



scrutiny



**Strategy and
Resources**

**Scrutiny Statement
Revised Gambling Act 2005
Statement of Licensing Policy**



Revised Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy

Introduction

1. Every three years the Council is required by the Gambling Act 2005 to review the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy (Licensing Policy) and to consult upon any changes.
2. This policy document also forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. Linked to this, there is a requirement in accordance with the Constitution of Leeds City Council for the Scrutiny of the development of key policies which form part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.
3. The revised Licensing Policy was therefore presented to the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) on 10th September 2018 for formal consideration.
4. The purpose of this report is to inform the Executive Board of the deliberations and conclusions of the Scrutiny Board in order to meet constitutional requirements and support the decision making process of the Executive Board.

Evidence and Information Considered

5. The Chief Officer Elections and Regulatory submitted a report to the Scrutiny Board explaining that the three yearly review of the Council's Licensing Policy was due this year and that officers had reviewed the current policy and made suggestions in line with changes to Gambling Commissions Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice.
6. It was acknowledged that a public consultation had been undertaken in line

with the requirements of the Act and that the policy had also been reviewed based on the comments received.

7. A summary of the consultation responses and the Council's resultant proposed changes were appended to the report, along with the amended Licensing Policy, with track changes, for the Scrutiny Board's consideration. The associated Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening report, dated 1st May 2018, was also appended for information.
8. The following representatives were in attendance to participate in debate, provide information and to respond to Members questions and comments.
 - Cllr James Lewis - Executive Member for Resources and Sustainability
 - John Mulcahy – Chief Officer Elections and Regulatory
 - Susan Holden – Principal Licensing Officer
9. During the meeting, it was also reported that the final draft policy and the consultation report had been presented for endorsement to Licensing Committee on the 4th September 2018. The Scrutiny Board was informed that no further changes had been proposed by the Licensing Committee.

Deliberations and Conclusions

Consultation Response Rate

10. It was reported that the Council had received five responses to the public consultation. These included two gambling operators, two Parish Councils and one support organisation.



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11. We did raise some concerns in light of this apparent low response rate and therefore discussed the consultation strategy that had been applied in this regard. In doing so, we acknowledged that the consultation had run from mid-June to early August 2018 and had been advertised by way of letters and emails to 696 businesses, Ward Councillors, MP's, Parish and Town Councils and support organisations.
12. It was also noted that the responses received were not from individuals, but came from wider representative bodies. As this would be the fifth time that the Council has reviewed and amended the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy, we were advised that the current response rate was in fact deemed to be good.
13. We were also advised that the Licensing Working Group had worked closely with support organisations during the review of the policy, which we accept may have been a contributing factor in terms of the response rate from such organisations. To help support this view, the Chief Officer Elections and Regulatory extended an invitation to all Scrutiny Board Members to attend a future meeting of the Licensing Working Group to observe this interaction with support organisations.

Fixed Odds Betting Terminals

14. In consideration of the main changes made to the Licensing Policy, we noted that a number of issues raised had come to the attention of councils nationwide, with the main issue being an increase in the number of Fixed Odds Betting terminals in deprived areas.

15. We were advised that although there had been no significant change in the number of betting shops, there had been more premises opening in deprived areas, although not recently. In view of this, we are pleased that the Council continues to lobby against Fixed Odds Betting Terminals.

Protecting vulnerable groups

16. We acknowledged that since the last policy review, the city's Large Casino has opened and linked to this, the Council had commissioned research from Leeds Beckett University to identify problem gambling in Leeds. This research detailed a number of groups that were vulnerable to problem gambling and we are very pleased to note that this information has now been included in the revision of the policy.
17. In particular, we are pleased that the protection of vulnerable groups and particularly children forms part of the revised local risk assessment requirements set out within the policy.
18. Linked to this, we also acknowledged the public consultation being launched by the Gambling Commission on age and identity verification procedures in online gambling and welcome the Council's intention to respond to this accordingly.

Conclusion

19. In general we are supportive of the revisions made to the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy, as presented to Scrutiny.

Recommendation

The Executive Board is recommended to note the deliberations and conclusions of the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) when considering the revised Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy.

**Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)
Statement for the Executive Board
Revised Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy
October 2018**



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