

Date 26 February 2019

EDIR: 21465

Dear [REDACTED]

Subject: Airbnb impact, regulation and communications

I write with reference to your email dated 28 January 2019, in which you explained that you were dissatisfied that you had not received a response to your initial request within the statutory time period. I have carried out a review in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 ("FOISA"). Please accept my apologies for the Council's failure to respond in the statutory time scale. I have provided a response to your questions below.

1. Please could you tell me confirm how many times council officials or elected representatives have met with representatives from AirBnB or other web-based short-term letting platforms over the last 2 years? In each instance, please provide the dates of each meeting, who attended, and a short-summary of the purpose of the meeting.

Please find below details of meetings between Council officials and elected representatives with Airbnb and other short terms letting organisations.

Meeting date: 13 June 2017

Subject: Council's concern about short term lets

Attendees:

Andrew Mitchell, Regulatory Services (Council)
Representative from Planning Enforcement (Council)
Representative from Airbnb.

Meeting date: 10 October 2017

Subject: Council's concern about short term lets

Attendees:

Andrew Mitchell, Regulatory Services (Council)
Representative from Planning Enforcement (Council)
Representative from Airbnb.

Meeting date: 23 November 2017

Subject: Council's concerns about short term lets

Attendees:

Andrew Mitchell, Regulatory Services (Council)
Representatives from the UK Short Term Accommodation Association

Meeting date: 24 November 2017

Subject: Short term lets discussion

Attendees:

Paul Lawrence, Director of Place (Council)
Representatives of UK Short Term Accommodation Association

Meeting date: 22 January 2018

Subject: Meeting to discuss short term lets and allow elected members to ask about the issues regarding short term lets.

Attendees:

Councillor Cathy Fullerton
Councillor Maureen Child
Councillor Claire Miller
Councillor Susan Rae
Councillor Robert Aldridge
Councillor Gavin Barrie
Councillor Lezley Cameron
Councillor Joanna Mowat
Councillor Cameron Rose
Andrew Mitchell, Regulatory Services (Council)
David Leslie, Planning (Council)
Representative from Housing & Economy (Council)
Representative from Communications (Council)
Michael Thain, Place Development (Council)
Representatives from Edinburgh Home Sharing Club
Representatives from Halogen Communications
Representatives from Airbnb

Meeting date: 08 March 2018

Subject: Airbnb meeting; session to discuss a Transient Visitor Levy (TVL)

Attendees:

Councillor Adam McVey
Councillor Cammy Day
Councillor Gavin Barrie
Chief Executive Andrew Kerr (Council)
Representative from Airbnb

Meeting date: 16 March 2018

Subject: Short term lets member working group

Councillor Kate Campbell
Councillor Cathy Fullerton
Councillor Maureen Child
Councillor Cameron Rose
Councillor Neil Gardiner
Councillor Lezley Cameron
Councillor Joanna Mowat
Andrew Mitchell, Regulatory Services (Council)
David Leslie, Planning (Council)
Representatives from Scottish Association of Landlords
Representatives from Edinburgh Living Rents

Meeting date: 23 April 2018

Subject: Airbnb meeting; session to discuss TVL

Attendees:

Chief Executive Andrew Kerr (Council)
Representative from Airbnb

Meeting date: 26 June 2018

Subject: Short term lets discussion

Attendees:

David Leslie, Planning (Council)
Colin Baxter, Trading Standards and Licensing (Council)
Representative from Housing Development (Council)
Representatives of UK Short Term Accommodation Association

Meeting date: 26 June 2018

Subject: The Council's concerns about short term lets

Attendees:

Paul Lawrence, Director of Place (Council)

Representatives of UK Short Term Accommodation Association

Meeting date: 26 June 2018

Subject: Short term lets discussion

Attendees:

Councillor John McLellan

Representative from the UK Short Term Accommodations Association

Meeting date: 24 August 2018

Subject: Session to discuss TVL

Attendees:

Representatives from Policy and Insight (Council)

Representative from Airbnb

Meeting date: 06 September 2018

Subject: Short term lets discussion

Attendees: Andrew Mitchell, Regulatory Services (Council)

Representatives of UK Short Term Accommodation Association

Meeting date: 04 October 2018

Subject: Short term lets discussion

Attendees:

Councillor Neil Ross

Councillor Hal Osler

Representatives from Airbnb

Meeting date: 28 November 2018

Subject: Changes in housing market around short term letting in Edinburgh, potential future regulatory regimes, and Airbnb's place within the wider market

Attendees:

Councillor Iain Whyte

Representative from Airbnb

Representative from Halogen Communications

Meeting date: 29 November 2018

Subject: TVL consultation discussion

Attendees:

Representatives from Policy and Insight (Council)

Representative from Airbnb

Representative from the Scottish Licensed Trade Association

Representative from Mercat Tours

Representative from Viajar por Escocia

Member of the public

2. Have officials or elected members had any meetings with campaign groups or residents groups who claim to be negatively affected by AirBnB or other web-based short-term letting platforms over the last 2 years? In each instance, please provide the dates of each meeting, who attended, and a short-summary of the purpose of the meeting.

One meeting has been located which falls within your request remit. On 3rd October 2018 Council officers (Strategy Manager for Communities and Andrew Mitchell from Regulatory Services) met with a community group about a participation request. The group wanted to discuss the Council's approach to the management of short term lets.

Councillor interactions with residents would fall under their constituency role, which is outside of the remit of the FOI legislation.

3. Where meetings have occurred, please could you provide me with any recorded information held that relates to meetings with representatives from AirBnB, AirBnB landlord groups, or residents affected by short-term letting providers. This could include, but should not be limited to, briefing materials, reports, power point presentations, meeting minutes and emails related to issues raised at the meetings.

4. Lastly, please supply any information the council holds on the volume and impact of AirBnB and other web-based short-term letting providers on the housing sector in the area. This could include research, policy documents, or reports produced by the council, or for the council by other bodies.

I have combined the information for the above two questions as there is some cross-over with where the information has been generated from.

Please find attached:

1. Airbnb briefing note
2. Meeting minute – 22 January 2018**
3. Meeting notes – 16 March 2018**
4. Tourism and Committees working group briefing
5. Airbnb submission to the Scottish Government
6. Airbnb Infographic
7. Short term lets presentation
8. Airbnb summary of Airbnb size in Edinburgh created December 2017
9. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee – short term letting in Edinburgh review. This is also available [online](#) (full Committee papers are also on our [website](#)).
10. Email from STAA to Councillors Cameron and Wilson and Council policy officer 27 November 2017

In addition to the above, some meetings did not produce minutes but formed part of a wider report on the transient visitor levy. Details of this can be found on the Council [website](#).

**Please note that some personal data has been removed from the minutes of 22 January 2018 and the meeting notes from 16 March 2018. The data is the names of external representatives and non-senior Council staff who were in attendance. The names have been removed in line with section 38(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002: information is exempt information if it constitutes personal data. The individuals concerned would have little or no expectation that their names would be placed in to the public domain in this manner, and do so could would breach the first principle of the General Data Protection Regulation, relating to fair and lawful processing. Please note that whilst the names have been removed, the companies they represent have been provided.

If you are unhappy with this review outcome or the way we handled your request and review, you have a right of appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. You must submit your complaint to the Commissioner within 6 months of receiving this review response. The Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews
Fife
KY16 9DS

Telephone: 01334 464610
Fax: 01334 464611

Website www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal

E-mail: enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info

Please note that, once the Commissioner provides you with a decision on any application made to him, you have the right to lodge an appeal against the decision on a point of law to the Court of Session.

Yours sincerely,



Information Governance Unit