

Council proposes new Tourism Policy for Capital

The City of Edinburgh Council has proposed a new tourism policy based on providing a greater balance to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

The policy, which also emphasises the need for Edinburgh to make more of its role as a gateway to the city region and the rest of Scotland, will be discussed at the Corporate Policy and Strategy meeting of the Council next week.

When agreed the policy will help to shape Edinburgh's new Tourism Strategy which is being developed in partnership with Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG).

A report outlining the impact of short term lets across Edinburgh will also be discussed at the meeting next week. The report details what the Council is doing to combat the issue as well as the launch of the Scottish Government consultation on the introduction of a regulatory system which the Council fully supports.

Council Leader Adam McVey said: "Edinburgh is an internationally renowned multi award winning city, known for its creativity, beauty, culture and heritage. While we can feel proud of our world-class status and our city's ever-growing popularity, we must also recognise and address the pressure on our core services and on residents. We have a responsibility to manage that impact while promoting the jobs and cultural opportunities that tourism provides.

"We've already done a huge amount of work with the Scottish Government to bring in new legislation to protect the vibrant and distinctive character of the city that we all know and

love. To help us protect the needs of our residents and continue to offer visitors the best possible experience we can we've made our case to the Scottish Government for a Tourist Levy.

"We're also working with the Scottish Government on the introduction of a regulatory system for short term lets to help us deal with the impact this is having on our communities, which the Government are now taking forward through a consultation.

"Tourism is having a very positive impact on our economy providing 35,000 jobs and contributing over £1.5bn to the economy each year. To enhance skills and pay in the sector we are working with the industry at key locations such as Edinburgh St James to create skills academies to drive up the demand for skilled, long term jobs and help residents build careers in the industry.

"We want to see everyone sharing in Edinburgh's success, and get the balance right between the tourism economy and the city as a whole."