

MINUTES OF CABINET MEMBER SIGNING MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 2 JULY 2024, 10:30AM – 10:45AM.

PRESENT: Councillor Ajda Ovat, Cabinet Member for Communities

In attendance: Daliah Barrett, Licensing Team Leader and Nazyer Choudhury, Principal Committee Co-Ordinator

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS NOTICE

The Chair referred to the notice of filming at meetings and this information was noted.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no declarations of interest.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5. DEPUTATIONS/ PETITIONS/ QUESTIONS

There were none.

6. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

It was a requirement to regularly review the Council's Statement of Gambling Policy. The current policy was adopted in January 2021 and is therefore due for review this year, to be published in January 2025. The Gambling Commission had advised Local Authorities to extend their existing policies so as to have a lawful policy in place come January 2025. There were changes expected from Central Government and the Gambling Commission. During December 2020 the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) launched a major and wide-ranging review of gambling laws to ensure that they are fit for the digital age. There was a 'Call for evidence' and a new Gambling Bill was expected to be presented to Parliament. The Department for Culture, Media & Sport has published a white paper on gambling reform in April 2023 but there had yet to be any changes to the legislation which would not be in place, so a further review may be required in late 2025 to take account of these changes.

The report sought authorisation to take the attached draft policy to public consultation.

There were changes to the proposed policy at this time. The draft revised policy contained more information about the socio-economic make-up of the borough and the impacts of gambling harm in the communities. The Local Area Profile Supplementary document highlights the impact high street gambling premises had on the most vulnerable and 'at risk'

areas of the borough. The Council considered that it was necessary to manage the impact that facilities for gambling have in areas where its most vulnerable residents may be placed at increasing risk from gambling harm.

All areas shown within the local area profile as being at high overall risk of Gambling related harm, were generally considered inappropriate for further gambling establishments, which could potentially raise the risk of gambling related harm to vulnerable people living in those areas. Operators were therefore asked to consider very carefully whether seeking to locate new premises or relocating existing premises within these areas would be consistent with the licensing objectives and the local risks identified. However, the Gambling Act 2005 still requires the Council to 'aim to permit' applications.

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The Cabinet Member RESOLVED

1. To approve the 6-week consultation on the draft Gambling Policy 2025-2028 (Appendix 1) and the local area profile (Appendix 2). b)
2. To note that following consultation a further report will be presented for decision to recommend approval to Full Council for final adoption.

Reasons for decision

To comply with the requirements of the Gambling Act 2005 the Council must prepare and consult on a statement of gambling policy for the period 2025- 2028.

The Council would be renewing its resolution, first made in 2007, to not issue any casino licences in the next three years.

To obtain the views of interested parties on the proposed statement of gambling policy and use these views to formulate any changes to the policy.

Alternative options considered

No alternatives were considered. It was a statutory requirement that the policy be reviewed at least every three years, and that a public consultation was carried out. If the Council did not have a policy, it would be acting ultra vires with regards to any decisions it makes when determining gambling premises licences.

The Gambling Commission has laid down requirements which the Council must follow with regards to the Gambling Policy. If they were not followed the Council could face risk of judicial challenge. The Gambling Commission guidance had been followed in drafting this policy.

7. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of urgent business.

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor Ajda Ovat

Signed by Cabinet Member.....

Date2 July 2024.....