

Licensing Committee – 12 September 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the **Licensing Committee** held on **12 September 2016** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr M J Webb

Cllr M R Carter
Cllr Mrs I Cassar
Cllr B T Hazlewood

Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr Mrs L Shaw
Cllr A L Williams

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs D Hoy, Mrs T R Hughes, E O K Mason and D Merrick.

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Cllr Mrs C M Mason - for Cllr Mrs D Hoy
Cllr J R F Mason - for Cllr E O K Mason

OFFICERS PRESENT

J Fowler - Senior Licensing Officer
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

192 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2016 and of the Licensing Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 July 2016 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

193 REVIEW OF GAMBLING ACT STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Legal Services providing Members with details of the results of the recent public consultation on the draft Gambling Act statement of licensing policy.

Officers advised that only one response had been received to the public consultation, in respect of social welfare and fixed odds betting terminals, or B2 machines. It was further noted that this response was in line with recommendations made by the Campaign for Fairer Gambling which seeks a reduction from a £100 stake to a £2 stake for B2 machines; a reduction in the current maximum of four B2 machines per shop, to one; a reduction in spin frequency and the removal of table game content from B2 machines.

Officers emphasised that the Government had recently put in place measures necessitating anyone wishing to bet over £50.00 per stake on B2 machines to provide photo identification; these measures had already resulted in a reduction in the instances of high stake machine betting. It was further stressed that the Government did not support a reduction in the £100 stake to £2 in respect of B2 machines, as it considered that lower stakes would lead to an increase in betting on such machines. Officers advised that there was likely to be further legislation relating to these machines in the near future. As such, officers advised that it

could be premature to include within the Council’s policy the measures requested by the respondent; it would be prudent to wait until changes to legislation were made. It was further noted that the Council does not set the level of stakes; this was done by the Gambling Commission. Officers further advised that the local area profile was not part of the policy; it was on the Council website and was reviewed annually and did not need to come back to this Committee.

In response to a Member question relating to what steps local authorities could take in respect of such social welfare concerns, officers confirmed that Councils are able to impose conditions on any new premises licences, as well as on existing premises licences the subject of any licensing reviews. Officers further advised that there were only seven betting shops within the district, run by major companies who ensured that staff were trained to interact with customers gambling on their premises to gauge if customers are gambling excessively on B2 machines. In addition, gamblers were able to self exclude themselves from betting shops.

Responding to a further Member query relating to the location of betting shops, officers confirmed that these weren’t located in deprived areas within the district; there had been no instances reported to the Council of problems associated with people with gambling problems associated with B2 machines within the past three years.

Officers advised that the betting shops within the district had measures in place to address the issues raised in points 1 and 6 of the response that had been received to the public consultation, detailed on 5.91 and 5.92 of the officer’s report. It would, however, be possible to include these two points in the Council’s policy.

Resolved

That the statement of licensing policy(Gambling Act 2005) be amended to include points 1. and 6. set out on pages 5.91 and 5.92 of the officer’s report. (ADLS)

It was further **Recommended to Council**

That the updated statement of licensing policy (Gambling Act 2005) be approved and that no provision be made in respect of the issue of casino licences. (ADLS)

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and closed at 10.17 am.

Chairman

Date

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