

Minutes of a meeting held at the Conference Room, Riverside, Lowestoft on **Wednesday 5 August 2015** at **6.00pm**

Members Present:

K Grant (Chairman), N Brooks, M Cherry, J Craig, T Goldson, A Green, J Groom, T Mortimer and K Springall.

Officers Present:

C Evans (Licensing Services Manager) and S Carter (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES / SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Ashdown, Y Cherry, C Topping, N Webb and S Webb.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

3 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

No declarations of lobbying were made.

4 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 GAMBLING ACT 2005 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES - REVISION

The Committee considered a report, the purpose of which was to review the Council's Statement of Principles in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005.

The report stated that the 2005 Act had replaced most law relating to gambling in Britain other than the National Lottery and, by January 2007, it had required the Council to adopt a Statement of Principles which was then to be updated every three years following a consultation procedure.

The Act had three core objectives:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime;
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

The Licensing Services Manager explained that, in producing its Statement of Principles, the Licensing Authority had to have regard to those licensing objectives and the additional guidance for local authorities issued by the Gambling Commission. However, as the latest edition of that guidance was not due to be published until September 2015, the Commission had advised authorities to continue referencing the existing guidance. The form and publication of a Statement of Principles was set out in the Regulations and detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the report.

The Licensing Services Manager explained that the designated licensing authorities throughout Suffolk had worked together to produce a draft statement and that document was attached as Appendix A to the report. Other than dates and factual information, the proposed changes were the additions of Section 4 Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice and Section 5 Risk Assessments and Area Profiles within Part A shown on Agenda pages 12 to 14. The reasons for these changes were to remind operators of their social responsibilities and the need to prepare a risk assessment. Reports of any findings would need to be shared with the Council, giving the Council an additional duty.

For consultation purposes, it was proposed that the draft policy would be available on the Council's website, with an electronic link being sent to the Chief Officer of Police, the Responsible Authorities named in the Gambling Act 2005, persons carrying on gambling businesses within the District, groups representing vulnerable persons and Parish and Town Councils. The public consultation period would run from 8 August to 25 September.

In the event of any responses to the consultation being received, they would be reported to the Licensing Committee at its October 2015 meeting to allow Council to adopt the Statement at its meeting in November, ready for publication by 31 January 2016.

Members raised questions regarding:

- The reference to vulnerable people and if it encompassed all forms of vulnerability in society.
- TV publicising gambling.

The Licensing Services Manager confirmed that vulnerability was viewed from two angles; premises located near to vulnerable adults or those rehabilitating and secondly, general vulnerability identified by risk assessing. The Council was responsible for the arcades within its District; media coverage and online gambling was the responsibility of the Gambling Commission. It was generally agreed that little could be done to help a person suffering from gambling addiction unless that person wished to help themselves. The Licensing Services Manager further explained that the Gambling Commission imposed much tighter rules and regulations and it had the power to investigate in conjunction with HM Revenue & Customs.

There being no further discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That consultation on the draft Licensing Policy, Gambling Act 2005: Statement of Principles, set out in Appendix A to report REP1289 be approved, to commence in accordance with the following timetable:

Public Consultation	8 August to 25 September 2015
Consideration of policy in the light of responses to consultation	7 October 2015
Adoption of Policy by full Council	18 November 2015

The meeting was concluded at 6.09pm.

Chairman