

“Scottish Government repeating mistakes with ‘vague’ Circular Economy Bill”

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Thoughts from UKHospitality Scotland

The Circular Economy (Scotland) Bill will increase costs for businesses and deter customers, says UKHospitality Scotland.

The Scottish Government’s Circular Economy Bill, introduced to Holyrood last year has, as its aim, the purpose to reduce waste and carbon emissions, as part of the country’s transition to net zero.

Unsurprisingly, the Bill contains elements which have the potential to create challenges for our businesses.

UKHospitality Scotland took part in the Scottish Government’s consultation on the Bill in late 2022 and has been involved in a series of workshops related to a key provision of the Bill – charging for single use cups.

The passage of the Bill, which is extremely light on detail, would give Ministers the power to introduce charges and set targets on recycling, connected with a future Circular Economy Strategy.

The Bill includes the following two provisions, which our member businesses need to be aware of:

1. Latte levy Charges for single-use items: creating a power to set a minimum charge for certain throwaway items. Cups will be the first items to be targeted.
2. Data Reporting on waste and surpluses. The intention is for this initially to be applied to information about food.

Leon Thompson, Executive Director of UKHospitality Scotland, said: “Hospitality businesses had hoped the

Scottish Government had learnt from its previous mistakes of introducing legislation devoid of essential details.

“The Circular Economy Bill proves that isn’t the case, to the extent that we’re going through the exact same motions we did with the Deposit Return Scheme. Like DRS, all we do know is that this Bill will ramp up costs for businesses.

“The entire sector was clear months ago that more detail was needed in the Bill to provide clarity on what it is the Scottish Government is trying to achieve, including through the introduction of a charging regime on single-use items.

“Instead, businesses are none the wiser on what charge may be levied against single-use cups and other items and what the funds might be used for.

“We’ve been here before. This is no way to treat hospitality businesses that deliver billions to the Scottish economy and employ hundreds of thousands of people. We urgently need the Scottish Government to provide further information on the proposals included in the Bill and engage rapidly with the sector.”