

Report to Licensing Committee

14 September 2012

The Gambling Act 2005 – Review of Statement of Principles

1. Summary Statement

- 1.1 Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) requires the Council as the Licensing Authority to prepare and publish its own Statement of Principles as to how it intends to carry out its licensing functions under the Act.
- 1.2 The Council's current Statement of Principles was approved by Council in December, 2009.
- 1.3 The Act requires the Council, in respect of each three year period, to determine its Principles with respect to the exercise of its licensing functions, and to publish a statement of those principles on the Council's web site before the beginning of the period. In that respect, the reviewed statement must be published no later than 12 December 2012.
- 1.4 Before determining its principles, the Act specifically requires the Licensing Authority to consult the following:
 - a) The Chief Officer of Police;
 - b) persons representing the interests of those carrying on gambling businesses within Sandwell;
 - c) persons representing the interests of anyone likely to be affected by the exercise of the Council's functions under the Act.
- 1.5 The Act came into force on 1 September 2007.
- 1.6 There are only minor changes proposed to the Council's current Statement of Principles, primarily in order to include changes necessary as a result of revised Statutory Guidance to Licensing Authorities issued by the Gambling Commission in July, 2012.

- 1.7 A six week consultation process will take place during September and October, 2012. This will involve statutory bodies, trade organisations, representatives of licence holders, and representatives of those likely to be affected, including all ward Councillors and Members of Parliament.
- 1.8 Should there be any issues arising as a result of the consultation process a further report will be submitted to the Licensing Committee meeting on 23 November 2012.
- 1.9 The Statement of Principles will need to be approved by Council at its meeting on 4 December 2012.
- 1.9 The proposed Statement of Principles is contained in Appendix 1 to this report.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005, and subject to any comments received as a result of the consultation process referred to in paragraph 1.7 of this report, Council be recommended to approve the revised Statement of Principles, as set out in Appendix 1, with effect from 10 January, 2013.

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3. Strategic Resource Implications

There are no direct strategic resource implications associated with the review, approval, and adoption of the “Statement of Principles” itself.

4. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 4.1 Under Section 349 of the Act, the Council, as the Licensing Authority, must in respect of each three year period determine its policy with respect to the exercise of its licensing functions, and publish a statement of that policy before the beginning of the period.
- 4.2 The last statutory three year period began on 10th January 2010
- 4.3 Before determining its principles for a three year period, the Council must consult those referred to in paragraph 1.4 of this report.
- 4.4 During each three year period, the Council must keep its Statement of Principles under review and make such revisions to it, at such times, as it considers appropriate.
- 4.5 Where revisions are made, the Council must publish a statement of those revisions.

5. Implications for the Scorecard Priorities

- 5.1 The licensing objectives set out in the Act are:
 - (a) preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder, or being used to support crime ;
 - (b) ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
 - (c) protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling
- 5.2 The licensing function under the Act specifically impacts on the following priorities
 - i. Great Prospects – Investing in people, businesses and jobs : licensed gambling establishments provide a proportion of employment in the Borough and, as such, they play an important part in contributing to the Borough’s economy.

- ii. Great Place – the objectives of the Act help to maintain a safe and clean environment for those who wish to gamble at licensed premises within the Borough.

6. Background Details

- 6.1 The Act came into effect on 1st September 2007. The Act introduced a new regime for the licensing of premises and permits enabling the provision of gambling facilities.
- 6.2 Section 349 of the Act required each licensing authority to prepare and publish every three years, a statement of its principles, setting out how the authority intended to carry out its functions under the Act. Each authority is also required to keep its Statement of Principles under review during the three year period and to make any revisions it considers appropriate.
- 6.3 The Council's current Statement of Principles was compiled following a statutory consultation exercise, having regard to the provisions of the Act itself and also Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission with a view to promoting the three licensing objectives referred to in paragraph 5.1 of this report.
- 6.4 The current Statement of Principles has proved to be entirely satisfactory since its adoption and only minor changes have been made to the proposed Principles set out in Appendix 1 to reflect revised Guidance to licensing authorities from the Gambling Commission.

Source Documents

Gambling Act 2005;
Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission.