

Hospitality body asks for delays to tourist tax

UKHospitality Scotland has called on Edinburgh Council to delay the beginning of a planned transition period for collecting levy funds from May to at least October this year.

The body says that the council's draft proposals would implement a transition period from 1 May 2025 when businesses would have to collect levy funds for bookings made from 24 July 2026 onwards.

Ahead of the council taking the final vote on Friday on the proposed Visitor Levy, UKHospitality Scotland warned that many businesses, and the booking partners they use, will not be ready to start collecting levy funds from May this year.

Leon Thompson, Executive Director of UKHospitality Scotland, said: "A Visitor Levy in Edinburgh will bring huge changes to the city, its visitors and the accommodation businesses that have to administer and collect the levy. It will also impact the capital's competitiveness as a destination for tourists.

"Accommodation businesses are undoubtedly going to face significant burdens and additional cost as they implement new systems to deal with the levy. I've been pleased that the Council has so far recognised that through the business support measures they have included.

"In this final vote, I would urge them to go one step further and delay the date at which businesses have to collect levy funds to at least October this year.

“Asking already stretched businesses to begin collecting funds in May, just three months’ time, when the scheme will only be finalised this week, just isn’t feasible for many.

“I hope the Council will once again act on concerns from businesses in this final vote, as well as from the wider sector who would like to see more of the money raised from the levy used to boost the visitor economy.”

