



## North of England

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Principal Licensing Officer  
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23 August 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Stockton on Tees Borough Council Statement of Licensing Principles (Gambling)**

The British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) represents brewing companies and their pub interests, and pub owning companies, accounting for 98% of beer production and around two thirds of the 60,000 pubs in the UK. Many of our members own and run pubs in Stockton. The Association promotes the responsible sale of alcohol and management of licensed premises. It has a range of good practice information and guidance for member companies. Further information is available on our website at [www.beerandpub.com](http://www.beerandpub.com).

Overall, we welcome the approach taken by the Council in basing its draft Statement of Principles on the revised LACORS template, and are pleased to comment as follows. This response is also supported by BII, the professional body for the licensed retail sector, the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (ALMR), which represents the interests of smaller independent companies within licensed retailing and the Federation of Licensed Victuallers Association (FLVA) which represents self-employed licensees in England.

### **The protection of children and vulnerable persons**

We would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that pubs have had amusement with prize machines on their premises for many years. The BBPA has been pressing for legislation prohibiting under 18s from playing all cash machines (ACMs) since before the introduction of our Code of Practice on Minimum Age of Players, and we therefore very much welcome the restriction now contained in the new Gambling Act.

The Association first introduced its Code of Practice in 1998, and has kept it under regular review since then. As a result of the Code, which is supported by other trade bodies including the ALMR, BII, FLVA and BACTA, ACMs coming on to the market include the "No Under 18s to Play" prohibition notice in the front of the machine. The inclusion of this notice has been achieved at the instigation of the Association in co-operation with machine suppliers.

BBPA member company training schemes also reinforce the management of the machines to ensure the minimum age requirement is complied with, for example by requesting recognised ID such as a PASS accredited proof of age card, driving licence or passport where there is doubt that the player is 18 years of age or over.

### **Grant of additional permits**

While there is no actual requirement under the Gambling Act 2005 for machines to be sited in the bar, we believe that supervision of machines is very important and this is again reinforced by our Code of Practice and staff training. Under the new regime, when operators apply for additional machine permits and they are complying with the Gambling Commission Code of Practice (which will of course replace the BBPA Code), there is no reason why these should not be granted. It would be helpful if the Statement of Principles could reflect this.

### **Application procedures for more than two machines**

The Association would welcome the inclusion in the policy of an outline of the application procedures for permits for more than two machines. We understand that some councils are taking the view that they will grant up to four machine permits without the need for a hearing. We support such an approach in the interests of reduced administration and bureaucracy for both Councils and applicants and would encourage you to consider this possibility.

Last time around, both the BBPA and LACORS were concerned about the lack of a generic application form for permits but we are pleased that a standard form is now available.

We trust that these comments are helpful and that they will be taken into account in the final version of the policy. The BBPA is committed to ensuring a smooth transition to the operation of the new gambling regime and looks forward to working with you to achieve that objective.