

Meeting of the Cabinet – 31st October, 2012

Report of the Director of Corporate Resources

Gambling Policy

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the recommendation of the Licensing and Safety Committee concerning the responses to the consultation on the Council's Gambling Policy and to recommend approval of the policy to full Council.

Background

2. The Gambling Act 2005 requires the Council to prepare and publish a statement of its Gambling Policy every three years.
3. The current Policy was approved by the Council on 30th November 2009 and came into effect on 4th of January 2010.
4. The Licensing Officer has produced a draft Gambling Policy. A copy of the draft policy is attached to this report at Appendix 1.
5. The draft policy went out to consultation on 1st July to 30th September 2012 requesting comments by 13th August 2012. A list of consultees is contained within the draft Policy on pages 4 and 5.
6. In response to the consultation, The Amblecote and Kingswinford Royal British Legion both commented that they found the draft gambling policy to be clear and easily understood. The Reverend Simon Fanshaw from Christ Church the Lye and Stambermill was concerned that his church had encountered people with gambling addictions and that the gambling policy should not make gambling any more accessible to the people in his area. The National Casino Industry Forum wanted to assure the Council that their industry is highly regulated, contributes in a positive way to the night time economy of an area by, offering different types of entertainment, not centred around social drinking and in addition provides high employment opportunities. Mr Matt Zarb – Cousin of the Fairer Betting Campaign, expressed concern in relation to the Department of Culture Media and Sports select committee report, recommending an increase in the number of fixed odds betting terminals allowed in Licensed Betting Offices. He felt that this would not promote the four licensing objectives.

7. It is planned that following full Council on 26th November 2012, the policy will be published. It is a statutory requirement that the policy must be published by 14th January 2013.
8. The Licensing and Safety Committee considered a report on the Gambling Policy at its meeting on 12th September, 2012. The Committee recommended that the Cabinet and Council approve the draft Gambling Policy, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

Finance

9. The costs of publication of the Gambling Policy will be met out of the Licensing budget.

Law

10. Gambling Act 2005 section 348 (1)(a) and (b) requires all Local Authorities to prepare and publish a Licensing Policy.
11. Statutory consultees on that policy are set out in Section 349(3) of the Gambling Act 2005: -

The Chief Officer of Police

Representatives of persons carrying on gambling businesses

Representatives of persons who are likely to be affected or by or otherwise have an interest in the licensing policy.

Equality Impact

12. This report takes into account the Council's policy on equality and diversity.
13. A Gambling Policy will impact equally on all groups.
14. A Gambling Policy will impact on children and young persons through their permitted attendance at certain categories of licensed premises.
15. There has been consultation and involvement of young people in developing this policy as part of the consultation process through Area Committee and the Directorate of Children's Services.
16. This application falls within the Council's responsibility for licensing as a direct link to the Council's key corporate priority that safety matters.

Recommendation

17. That the Cabinet consider the Gambling Policy and recommend its approval to the Council.



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Director of Corporate Resources

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List of Background Papers

Gambling Act 2005
Gambling Commission Guidance to the Gambling Act
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Gambling Policy
Responses to the Consultation of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's Gambling Policy