

## **Report to Council – 16 October 2018**

### **Report of Licensing Committee (Licensing Act 2003)**

Licensing Committee (Licensing Act 2003) met on 26 September 2018. The minutes are published on the Council's website.

The following Members were present at the meeting:

Present: Councillor Fahmy (Chair)  
Councillor Dychton (Vice Chair)  
Councillors Barton, Bolton (minute numbers 9 and 10), Grimston (minute number 10), Hastrick, Jeffree, Mauthoor, Mills, Parker, Scudder (minute number 10), Smith and Walford

The following was a recommendation to Council:

#### **9. Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles 2019 – 2022**

The Committee received a report of the Head of Community and Environmental Services. It set out the three year review, consultation and proposed amendments of the Council's Gambling Act 2005 policy that was due to expire on 6 January 2019.

The Environmental Health Manager introduced the report. He discussed the background to the policy review and reminded the Committee as to the type of premises and licences covered by it. He advised that the revised policy only contained minor amendments and that members were being asked to approve the Statement of Principles 2019 – 2022 that would take effect from 6 January 2019. He read the recommendations as outlined on Page 4 of the report to the Committee.

The Environmental Health Manager drew the committee's attention to the licensing objectives that drove the policy. He discussed the number and types of premises currently holding licenses under the Gambling Act and advised that new premises licenses were rarely applied for. He discussed the 'no casino' resolution contained in the report and the implications of any change in legislation.

He went on to explain the two proposed amendments to the policy. Firstly, a public health reference was included in the revised Statement of Principles as public health teams played a role in promoting the licensing objectives relating to the protection of children and other vulnerable people from gambling. He described the resulting stronger links with these teams contained within the policy.

Secondly, he discussed the proposed change to the granting of gaming machine applications for five or more machines; obviating the need for a Licensing Sub-Committee to be held where no representations were received and officers were satisfied that the licensing objectives were being promoted.

The Environmental Health Manager discussed the public consultation process that was conducted between 27 July 2018 and 31 August 2018 and the responses received. He advised that the replies were supportive of the proposed changes to the policy. The local Director of Public Health was also supportive of the proposed changes when first contacted albeit no formal response to the consultation was received.

In response to questions from members the officers:

- Clarified why the 'no casino' resolution was contained in the proposed policy.
- Advised that the proposed amendment removing the need for Licensing Sub-Committees applied only to applications for fruit machines in public houses and clubs.
- Explained that fees for gaming licenses were cost neutral so there would be little scope to put monies in to public health issues.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Licensing Committee recommended that the Council, acting as the licensing authority for the Borough of Watford, adopted the Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 as set out at appendix 1, to take effect from 6 January 2019 upon the expiry of the existing policy.
2. The Committee recommended that the Council resolved under section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005 that it would continue with the policy not to issue any casino premises licences as it believes a casino would detract from its aspiration to create a safe, prosperous and family-friendly town centre.
3. That the Local Area Profile be maintained as a separate document and not included within the Statement of Principles, with the upkeep of the profile delegated to officers.