

## **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**30 September 2021**

Present: Councillor G Saffery (Chair)  
Councillor M Devonish (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors K Crout, S Feldman, P Hannon, M Hofman, A Khan,  
B Mauthoor, A Saffery, R Smith, J Stiff and R Wenham

Also present:

Officers: Associate Director of Housing and Wellbeing  
Senior Licensing Officer (AY)  
Business Compliance Officer  
Senior Solicitor  
Democratic Services Manager  
Democratic Services Officer (LM)

### **9 Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Councillors Stanton and Watling.

No apologies were received from Councillor Grimston.

### **10 Disclosure of interests**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### **11 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 8 July 2021 were submitted and signed.

### **12 Review of Environmental Health and Licensing Compliance Policy**

The committee received a report of the Business Compliance Officer which set out the public consultation of the Environmental Health and Licensing Compliance Policy.

The Business Compliance Officer provided an overview of the public consultation and the subsequent changes to the report. He highlighted a change to

paragraph 7.2 following a response from the public consultation. Practical examples of the enforcement of the policy would benefit the public's understanding and would be included at a later date by officers.

The Business Compliance Officer highlighted the recommendations in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3, as the policy covered both executive and non-executive functions. The committee considered areas of policy that were within its remit. Whilst Cabinet would consider those areas under its remit at its next meeting.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026, set out at appendix 1, be approved by the Licensing Committee in relation to functions under its remit.
2. That the Head of Community Protection, in consultation with the Head of Legal, be authorised to make minor amendments to the Policy without member approval. These changes are to be restricted to updates of legislation, codes of practice and guidance notes, and are not to include any changes to approach or considerations.

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### **Continuation of the town centre street trading policy until 31st December 2025**

The committee received the report of the Senior Licensing Officer detailing the outcome of the public consultation. He highlighted that the details of who were consulted was in appendix 2 and not appendix 3 of the report. Only one response was received, which was “no comment” from the police.

In response to a question about the low star rating for food providers who may require additional support, the Head of Community Protection advised new businesses were offered support and guidance before their first inspection. Businesses who had received a low rating were offered intensive assistance. There were few low star rating businesses in Watford.

RESOLVED –

That the Committee approves the town centre street trading policy 2021-2025 as attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

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### **Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles 2022 - 2025**

The committee received a report of the Senior Licensing Officer detailing the public consultation of the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles 2022 - 2025.

The policy was presented at July committee, which included a no casino resolution. There were three responses from the public consultation, none of which suggested amending or reviewing the statement of principles.

Councillor Hannon asked about the no casino principle, being approved by the council in relation to the full council meeting date of 12 October which had yet to occur.

The Senior Licensing Officer stated that the date of the full council meeting in the report needed to be changed as it was now due to be held on the 18 October. The no casino resolution was in the report to reflect the current position and to recommend to maintain the status quo. If the no casino recommendation was not agreed at council, Democratic Services would be consulted.

Following a question from Councillor Hofman regarding the no casino resolution, the Senior Licensing Officer stated that there had been no interest shown in opening a casino in Watford. The policy regarding no casino was always dependent on national guidance and legislation, however there was some discretion in some areas. There was a possibility to depart from guidance if a good reason was provided.

In response to a further question from Councillor Hofman, regarding exemptions to the no casino resolution, the Senior Licensing Officer stated that there were exemptions under law to allow people to put on events that could be described as casino style nights. There were occasional use or temporary use licenses for one off small scale events. The resolution was for a permanent casino premises licence.

Councillor Hannon having asked about the distinction between large bingo venues and casinos, the Senior Licensing Officer stated that there were legal definitions between casino and bingo venues. These were set out in the legislation.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Licensing Committee recommends that the Council, acting as the licensing authority for the Borough of Watford, adopts the Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 as set out at appendix 1, to take effect from 6th January 2022 upon the expiry of the existing policy.

2. The Committee recommends that the Council resolves under section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005 that it will 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.

Chair  
Licensing Committee

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm  
and finished at 7.25 pm