

Licensing and Regulatory Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15 November 2021 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 5.00pm.

Present: Councillors Illingworth (Chairman), Boad, Cullinan, C Gifford, Grey, Redford, Norris, and Syson.

16. **Apologies and Substitutes**

(a) apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mangat and Wright.

(b) there were no substitutes.

17. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

18. **Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles for the period of January 2022 to January 2025**

The Committee considered a report from Health and Community Protection which sought the consideration and formal adoption of the Gambling Act Statement of Principles for 2022-25.

The Council was required to produce a Statement of Principles (Policy) to enable it to issue licences and enforce the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005.

The existing policy expired on the 30 January 2022, and a copy was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The proposed policy, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, was written in conjunction with our Warwickshire group of authorities. The group included Rugby, Nuneaton and Bedworth, North Warwickshire, Coventry and Stratford-on-Avon District Council. Officers had co-written this statement to produce one combined policy with some minor differences to allow for local statistical data and considerations. The changes between the current and the proposed new policy were attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

A six-week consultation was conducted with regards to the proposed policy for 2022 - 2025. Consultation was carried out with members of the trade, the public, responsible authorities, gambling charities, Chamber of Commerce, the Gambling Commission, Association of British Bookmakers, British Amusement Catering Trade Association, Gamcare, Gambleaware as well as Members.

The Council, as the licensing authority, was bound to produce a Statement of Principles as defined in the Gambling Act. Applications could not be determined until the authority had done so.

If accepted by Council, the policy would be valid from 31 January 2022 to 30 January 2025.

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The Council had an obligation to publish and review its Gambling Policy every three years in order to issue, administer and enforce the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005.

In terms of alternative options, the Council had no option but to adopt a Policy as defined in the Act and could not receive applications unless there was a Policy in place. There was limited discretion over how and when this was done and therefore Members could support the proposed Policy or amend the Policy.

In response to questions from Members, the Licensing Team Leader advised that:

- Licensed Gambling premises were inspected annually. An inspection sheet had been created with counterparts from the Gambling Commission, which was used to check relevant documents that premises needed to display, and they would inspect the premises' local risk assessment as part of the inspection. Any issues would be followed up and a reinspection would take place.
- There were national limits / maximum betting stakes that were in place, and as part of premises inspections, staff were asked about what the policy was if someone was deemed to have a gambling problem, and staff were encouraged to recognise if there was a customer that needed advice. There was a self-exclusion policy, but also a multi-premises exclusion policy, if individuals were minded. Part of the inspection also checked that premises were displaying leaflets regarding gambling help/support for individuals.
- Legal advisors had advised that it was not appropriate to include a policy not allowing a Casino in the District as part of the Gambling Policy.

The Committee therefore

Recommended to Council that the revised statement of Gambling Policy for 2022 – 2025, as set out at Appendix 1 to the minutes, be adopted.

(The meeting ended at 7.14pm)

CHAIRMAN
21 March 2022