

Cole-Hamilton calls for renaming of city thoroughfare as Zelensky Street

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader and Edinburgh Western MSP Alex Cole-Hamilton has today written a letter to The City of Edinburgh Council calling on them to rename Melville Street, where the Russian Consulate is located to “Zelensky Street”.

The politician says that the new street name would show solidarity with the Ukrainian people and would be a reminder to all those writing to or visiting the Consulate about the crimes committed by Putin over recent weeks.

A number of cities in Europe are currently changing the names of streets where Russian embassies are based.

Vilnius, Lithuania, will change the name of the street the Russian embassy is on to “Heroes of Ukraine Street”. Tirana, Albania, will also call their street “Free Ukraine Street”, and Riga in Latvia is due to be called “Independent Ukraine Street”.

The street where the Russian Consulate is located is Melville Street. The Scottish Liberal Democrats are calling for it to be renamed “Zelensky Street” after the Ukrainian President

addressed the House of Commons yesterday.



Volodymyr Zelensky was the first foreign president to address the House of Commons remotely PHOTO UK PARLIAMENT/Jessica Taylor



Alex Cole Hamilton. Photo: © 2021, Martin P. McAdam
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Mr Cole-Hamilton said: “Britain must shame Putin at every possible opportunity. Everyone visiting or writing to the consulate should be reminded of Putin’s murderous and destructive invasion of Ukraine.

“This small but meaningful gesture would match the outpouring of support from Kyiv’s twin city Edinburgh. It mirrors the kind of protest that was used against South African embassies during Apartheid, and speaks to the proud tradition of solidarity shown by scots to oppressed and persecuted people the world over.

“Edinburgh has responded with horror and compassion to the images coming out of Ukraine. The offers to house those fleeing the horror of war in Capital homes has been truly inspiring. This would be a further beacon of solidarity for the people of Ukraine.

“At every level of government, we must do more to help those

affected by the invasion. The UK Government must immediately waive visa requirements for refugees, the Scottish Government must do more to identify Russian land interests and the city can play its part in readying itself for refugees and in small acts of defiance to Russian aggression like this.”

The council has a protocol for naming streets and any member of the public can make suggestions to them. Generally streets are named after people or events associated with Edinburgh to mark history or preserve the sense of place. the council keeps a bank of street names available for new streets in various parts of the city.

TEXT OF THE LETTER

Renaming Melville Street, Zelensky Street as an act of Defiance to Russian aggression

I hope this finds you well. I'm writing to ask that the City of Edinburgh follow other capitals in the free democracies of the world in renaming the location of the Russian consulate in a way that demonstrates our city's support for Ukraine in the face of unprovoked and outrageous Russian aggression. To this end can I suggest that the City urgently rename Melville Street, Zelensky Street.

We must seek to shame Putin at every possible opportunity. As such, everyone visiting or writing to the consulate should be reminded of Putin's murderous and destructive invasion of Ukraine.

This small but meaningful gesture would match the outpouring of support from Kyiv's twin city Edinburgh. It mirrors the kind of protest that was used against South African embassies during Apartheid and speaks to the proud tradition of solidarity shown by scots to oppressed and persecuted people the world over.

Our city has responded with horror and compassion to the images coming out of Ukraine. The offers to house those fleeing the horror of war in Capital homes has been truly inspiring. This would be a further beacon of solidarity for the people of Ukraine.

At every level of government, we must do more to help those affected by the invasion. The UK Government must immediately waive visa requirements for refugees, the Scottish Government must do more to identify Russian land interests and the city can play its part by readying itself for refugees and in small but meaningful acts of defiance to Russian aggression like this.

I'm grateful for your consideration of this matter.