the motion and any amendment and one speaker from each of the other political groups.

Emergency Motion UK Government White Paper “Restoring Control over the Immigration System” – Motion as adjusted approved, after division.

11 Councillor Casey, seconded by Councillor Aitken, moved that

“Council notes the publication this week of the UK Government’s White Paper ‘Restoring Control over the Immigration System’ and expresses concern at the rhetoric used by the Prime Minister including references to the UK becoming an “island of strangers” describing legal migration as an “open borders experiment” and, saying that high net migration has done “incalculable harm” to the country.

Council rejects this divisive language and affirms that migration has been overwhelmingly positive for Glasgow - enriching our diversity, supporting public services, increasing our working age population and strengthening our economy.

Council notes with alarm the impact of the proposals on the social care sector, where hundreds of vacancies currently exist both within and beyond the HSCP. Council agrees with Scottish Care's assessment that the White Paper is “reckless and inhumane.” Council rejects the assertion that social care roles are “low-skilled” and affirms that these roles are essential to the functioning of society. If the UK Government wishes to address low pay in the sector, the appropriate route is through improving wages and conditions, not closing off vital migration pathways.

Council further notes concerns raised by universities, businesses, and civic society regarding the impact of the White Paper on international students and skilled workers. Council also shares the deep concern of those whose settled lives in the UK have been thrown into uncertainty by sudden changes to migration and citizenship routes.

Council believes this White Paper represents an ill-considered and politically motivated reaction to the recent election results in England. Its impact will be far-reaching in Glasgow - disrupting key sectors, including the Council workforce - and will be unworkable without significant investment in domestic skills and training.

Council therefore reaffirms its support for a tailored Scottish Visa system to meet Scotland’s specific demographic and economic needs. Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the UK Government and to Glasgow’s MPs to set out our opposition to the White Paper and to seek their support for a Scottish Visa.”

Councillor Butler, seconded by Councillor Adams, moved as an amendment that:-

(1) delete the first paragraph and insert the following:

“Council reaffirms Glasgow’s proud record as a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming city over many decades, and recognises the positive social, cultural, and economic contributions of migrants to the city’s life.

Council notes the publication of the UK Government’s White Paper ‘Restoring Control over the Immigration System’ and recognises that immigration policy is a matter reserved to the UK Parliament.

Council believes that both the UK and Scottish Governments must work together constructively to address migration challenges and opportunities. Council further believes that there is merit in drawing on imaginative approaches, such as the ‘Fresh Talent Initiative’ and a Protocol on Asylum Seekers and Refugees of the early 2000s, to shape a humane, fair, and evidence-based migration policy.

Council believes that migrants are a positive force, and that migrants are not the source of economic and social challenges facing government today.”

- (2) delete the second paragraph;
- (3) delete the third paragraph and insert the following:

“Council notes with concern the potential impact of the proposals on the social care sector, where hundreds of vacancies currently exist. Council affirms that social care roles are essential to the functioning of society and should be recognised and rewarded appropriately.”

- (4) at the fourth paragraph
 - (a) between “regarding and impact”, insert “potential” to read “regarding the potential impact”; and
 - (b) remove the last sentence and insert “Council notes with concern those whose settled lives may be affected by suggested changes.”;

- (5) delete the fifth paragraph and insert the following:

“Council believes that immigration policies should be designed to avoid unintended consequences, and that adequate planning and investment in workforce development are essential to ensure positive outcomes.”

- (6) delete the last paragraph and insert the following:

“Council calls for immigration policy to reflect the specific demographic and economic needs of cities like Glasgow, ensuring that they must always provide the ability to develop a humane and rational immigration system.

Council encourages the Leader of the Administration to write to the Home Secretary in the above terms.”

Bailie Carroll, seconded by Bailie Hoy, moved as an amendment:-

- (1) at the end of the first paragraph insert the following:

“Council believes that it is policies from successive UK Governments which over the last 30 years, combined with pandering to the hostile, right wing agenda of media barons, have caused an increase of people treating each other as strangers through the distrust which the Government seeds, dividing people based on disability, class, gender, and immigration status, and blaming those marginalised within these groups for the ills of the nation.”

- (2) at the third paragraph after “...reckless and inhumane”, insert the following:

(a) as well as Scottish Care CEO Donald MacAskill’s suggestion that the Prime Minister’s language has “echoes of Enoch Powell at his worst”. Council urges Glasgow’s Labour MPs, MSPs, and Councillors to call out and oppose their leader’s rhetoric regarding migrants, and distance themselves from a man comfortable with using the language of Enoch Powell as a suitable person to be Prime Minister and lead a Government to unite our country against the real causes of community breakdown, being gross wealth inequality and austerity”; and

- (b) at the end of the paragraph insert the following:

“Council notes that the Scottish Economic Bulletin reported in February 2025 that in January, 24.4% of Scottish businesses were experiencing worker shortages while 23.1% were experiencing recruitment difficulties.”

- (3) at the fourth paragraph insert the following at the end:

“Legal migrants to the UK have been hammered by cruel charges by successive governments, who exploit the fact that migrants have no choice but to pay extortionate and unjustifiable fees which seem to be raised on a whim. The cost of an application for Indefinite Leave to Remain has risen from £155 when first introduced in 2003 to a non-refundable £3,029 as of April 2025. The Immigration Health Surcharge was £200 when introduced in 2015, and as of 2024 costs £1,035 annually for adults and £776 for students and children. This charge was cynically introduced by the previous Conservative government to imply that migrants are a drain on the health system, despite the fact that the vast majority are themselves taxpayers, and it is years of underfunding and poor future planning that has crippled the health service. It is shameful that the new Labour government is continuing the Conservative and Reform approach of deliberately misleading the public about the financial contributions that migrants bring to the British economy.”

- (4) at the last paragraph insert the following at the end:

“, as well as for UK Government to significantly increase investment in further and higher education and training for social care, funding towards the

services' charges for Local Authorities to assist increased pay for workers, and also request that they strengthen the Employment Rights Bill for the care sector in areas such as the right to breaks, paid leave, and on sick pay"

During the debate, Councillor Casey and Bailie Carroll, with the approval of their seconders, agreed to combine their motion and amendments resulting in the following adjusted motion:-

"Council notes the publication this week of the UK Government's White Paper 'Restoring Control over the Immigration System' and expresses concern at the rhetoric used by the Prime Minister including references to the UK becoming an "island of strangers" describing legal migration as an "open borders experiment" and, saying that high net migration has done "incalculable harm" to the country.

Council believes that it is policies from successive UK Governments which over the last 30 years, combined with pandering to the hostile, right wing agenda of media barons, have caused an increase of people treating each other as strangers through the distrust which the Government seeds, dividing people based on disability, class, gender, and immigration status, and blaming those marginalised within these groups for the ills of the nation.

Council rejects this divisive language and affirms that migration has been overwhelmingly positive for Glasgow—enriching our diversity, supporting public services, increasing our working age population and strengthening our economy.

Council notes with alarm the impact of the proposals on the social care sector, where hundreds of vacancies currently exist both within and beyond the HSCP. Council agrees with Scottish Care's assessment that the White Paper is "reckless and inhumane", as well as Scottish Care CEO Donald MacAskill's suggestion that the Prime Minister's language has "echoes of Enoch Powell at his worst". Council urges Glasgow's Labour MPs, MSPs, and Councillors to call out and oppose their leader's rhetoric regarding migrants, and distance themselves from a man comfortable with using the language of Enoch Powell as a suitable person to be Prime Minister and lead a Government to unite our country against the real causes of community breakdown, being gross wealth inequality and austerity. Council rejects the assertion that social care roles are "low-skilled" and affirms that these roles are essential to the functioning of society. If the UK Government wishes to address low pay in the sector, the appropriate route is through improving wages and conditions, not closing off vital migration pathways. Council notes that the Scottish Economic Bulletin reported in February 2025 that in January, 24.4% of Scottish businesses were experiencing worker shortages while 23.1% were experiencing recruitment difficulties.

Council further notes concerns raised by universities, businesses, and civic society regarding the impact of the White Paper on international students and skilled workers. Council also shares the deep concern of those whose settled lives in the UK have been thrown into uncertainty by sudden changes to migration and citizenship routes. Legal migrants to the UK have been hammered by cruel charges by successive governments, who exploit the fact that migrants have no choice but to pay extortionate and unjustifiable fees which seem to be raised on a

whim. The cost of an application for Indefinite Leave to Remain has risen from £155 when first introduced in 2003 to a non-refundable £3,029 as of April 2025. The Immigration Health Surcharge was £200 when introduced in 2015, and as of 2024 costs £1,035 annually for adults and £776 for students and children. This charge was cynically introduced by the previous Conservative government to imply that migrants are a drain on the health system, despite the fact that the vast majority are themselves taxpayers, and it is years of underfunding and poor future planning that has crippled the health service. It is shameful that the new Labour government is continuing the Conservative and Reform approach of deliberately misleading the public about the financial contributions that migrants bring to the British economy.

Council believes this White Paper represents an ill-considered and politically motivated reaction to the recent election results in England. Its impact will be far-reaching in Glasgow - disrupting key sectors, including the Council workforce - and will be unworkable without significant investment in domestic skills and training.

Council therefore reaffirms its support for a tailored Scottish Visa system to meet Scotland's specific demographic and economic needs. Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the UK Government and to Glasgow's MPs to set out our opposition to the White Paper and to seek their support for a Scottish Visa, as well as for UK Government to significantly increase investment in further and higher education and training for social care, funding towards the services' charges for Local Authorities to assist increased pay for workers, and also request that they strengthen the Employment Rights Bill for the care sector in areas such as the right to breaks, paid leave, and on sick pay."

On a vote being taken electronically and by roll call, 27 members voted for the amendment by Councillor Butler and 47 for the motion as adjusted with 1 abstention.

The motion as adjusted was accordingly declared to be carried.