

[REDACTED]

Subject:

FW: CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL OFFICIALS MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

From: Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning

Sent: 11 September 2018 15:30

To: [REDACTED] Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs;
Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work; Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning;
Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL OFFICIALS MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

[REDACTED]

Thanks for this information which Mr Stewart noted for his interests, including your further update dated 10 September.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Private Secretary to Kevin Stewart, Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Please see the [Ministerial preferences](#) which may be of assistance to you.

All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.

Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 September 2018 21:16

To: Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs; Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work; Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning; Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy

Cc:

Subject: IMMEDIATE - CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL OFFICIALS MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

FAO PS

- CAB SEC CTEA
- CAB SEC FINANCE
- MIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- MIN PUBLIC FINANCE

Follows on from Cab Sec CTEA meeting with STA 5th September and Min Public Finance meeting with STA 6th September

Our contacts in tourism industry have flagged up that City of Edinburgh have called a meeting of CEC Officials with representatives of the Edinburgh tourism industry to discuss Tourism Tax. Copy of agenda attached – topics ranging between governance and operational issues around a Tourism Tax.

<< File: Agenda - Edinburgh TVL 13 September 2018.docx >>

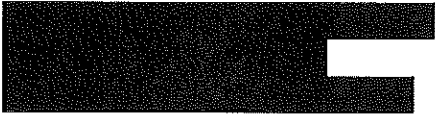
At the national industry level, neither Scottish Tourism Alliance nor UKHospitality have been invited to take part. We understand the Chair of the Edinburgh Hoteliers Association has been invited but apparently will not attend: it is not known whether this is in protest at the shortness of the invite or simply other diary commitments. We do not know what other Edinburgh industry bodies have been invited to the discussion.

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Ministers are invited to **NOTE** the next steps by CEC and the significant timing of 13th September, the same day as CEC, COSLA and City of Aberdeen give evidence to CTEER Committee.

Cab Sec CTEA next meeting Councillor McVey, Leader City of Edinburgh Council on 19 September

Tourism and Major Events Division
Directorate for Culture, Tourism and Major Events
Area 2G - South
Victoria Quay
EDINBURGH EH6 6QQ



<< OLE Object: Picture (Device Independent Bitmap) >>

[REDACTED]

Subject:

FW: MEDIA ENQUIRY: Scottish Government rules out 'tourist tax' measures

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2017 15:32

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: MEDIA ENQUIRY: Scottish Government rules out 'tourist tax' measures

Happy to clear.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2017 14:44

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: MEDIA ENQUIRY: Scottish Government rules out 'tourist tax' measures

[REDACTED]

Given that the change is minor are you happy I issue under your clearance?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2017 14:32

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: MEDIA ENQUIRY: Scottish Government rules out 'tourist tax' measures

Suggested a minor change.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2017 14:23

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: MEDIA ENQUIRY: Scottish Government rules out 'tourist tax' measures

Importance: High

Hello all

For info we were approached by STV and Provisional Press for a response to the below news release from British Hospitality Association.

I will issue the below lines that were previously cleared by Mr Mackay and Ms Hyslop on 13 December unless anyone has any objections. If you can let me know by 3pm that would be good.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"The Scottish Government has been consistent in our stance that given the potential impact on tourism, we have no plans to introduce visitor levy."

"Scotland's tourism sector is flourishing, with an 11% increase in overseas visits and a 19% increase in overseas expenditure in the 12 months to the end of June this year. It is important that we build on that success, and that any initiatives to maximise the economic return is taken forward in full consultation with the tourism and hospitality industry."

From: Alex Midgley [<mailto:alex.midgley@jeffersoncommunications.co.uk>]

Sent: 21 December 2017 12:42

To: BHA

Subject: Scottish Government rules out 'tourist tax' measures

Hi,

I hope the below press release from the British Hospitality Association is of interest:

Scottish Government rules out 'tourist tax' measures

The British Hospitality Association secured a major victory today (21 December) as the Scottish Government confirmed that any plans for a 'tourist tax' in Edinburgh – or any other Scottish cities – are firmly off the table. The BHA has been campaigning consistently for over six years against the implementation of any such additional and uncompetitive tax and is delighted that the Scottish Government has recognised our reservations.

This comes in the wake of proposals from Edinburgh City Council and other local authorities in Scotland to explore the viability of such a tax on visitors, typically charged on a nightly basis for anyone staying overnight. The Scottish Government, though, has rebutted any such plans by declining to devolve the necessary taxation powers to local councils.

The British Hospitality Association is delighted that the Scottish Government has recognised the immense contribution of the hospitality and tourism industry to Scotland, and we look forward to working with them further to ensure that it remains a fantastic place to visit.

Willie Macleod, Executive Director, BHA Scotland, said:

“The Scottish Government’s firm commitment today to rule out a ‘tourist tax’ is fantastic news for our members, but most importantly for all visitors to the country. Proposals for a ‘tourist tax’ – such as those from Edinburgh City Council – would have resulted in an unfair charge levied indiscriminately on all consumers simply wanting to enjoy an overnight stay in Edinburgh.

“We strongly welcome the Government’s decision and look forward to working further to ensure that the voice of hospitality is heard in Scotland and across the UK as a whole.”

ENDS

Alex Midgley
Jefferson Communications



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From: Barry McCulloch <Barry.McCulloch@fsb.org.uk>
Sent: 16 May 2018 09:14
To: Scottish Ministers
Subject: FSB letter - tourism tax
Attachments: FSB-tourism tax letter-SG-May18.pdf

Dear Fiona,

Please find attached a letter from FSB on the possible introduction of a tourism tax.

As always, do get in touch if you wish to discuss the issue in greater depth.

Kind regards,

Barry

Barry McCulloch
Senior Policy Advisor
Federation of Small Businesses



www.fsb.scot

[Redacted]

Subject: FW: Draft release to check - tourism tax - SpAds

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 11 September 2018 10:11

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: Draft release to check - tourism tax - SpAds

[Redacted]

[Redacted] will feed back after cabinet.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted] St Andrew's House
Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
[Redacted]

Please note Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot for information.

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [Redacted]

Date: Tuesday, 11 Sep 2018, 10:07 am

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Subject: RE: Draft release to check - tourism tax - SpAds

Fine for my side of things.

[Redacted]

Please note Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot for information

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 11 September 2018 09:14

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Subject: Draft release to check - tourism tax - SpAds

[Redacted]

Grateful for views on the attached release. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Gillian Provan

Senior Media Manager

Communications: First Minister, Culture and Brexit

Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | T: [Redacted]

Subject:

FW: IMMEDIATE - CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL OFFICIALS MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

From: Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy

Sent: 10 September 2018 19:41

To: [REDACTED] Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs;
Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work; Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning;
Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: IMMEDIATE - CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL OFFICIALS MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

[REDACTED]

Ms Forbes has noted for her interests

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Private Secretary to Kate Forbes MSP
Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy
4N.11 | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

Please check our updated [Ministerial Preferences](#)

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 September 2018 21:16

To: Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs; Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work; Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning; Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy

Cc:

Subject: IMMEDIATE - CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL OFFICIALS MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

FAO PS

- CAB SEC CTEA
- CAB SEC FINANCE
- MIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- MIN PUBLIC FINANCE

Follows on from Cab Sec CTEA meeting with STA 5th September and Min Public Finance meeting with STA 6th September

Our contacts in tourism industry have flagged up that City of Edinburgh have called a meeting of CEC Officials with representatives of the Edinburgh tourism industry to discuss Tourism Tax. Copy of agenda attached – topics ranging between governance and operational issues around a Tourism Tax.

<< File: Agenda - Edinburgh TVL 13 September 2018.docx >>

At the national industry level, neither Scottish Tourism Alliance nor UKHospitality have been invited to take part. We understand the Chair of the Edinburgh Hoteliers Association has been invited but apparently will not attend: it is not known whether this is in protest at the shortness of the invite or simply other diary commitments. We do not know what other Edinburgh industry bodies have been invited to the discussion.

In contrast, COSLA have scheduled an Official level discussion on their Tourism Tax paper for 21 September, which will include STA and UKHospitality.

Ministers are invited to **NOTE** the next steps by CEC and the significant timing of 13th September, the same day as CEC, COSLA and City of Aberdeen give evidence to CTEER Committee.

Cab Sec CTEA next meeting Councillor McVey, Leader City of Edinburgh Council on 19 September

Tourism and Major Events Division
Directorate for Culture, Tourism and Major Events
Area 2G - South
Victoria Quay
EDINBURGH EH6 6QQ

[REDACTED]

Subject: FW: LINES FOR CLEARANCE: tourism tax - National

From: Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work
Sent: 12 September 2018 17:21
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work <CabSecFEFW@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: LINES FOR CLEARANCE: tourism tax - National

[REDACTED]

Cab Sec is content to clear.

Thanks

[REDACTED]
Private Secretary to Derek Mackay MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 September 2018 17:10
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work
Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: LINES FOR CLEARANCE: tourism tax - National

Recirculating to include duty comms.

[REDACTED]
Newsdesk
Scottish Government
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 September 2018 16:09
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work
Cc: [REDACTED] Minister for Public
Finance and Digital Economy
Subject: LINES FOR CLEARANCE: tourism tax - National

Cab Sec/PO,

[REDACTED] at the National is doing a piece on written evidence to the CTEA Committee on tourism tax, to be discussed tomorrow.

She has asked for the latest SG position on such a tax and is focusing on Edinburgh Council submission that says a tax could raise them £29m per year.

The below lines have been agreed with policy and SPADs. Is the Cab Sec content for this to issue?

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“We have no plans to introduce visitor levy on the tourism sector.

“We continue to deliver a fair deal to councils across Scotland, with revenue and capital funding increasing in real terms over the next financial year.”

Background

- Local authorities do not have the power to introduce a tourist tax. Establishing such a power would require an act of the Scottish Parliament.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]
Newsdesk
Scottish Government
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject:

FW: IMMEDIATE - FURTHER INTELL ON CITY OF EDINBURGH WORK AND TIMINGS
RE CEC TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

From: Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs

Sent: 12 September 2018 10:56

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: IMMEDIATE - FURTHER INTELL ON CITY OF EDINBURGH WORK AND TIMINGS RE CEC TOURISM TAX
OPTIONS

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for providing this note, v useful to see. Ms Hyslop has noted and asked if you can keep her apprised of future planned meeting with stakeholders, COSLA and relevant Councils on the Tourism Tax both in advance and with a similar note following any meetings.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Private Secretary to the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs

The Scottish Government

St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG [REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 September 2018 17:04

To: Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs; Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work; Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning; Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Subject: IMMEDIATE - FURTHER INTELL ON CITY OF EDINBURGH WORK AND TIMINGS RE CEC TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

FAO PS

- CAB SEC CTEA
- CAB SEC FINANCE
- MIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- MIN PUBLIC FINANCE

As part of a long-standing commitment, SG Officials met today (10th September) with the City of Edinburgh (CEC) officers dealing with Transient Visitor Levy (TVL) work.

CEC have been carrying out what they term informal engagement with tourism industry, festivals, culture, residents and wider businesses on the potential principles of a Tourism Tax: this is deliberately avoiding publishing a strawman of a model to be argued against. CEC are instead working to the political steer from councillors of having the industry/residents design the tourism tax system they want in order to ensure acceptance, simplicity and fairness.

CEC state that industry concerns re displacement, price sensitivity, administrative burdens and an absence of accountability have been addressed through this process: their informal engagement leads CEC to assert that the sector is broadly unworried at the prospect of work to introduce a Tourism Tax within Edinburgh.

CEC will publish a paper on Tourist Tax describing the outcome of their stakeholder engagement in the coming week. This is going through internal sign-off and will be published on **Thursday 13th September** for discussion at the CEC Committee meeting on 26 September 2018. (NB 13th September [REDACTED] CEC appearing at CTEER Committee with COSLA and City of Aberdeen).

In addition, in mid-September CEC expect to publish headline findings from research, by Marketing Edinburgh. Research sets out perceptions of the importance of costs in the decision-making process of visitors to Edinburgh. Costs seen as only one of 9 factors in the research so CEC argue price is not the key factor. CEC will repeat the research in October to ensure that views from low-season visitors are taken into account.

[REDACTED]
Tourism and Major Events Division
Directorate for Culture, Tourism and Major Events
Area 2G - South
Victoria Quay
EDINBURGH EH6 6QQ

Telephone - [REDACTED]
Typetalk calls welcome
Mobile - [REDACTED]

<< OLE Object: Picture (Device Independent Bitmap) >>

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 September 2018 21:16

To: Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs <CabSecCTEA@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work <CabSecFEFW@gov.scot>; Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning <MinisterLGHP@gov.scot>; Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy <MinisterPFDE@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: IMMEDIATE - CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL OFFICIALS MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS TOURISM TAX OPTIONS

FAO PS

- CAB SEC CTEA
- CAB SEC FINANCE
- MIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- MIN PUBLIC FINANCE

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Cab Sec CTEA next meeting Councillor McVey, Leader City of Edinburgh Council on 19 September

[REDACTED]

Tourism and Major Events Division
Directorate for Culture, Tourism and Major Events
Area 2G - South

Victoria Quay
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[REDACTED]

Subject:

FW: MEDIA ENQUIRY - Tourism Tax - PJ

From: Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution

Sent: 17 May 2018 16:36

To: [REDACTED] Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Tourism and External Affairs

Subject: RE: MEDIA ENQUIRY - Tourism Tax - PJ

[REDACTED]

Cab Sec content subject to removal of the line struck through below.

Thanks,

[REDACTED] | Private Secretary (Depute) | Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Constitution

Mail: [REDACTED] | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 17 May 2018 15:24

To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs

Subject: MEDIA ENQUIRY - Tourism Tax - PJ

Afternoon PO,

The PJ have asked for a comment on Tourist Tax in light of the FSB news release that claims businesses are opposed to Aberdeen Council to impose such a tariff. FSB have also issued the same news release focused on Highland and Islands.

Spads, Policy and comms colleagues have suggested reissuing the following from last week

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"We [REDACTED] have no plans to introduce visitor levy on the tourism sector, which is already subject to the second highest VAT rates in Europe by the UK Government.

"We continue to deliver a fair deal to councils across Scotland, with revenue and capital funding increasing in real terms over the next financial year."

Background

Local authorities do not have the power to introduce a tourist tax. Establishing such a power would require an act of the Scottish Parliament.



[REDACTED]
Newsdesk | Scottish Government | 3W | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | E
[REDACTED]

From: David Groundwater [<mailto:David.Groundwater@fsb.org.uk>]

Subject: FSB: Businesses call for tourism tax to be put to bed. Embargoed until 0001 on Friday 18 May 2018

Embargoed until 0001 on Friday 18 May 2018

FSB: Businesses call for tourism tax to be put to bed

New research conducted by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) reveals that Aberdeen businesses are firmly opposed to Aberdeen City Council's plans to introduce a tourism tax to the city.

A survey of businesses has shown that 84% oppose the introduction of such a tax, with 72% predicting that a tourism tax would have a negative impact on businesses and the local economy.

Denis Pinto, North East Area Leader said:

"Once again businesses in and around Aberdeen have voiced their concerns on this unwanted and regressive tax.

"Whilst Aberdeen City Council face pressures on their budgets and their ability to provide services across the city, the introduction of an additional tax is not the answer.

"Only last month, figures released showed Aberdeen hotels had the worst occupancy rates in the UK during 2017.

"Historically, demand for accommodation in Aberdeen has been driven by the oil and gas industry and any plans to introduce a tourism tax would hinder efforts to diversify Aberdeen's economy and weaken already falling occupancy rates.

"Aberdeen must value its tourists and not price them out. Working together with tourism and hospitality businesses, the Council should be an active player in growing the city's attractiveness to tourists and residents alike and not adding a barrier to those visiting the city."

Plans for a tourism tax have also been criticised by other industry bodies.

Marc Crothall, Chief Executive of the Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA), said:

"The STA recognises the need across most destinations for an increased level of long-term sustainable investment, however applying a further cost to visitors is in our opinion not a sensible approach to take.

"The need for Scotland to become more competitive as a destination for visitors to travel to and spend money in is now greater than ever in relation to our impending exit from the EU. Any such visitor tax being applied is counterproductive and could have a potentially devastating long-term impact on Scotland's tourism industry and local economies."

Fiona Campbell, Chief Executive of the Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers (ASSC), added:

"The introduction of a tourist tax would threaten the existence of many small businesses across the Scottish tourism sector.

"The findings of FSB's survey chime with our own membership which suggests that, if government wants to help Scotland's vital tourism sector, the last thing it should do is burden it with an anti-growth tourist tax."

The FSB has today written to the co-leaders of Aberdeen City Council, Cllr Jenny Laing and Cllr Douglas Lumsden with the results of its survey and once again highlighted business opposition to the proposed tax.

ENDS

Notes

1. A copy of the full results of FSB's Aberdeen survey can be supplied on request.

About FSB

As experts in business, FSB offers members a wide range of vital business services, including advice, financial expertise, support and a powerful voice in Government. Its aim is to help smaller businesses achieve their ambitions.

Media contacts

David Groundwater david.groundwater@fsb.org.uk [REDACTED]

Barry McCulloch barry.mcculloch@fsb.org.uk [REDACTED]
