

Edinburgh Council urged to stop using the social media site X

Edinburgh Council has been urged to stop using the social media site X over concerns about a rise in extreme right content.

The site, formerly known as Twitter, has undergone huge changes since being bought by Elon Musk for a reported \$44 billion in 2023.

And after shedding an estimated 80% of its global workforce and removing fact-checking, X has seen a rise in violent, pornographic and hateful content.

The site, which is currently reported to have almost 336 million users worldwide, is still used by official organisations to promote their work, and Edinburgh Council has a number of accounts which currently promote the council's communications, and allows citizens to report issues and ask questions.

Now, however, Green councillor Chas Booth has put forward a motion calling for use of the site to be discontinued.

He said: "The Nazi salute given by Elon Musk at the inauguration and his recent address to a neo-Nazi rally in Germany suggests he's a fascist.

"If it salutes like a fascist and speaks at a fascist rally, it's probably a fascist. The council should have no dealings

with any organisation owned by this man.

“In addition, the lack of fact-checking, and the fact that blocking and reporting hate-speech and harassment is increasingly more difficult means that X / Twitter is not a channel the council should be using because it does not align with our values.

“I’m urging the council to end its use of X / twitter as soon as possible.”

It comes as a number of councils and organisations, including Renfrewshire Council, Devon County Council, North Somerset Council and others, have taken a decision to stop using X.

Cllr Booth, who represents Leith, has asked that council officers be told to put together a report ‘within one cycle’ setting out details for a review of the council’s social media engagement and an assessment of how each platform aligns with council values.

He also wants them to provide options and timescales for ending the council’s use of X and transitioning to other social media sites instead, including, but not limited to, the use of other social media channels to allow citizens to report issues to the council.

Cllr Booth’s motion is expected to go before the city’s full council meeting on Thursday.

By Joe Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter