

**Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing Committee
held on 14th October 2015 at Pippbrook, Dorking
from 8.00pm to 8.25pm**

Present: Councillors John Chandler (Chairman), Charles Yarwood (Vice-Chairman), Tim Ashton, Margaret Cooksey, Paul Elderton, Paula Hancock, David Mir, Wayne Monkman and Peter Stanyard.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th May 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sarah Seed.

3. Disclosure of Interests

None declared

4. Gambling Act 2005 – Statement of Principles

The Senior Licensing Officer advised the Committee that the existing Statement of Principles had been introduced in January 2013. Every three years the Council had to review the policy statement, consult on any proposed changes, and subsequently adopt a new policy.

The revised draft policy statement, due for adoption in January 2016, had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting, and the Chairman invited the Committee to feed back their comments prior to the document going out to consultation.

Members asked for clarification regarding the timetable for the consultation and whether the time available meant that it could be guaranteed the new policy would be in place by the required date of 31st January 2016. The Senior Licensing Officer advised that the consultation would begin as soon as the Committee had approved the draft, with the intention of completing the consultation by 20th November and the policy statement being approved at full Council on 24th November. If for any reason this could not be achieved, the next opportunity for approval would be the full Council meeting in February. Members were reassured that although the existing policy was due for revision by January 2016, it remains valid until such time as the new statement is adopted. Nonetheless, Members expressed a strong preference that the new policy statement be ready for approval at the November Council meeting.

Members asked the Senior Licensing Officer to briefly outline any key differences between the revised draft policy statement and the version currently in use. It was explained that the majority of the changes included in the revised version were material changes designed to simplify the content and reduce repetition. Some of the gaming machine classifications had been amended in accordance with changes to the maximum stakes and prizes permitted, whilst a more substantive change related to the introduction of Local Risk Assessments, which from April 2016 will require licensees to assess the local risks to the licensing objectives posed by the provision of gambling facilities at their premises. Members asked what might happen in the event of a licence applicant failing to submit a risk assessment, and where responsibility lay for determining the adequacy of any risk assessment provided. The Senior Licensing Officer advised that any application which did not appear to provide an adequate risk assessment would be carefully looked at in consultation with Legal Services, and would likely be returned to the applicant with guidance on which areas would need to be addressed.

A small number of minor corrections were identified by Members in the draft document, which the Senior Licensing Officer undertook to amend as necessary before the document was presented for consultation. It was additionally agreed that Town Centre Forums would be added to the list of recognized bodies/associations on page 13 of the draft document, and that the deleted text on page 8 in relation to advertising requirements would be reinstated.

Members noted the obligations outlined in the policy statement on the part of the licensee to ensure that safeguarding measures are adhered to. Clarification was sought as to how compliance with these measures is monitored. The Senior Licensing Officer advised that a random programme of premises inspections is carried out across the District to ensure that the licence holder is complying with their obligations.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the draft Statement of Principles be approved for consultation with those consultees as detailed in the report, and;
- 2) At the conclusion of the consultation period, following consideration of the responses to the consultation, the draft policy be recommended to the Council for adoption.

.....

Chairman

Date: