

# Minutes of a meeting of the LICENSING AND GAMBLING ACTS COMMITTEE on Wednesday 19 September 2018

## Committee members:

Councillor Cook (Chair)

Councillor Lygo (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Chapman

Councillor Howlett

Councillor Landell Mills

## Officers:

Daniel Smith, Lawyer

Emma Day, Licensing Compliance Officer

Richard Masters, Licensing Compliance Officer

John Mitchell, Committee and Member Services Officer

## Apologies:

Councillors Fry, Goff and McManners sent apologies.

## 13. Declarations of interest

None.

## 14. Minutes

The Committee resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 02 July 2018 as a true and accurate record.

## 15. Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy

The Head of Community Services had submitted a report seeking the Committee's agreement to the Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy.

The Licensing and Compliance Officer introduced the report. She reminded the Committee that all Licensing Authorities must have adopted and published a Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy, and must review it every three years. The Policy before the Committee was a revised draft following a period of consultation. The responses to the consultation were given in Appendix 4 of the report. It was explained that the low level of response was not unusual. None of the responses made material suggestions or observations. As well as seeking the Committee's approval of the revised policy the Committee was asked to consider retention of a 'No Casino' resolution.

The previous meeting of the Committee had identified the desirability of consulting organisations with an interest in the welfare of vulnerable adults. The Licensing and Compliance Officer confirmed that Citizen's Advice Bureau, Gamblers Anonymous and the Oxfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board had all been consulted.

It was explained that the “No Casino” resolution had been introduced when the government relaxed the rules about casinos and permitted the opening of so called ‘super casinos.’ Since then, the permissive legislation has been withdrawn and it would no longer be possible to open a casino in Oxford. However, failure to retain the resolution might be interpreted as an implicit willingness that the Council would consider opening a casino if the opportunity presented itself.

In response to questions about what was in place to protect the interests of vulnerable adults it was noted that applicants will now be required to provide Local Risk Assessments which will, in turn, be informed by the new Local Area Profile. The Council’s opportunity to mitigate the risks to vulnerable adults was broadly confined to ensuring application of and compliance with the policy.

It was noted that the Local Area Profile is, deliberately, distinct from the policy. This will enable officers to keep the profile up to date without recourse to the formality of Committee agreement. It was agreed that the title of the Local Area Profile as given with the papers should be amended to make this distinction clear.

Establishments could install up to two gaming machines without a licence but must inform the Council. Three or more machines require a licence. Officers conducted checks of establishments from time to time.

It was confirmed that relevant establishments should have literature available to signpost customers to help and support when appropriate.

The Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee resolved to:

- a) **Note** responses to the consultation submitted to the Licensing Authority;
- b) **Agree** that the ‘No Casino’ Resolution should be maintained;
- c) **Agree** the final draft Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy ; and
- d) **Recommend** the final draft of Gambling Licensing Policy to the Council

## **16. Update (Activity) Report**

The Head of Community Services had submitted a report to inform the Committee of the progress made by the Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 during the period from April 2018 to July 2018.

The Licensing and Compliance Officer introduced the report which set out activity for the period from April 2018 to July 2018.

In response to a question from the Chair she said no significant trends were emerging. Significantly less premises licences had been issued compared with the same period in the previous year but this was largely accounted for by the opening of the Westgate centre at that time.

The Chair thanked the licensing team for the reports considered at this meeting and for their work in this important area.

The Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee resolved to:

**Note** the contents of the report.

**17. Dates of future meetings**

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place on 23 January 2019, to start at 6.00 pm.

**The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.40 pm**

**Chair .....**

**Date: 23 January 2019**

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