

The original motion proposed by Councillor Connor McManus and seconded by Councillor Colin Cassidy, with the amendment proposed by Councillor Derek Milligan and seconded by Councillor Russell Imrie states:

“Midlothian Council unequivocally condemns the terrorist attacks by Hamas and calls for the unconditional release of all hostages. Council shares the sorrow and outrage of Midlothian's Jewish community and offers our deepest respects to anyone affected.

Midlothian Council also recognises that a humanitarian catastrophe is unfolding in Gaza. Council agrees with the comments on Saturday 21st October 2023 by the Secretary General of the United Nations calling for a "humanitarian ceasefire" and demanding "action to end this godawful nightmare".

Council further recognises that civilians can only evacuate if there is an open border crossing to allow them to leave and they can travel safely without the risk of being caught up in military attacks; further recognises that many people, including the very young, very old and the infirm, cannot leave. Council supports calls for a humanitarian corridor, protected by a ceasefire, to be agreed to allow people to leave and civilian supplies, including food, fuel, water and medical supplies, to reach those who cannot leave.

Council further believes international law must be respected, rejects collective punishment, believes that innocent people must not pay the price for the actions of Hamas and is appalled by the escalating civilian death toll in Gaza.

Council recognises that families in Midlothian may be affected by violence in the region; offers condolence to all those who have suffered as a result of this horrific conflict; and resolves to be alert to, and to stand up against, discrimination and hate crime; and resolves that there is no place for antisemitism, Islamophobia, sectarianism, or hatred of any kind in Midlothian.

Midlothian Council calls on the UK Government to support a ceasefire and humanitarian corridor, to commit supplies and aid to mitigate the human tragedy unfolding in Gaza and to be prepared to offer sanctuary and support to Palestinian refugees.

We also recognise that in order for any ceasefire to work it requires all sides to comply; is horrified by the Hamas statement that they would repeat the October 7th attacks and continue rocket fire; regrets that Benjamin Netanyahu has stated they will not even consider a ceasefire; therefore calls on the international community to use every form of diplomacy to try and create the conditions on the ground to make a ceasefire a reality; calls on the International Criminal Court to investigate the conduct of all parties in this conflict; and reaffirms our commitment to a lasting peace and a two state solution with the end of illegal occupation, siege, and settlements.

Midlothian Council will hold a 1-minute silence for all those who have lost their lives as part of this conflict.”