

NOTICE OF MOTION – SEPTEMBER 2026

PROTECTING BURY'S HOSPITALITY SECTOR – OPPOSING THE GREATER MANCHESTER OVERNIGHT VISITOR LEVY

In the names of: Councillor S Arif, Councillor I Gartside, Councillor K Hussain

This Council Notes:

1. The vital contribution made by Bury's hospitality, leisure and visitor economy, including our pubs, restaurants, cafés, hotels, guest houses and other accommodation providers, which provide employment, support local businesses and bring valuable footfall into Bury, Radcliffe and other town centres.
2. The significant financial pressures already facing hospitality businesses, including business rates, VAT, energy costs, employment costs and wider increases in the cost of operating a business.
3. The Government's announcement that mayors and strategic authorities in England will be given powers to introduce an **Overnight Visitor Levy** on paid overnight accommodation, charged as a percentage of the accommodation cost.
4. That any decision to introduce such a levy in Greater Manchester would ultimately rest with the Greater Manchester Mayor and strategic authority, following consultation.
5. That Bury's hospitality and visitor economy includes many independent and smaller businesses which may be particularly sensitive to additional costs and administrative burdens.
6. That Greater Manchester already has experience of accommodation-related visitor charges, while the proposed statutory Overnight Visitor Levy would represent a new regional taxing power.
7. That the Government has stated that local leaders should consult residents and businesses before deciding whether to introduce an Overnight Visitor Levy.

This Council Believes:

1. **Bury should be a welcoming, accessible and affordable destination for visitors**, supporting rather than placing additional financial barriers in front of the businesses that serve them.
2. At a time when hospitality businesses are already under considerable financial pressure, the introduction of another charge should not be undertaken without a compelling and independently evidenced case demonstrating that the benefits outweigh the costs.
3. An additional charge on overnight accommodation could increase the cost of visiting Greater Manchester and may affect the competitiveness of Bury's hospitality businesses when visitors have alternative destinations available.
4. The priority for local and regional government should be to **back businesses, encourage investment and support employment**, rather than relying on additional taxation of the visitor economy.
5. Any assertion that an Overnight Visitor Levy will generate economic benefits must be properly tested against its potential effects on visitor numbers, accommodation businesses, employment, investment and the wider local economy.
6. **Bury businesses and residents should have a meaningful voice** in any decision which could materially affect the local visitor economy.

This Council Resolves To:

1. **Formally oppose the introduction of an Overnight Visitor Levy, tourist tax or supplementary accommodation charge affecting businesses within the Metropolitan Borough of Bury.**
2. Call on the **Mayor of Greater Manchester not to introduce an Overnight Visitor Levy** without first undertaking a full, independent assessment of its potential economic impact on Bury.
3. Request that the Leader of Bury Council writes formally to the Mayor of Greater Manchester setting out this Council's opposition and asking that Bury's hospitality businesses and residents are properly represented in any consultation or decision-making process.
4. Call for a comprehensive **Bury-specific economic impact assessment**, covering hotels and guest houses; restaurants, pubs and cafés; visitor attractions; employment; visitor numbers and spending; investment; town-centre footfall; and the competitiveness of Bury as a visitor destination.
5. Require meaningful engagement with Bury hotels, guest houses, accommodation providers, restaurants, pubs, tourism businesses, business organisations and residents before any levy affecting Bury is introduced.
6. Call on the Government to prioritise measures which support the hospitality sector, including addressing the wider burden of business rates, VAT and employment costs, rather than creating additional taxation.
7. Establish a working group involving representatives of Bury's hospitality and visitor economy, relevant business organisations and councillors from across the Council to identify **pro-growth initiatives to support the night-time and visitor economy without relying on additional taxation.**
8. Should an Overnight Visitor Levy nevertheless be introduced by Greater Manchester, require a **fair, transparent and proportionate share of revenue raised from accommodation within Bury to be retained and reinvested in Bury**, with priority given to town-centre regeneration, tourism promotion, public spaces, transport, culture and measures which directly support the visitor economy.
9. Request that the Leader reports back to Full Council on the outcome of discussions with the Greater Manchester Mayor and any proposals relating to an Overnight Visitor Levy.

Conclusion

This Council supports Bury's hospitality, tourism and visitor economy and the businesses, workers and communities that depend upon it.

At a time when businesses are already facing significant financial pressures, Bury should not be asking how it can impose another charge on visitors. It should be asking how it can **attract more visitors, support local businesses, create jobs and bring greater footfall into our town centres.**

This Council therefore calls on the Greater Manchester Mayor not to introduce an Overnight Visitor Levy affecting Bury, and to put the interests of local residents, businesses and the visitor economy first.