

Minutes of the Licensing Committee

15th September, 2006 at 9.30 a.m.
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor Silvester (Chair);
Councillors Dr Crumpton, Mrs Edis, Mrs A Hughes, Mrs Macklin, Sakhi, G Turton, and A Underhill.

Apologies: Councillors Allen, Mrs James, Rouf, and Tagger.

5/06 **Minutes**

Resolved that, the minutes of the meetings held on 9th June, 2006 be confirmed as correct records.

6/06 **Gambling Act 2005 Implementation – Approval of Statement of Principles**

The Committee considered a report on the Gambling Act 2005 Implementation – Approval of Statement of Principles.

The Statement of Principles had been prepared in accordance with the requirement of the Act, regulations, principles and guidance issued by the Gambling Commission. The Statement of Principles was determined in consultation with the police, those representing the interest of persons carrying on local gambling business, those representing the interest of residents likely to be affected, the Gambling Commission and others suggested by the Guidance.

As the Licensing Authority the Council had to publish its 'Statement of Principles' by Wednesday 3rd January 2007, hence the document needed to be approved by the full Council at its meeting on Tuesday 31st October, 2006.

Members were informed that currently there was two licensed casinos in the Borough and to date there did not appear to be any problems in relation to their operation. The Police had not made any comments on casinos during the consultation. Sandwell did not make a bid for one of the 17 new casino locations. At the last estimate approximately 70 local authorities had done so and it was known that the Government would only be granting these 17 licenses for such establishments.

Licensing Committee – 15th September 2006

The feedback from other local authorities was that they would not be having 'no casinos' resolutions, and officers were not aware currently of any that were proposing to do so. Where a Local Authorities intended to have a 'No Casino' clause, they had to have regard to guidance and state valid and credible reasons for such a course of action.

Also, under existing legislation, the Gambling Act 1968, an operator could up until 29th April of this year apply to the Gambling Commission for a Certificate of Consent, which if granted could apply to the magistrates court under current arrangements for a casino licence. Such an operator could then apply for continuation rights as an existing casino, and will as such be able to continue to operate under the new legislation.

Having had a full and frank discussion on the matter before them, the Committee deferred consideration of the report pending the submission of an additional report by officers, on the feasibility of including a 'No Casino' within the Statement of Principles.

Resolved:-

- (1) that consideration of the report be deferred to enable officers to investigate whether a 'no casino' clause should be included in the 'Statement of Principles';
- (2) that a further report be submitted to the Committee in due course.

(The meeting ended at 9.50 a.m.)

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