Buffer Zones – Emergency motion as adjusted, approved.

12 Councillor Cunningham, seconded by Councillor Cannon, moved that:-

"This Council welcomes the UK Supreme Court decision on the legality of Buffer Zones in Northern Ireland. The decision validates and confirms the position taken by this Council from 2018 onwards, that buffer zones are the best and most appropriate way to balance the rights of women with the rights of those who may wish to change the law. In light of the precedent set by this decision we look forward to the Scottish Government introducing legislation to address this issue in Scotland.

Those who seek to have the law changed are entitled to their views and to campaign for such a change but that should not extend to harassing individual women attending hospital or clinics. Women are entitled to seek advice and medical assistance in regard to their pregnancy. Their right to privacy without harassment must be respected and protected.

The exact provisions of buffer zones will require to be developed and debated but for reasons of consistency and legal clarity this Council believes that national legislation is the most appropriate way forward. We therefore call upon the Scottish Government to commence the process of introducing legislation to this effect as soon as possible. Council agrees to work with the Scottish Government and partners to gather evidence about the impact these protests are having in Glasgow. We commit to working to ensure that the legislation is consistent with the rights of all parties but which results in women being able to access health services within the law and free from harassment."

Councillor Murray, seconded by Councillor Vallis, moved as an amendment that the following be inserted after "Their right to privacy without harassment must be respected and protected.":

"Council resolves to pay tribute to those women who led the fight to protect access to reproductive health facilities without intimidation".

Councillor Bruce, seconded by Councillor Reid-McConnell, moved as an amendment that:

(1) at the first paragraph:

(a) after "women", add "and pregnant people";

(b) after "Scottish Government", add "and Green MSP Gillian MacKay"; and

(c) at the end of the paragraph, add the following new sentence:

"Council also extends its gratitude to Back Off Scotland campaigners who have played a vital role in bringing this important issue to the forefront.";

(2) at the second paragraph:

(a) in the first sentence after “individual”, remove “women” and replace with “people”; and

(b) in the second sentence, after “women”, add “and pregnant people”; and

(3) at the third paragraph:

(a) after the first sentence, insert “The Council will continue to work with partners such as Police Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to explore interim measures, within existing legislation, to protect people’s right to accessing healthcare free from harassment.”; and

(b) at the final sentence, after “women”, add “and pregnant people”.

Councillor Cunningham, with the approval of his seconder, accepted the amendments by Councillor Murray and Councillor Bruce, resulting in the following adjusted motion:

“This Council welcomes the UK Supreme Court decision on the legality of Buffer Zones in Northern Ireland. The Council will continue to work with partners such as Police Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to explore interim measures, within existing legislation, to protect people’s right to accessing healthcare free from harassment. The decision validates and confirms the position taken by this Council from 2018 onwards, that buffer zones are the best and most appropriate way to balance the rights of women and pregnant people with the rights of those who may wish to change the law. In light of the precedent set by this decision we look forward to the Scottish Government and Green MSP Gillian MacKay introducing legislation to address this issue in Scotland. Council also extends its gratitude to Back Off Scotland campaigners who have played a vital role in bringing this important issue to the forefront.

Those who seek to have the law changed are entitled to their views and to campaign for such a change but that should not extend to harassing individual people attending hospital or clinics. People are entitled to seek advice and medical assistance in regard to their pregnancy. Their right to privacy without harassment must be respected and protected. Council resolves to pay tribute to those women and pregnant people who led the fight to protect access to reproductive health facilities without intimidation.

The exact provisions of buffer zones will require to be developed and debated but for reasons of consistency and legal clarity this Council believes that national legislation is the most appropriate way forward. The Council will continue to work with partners such as Police Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to explore interim measures, within existing legislation, to protect people’s right to accessing healthcare free from harassment. We therefore call upon the Scottish Government to commence the process of introducing legislation to this effect as soon as possible. Council agrees to work with the Scottish Government and partners to gather evidence about the impact these protests are having in

Glasgow. We commit to working to ensure that the legislation is consistent with the rights of all parties but which results in women and pregnant people being able to access health services within the law and free from harassment."

The motion as adjusted was approved.