

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**16 JANUARY 2025**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**CABINET DECISION**

**Access, Communities & Community Safety- Lead Cabinet Member – Cllr Norma Stephenson**

**REVIEW OF THE STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES FOR GAMBLING PREMISES IN STOCKTON**

**SUMMARY**

The Authority is required, by the Gambling Act 2005, to publish a Statement of Principles (policy) that it proposes to apply when exercising its functions under the Act. This policy must be published every three years.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council's current policy came into effect on 31 January 2022 and is now due for review.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Adoption of the Gambling Statement of Principles under s349 of The Gambling Act 2005 is an executive function, it is recommended the Cabinet agree the revised policy which would then come into effect on the 31 January 2025.

**DETAIL**

2. Gambling is regulated in two ways, the Gambling Commission regulate the individuals who provide gambling, carrying out a fit and proper test on licensed operators. The Local Authority issue premise licences to those operators ensuring the premises where gambling is carried out meets legislation and guidance.
3. Gambling has changed in recent years, traditional methods such as betting shops are being replaced with online gambling. The Gambling Commission regulate online gambling. The number of betting shop premises have reduced by 17 over the past 9 years. The main source of statistical data on gambling is from the Gambling Commission website, further information is attached as Appendix 1.
4. As well as the Gambling Act 2005, the Gambling Commission Guidance for Local Authorities details how the local authority should exercise its functions when licensing premises for gambling. More information can be found at:  
[www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-to-licensing-authorities](http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-to-licensing-authorities)
5. There have been no legislative changes since 2022, as such there have been no material changes to the current policy. The policy has had a refresh regarding look, ease of use and updated information about the Borough, gambling participation and gambling harms, and a copy of the draft policy can be found at:  
[www.stockton.gov.uk/current-applications-and-consultations](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/current-applications-and-consultations)

6. The draft policy was published for a four-week public consultation. The consultation included stakeholders such as the Gambling Commission, trade associations, licensees, children's services, local residents groups, responsible authorities including police and public health, and all members. The consultation was also published on the Council website and a public notice was placed on the notice boards of all public libraries. No comments on the draft policy were received.
7. The Statutory Licensing Committee considered the draft policy at a hearing on 24 September 2024, no additional comments were received.
8. The Corporate Management Team also considered the draft policy at a meeting on 10 December 2024, no additional comments were received.

## **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

9. The policy aims to uphold the licensing objectives, which support the role of the Gambling Commission and ourselves. These are:
  - 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
  - protecting children and other vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited by gambling
10. This report subject to an Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment which has been completed and is available online at [Assessment Details - Stockton EPIA System](#)

## **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

11. The licensing objectives in the Gambling Act aim to protect children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

12. The cost of licensing gambling premises and issuing gaming permits and lottery registrations will be met from the fees paid by applicants and licence holders. The fee structure, in terms of the application / renewal fees to be charged, is to be determined with a view to full cost recovery. The setting of fees has been delegated to officers, the current fees in this sector are set at the maximum national limit.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

13. The Gambling Act 2005 requires the Licensing Authority to prepare a policy every three years. The Council's current policy has been in effect from 31 January 2022 and is now due for review. Adoption of this policy under s349 of The Gambling Act 2005 is an executive function.
14. The adoption of the policy will assist members and officers when considering applications and businesses intending to submit applications. It will give a clear outline of the Authority will consider when assessing applications. The policy can be challenged by way of judicial review.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

15. This matter is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

## WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS

16. Consultation on the draft policy commenced in August 2024, a public notice was placed in all public libraries and a was placed on the council website. The link to the website was emailed to stakeholders including responsible authorities, trade bodies, members and residents associations. All Members were directly consulted via email. The draft policy was also considered by the Statutory Licensing Committee on 24 September 2024 and the Corporate Management Team on 10 December 2024, no additional comments were received.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices 1

[www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-to-licensing-authorities](http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-to-licensing-authorities)

[www.stockton.gov.uk/current-applications-and-consultations](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/current-applications-and-consultations)

[www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/publication/statistics-on-gambling-participation-year-2-2024-wave-1-official-statistics](http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/publication/statistics-on-gambling-participation-year-2-2024-wave-1-official-statistics)

[Assessment Details - Stockton EPIA System](#)

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