



LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on Thursday 24 October 2024 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors J Thompson (Chair), S Handley (Vice-Chair), E Aston, A J Burford, H Rhodes, P J Scott, K T Tomlinson and R Tyrrell

In Attendance: A Lowe (Director: Policy & Governance), R Phillips (Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy Service Delivery Manager), S Hardwick (Lead Lawyer: Litigation & Regulatory), A Singh (Licensing & Night-Time Economy Manager) and J Clarke (Senior Democracy Officer (Democracy))

Apologies: Councillor G C W Latham-Reynolds and L Parker

LIC6 Declarations of Interest

None.

LIC7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 29 July 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

LIC8 Review of Statement of Gambling Policy

The Licensing & Night-Time Economy Manager presented the review of the Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy.

The Gambling Act 2005 regulated the provision of gambling in Great Britain and allocated responsibility for licensing these premises to the local authorities within their areas. Gambling licensed establishments included bingo halls, bookmakers, amusement arcades and public houses with gaming machines.

It was a requirement that the Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy be reviewed on a three yearly basis and the Council's most recent policy was last issued in January 2022. The Policy set out the principles that the Council would apply when undertaking its role and responsibilities under the Act.

The Policy would have regard to the licensing objectives set out in the Act, namely:



- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime;
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by Gambling.

The revised Policy had been reviewed and prepared in accordance with the Gambling Policy Best Practice Guidance.

If the revised Policy was not approved, the Council may risk being in breach of its obligations as Licensing Authority under the provision of the Gambling Act 2005.

The current number of licences issued under the Gambling Act 2005 by Telford & Wrekin Council was:

- 16 Betting Premises Licences
- 2 Bingo Premises Licences
- 2 Adult Gaming Centres

A consultation exercise on the revised Policy was undertaken between 22 July 2024 and 23 September 2024. Details of the consultees were set out at Appendix A to the report. There had been no responses received from consultees during the consultation period.

The Policy supported the following Council policies:

- Everyone benefits from a thriving economy; and
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live

If Members were minded to approve the Policy, the revised Policy would come into effect on 31 January 2025.

During the debate, some Members thanked Officers for the report and noted there were no proposed changes. In relation to enforcement, it was asked what was involved in product testing. A further question was raised in relation to how many times the local authority had needed to intervene and how many issues were out there. Other Members asked if there had been any enquiries over the last three years regarding the Policy itself.

The Licensing & Night-Time Economy Manager confirmed that there was a yearly inspection of licensed premises and full inspections had been undertaken approximately six weeks ago. The Gambling Commission had proformas and templates for each of the different premises type with relevant



criteria which were used to carry out the inspections. Each of the premises had passed the inspection, although one premises did require some further investigation. There had been low numbers of complaints in Telford and when individuals faced a problem they were signposted to GamCare. In relation to issues with a premises, these could be reported to the Council or to the Gambling Commission who had their own enforcement and compliance procedures. Underage gambling and customer complaints were more likely now to be related to online gambling, which is regulated by the Gambling Commission. In relation to enquiries regarding the Policy, during the eight-week consultation there had been no comment from consultees. The Gambling Commission Policies had not been updated recently but this may change during the next year.

The Director: Policy & Governance reassured Members that it was uncommon for the Council to have received reports or concerns and was rare to identify concerns in relation to children and if an issue was identified the Police would raise this with the Council to target activity.

RESOLVED: that the Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy be approved and it be RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL that the Policy be adopted.

The Director: Policy & Governance updated Members that there had been some changes to the SMT structure and that Public Protection and Registrars now sat with her as Director and these, together with Audit Investigation strengthened the enforcement offer.

The Director: Policy & Governance asked if Members would consider getting involved with activities in relation to gambling establishments, taxi and premises licensed under the Licensing Act 2004 in order to give them a flavour of the work that took place in relation to enforcement. It was suggested that there would be a standing item on the agenda to give Members a verbal update on enforcement work and that this may need to be in private session when necessary.

The Service Delivery Manager for Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy suggested that a day could be sought for Members to look at a taxi renewal and have a series of visits to gambling establishments, licensed premises and look at the work of the taxi marshalls in order to give Members a flavour of the work that was undertaken in respect of enforcement.

Members welcomed the opportunity to improve their training and knowledge. A question was raised if Members could have names and contact details of the officers to report issues.



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

**Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough**

The Director: Policy & Governance advised Members that they could use the Member Enquiry process on the Members Portal or MyTelford App to log or report issues, but an easy read document would be circulated.

The meeting ended at 6.24 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday 19 December 2024