

TITLE OF REPORT: OSC Review – The impact of gambling on the borough – Scoping Report

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SUMMARY

The Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee have agreed that it will carry out a review of the impact of gambling in Gateshead as part of its 2016/17 work programme.

The review will draw upon local and national evidence and will focus on:

- **Gambling in Gateshead** – the distribution, types and number of premises licensed for gambling and how this has changed over time; the types of gambling taking place in the borough
- **The legal framework for regulation of gambling and the role of the regulators** - the Gambling Act 2005 and the respective roles of the Gambling Commission and Gateshead Licensing Authority; the impact of other regulatory regimes on gambling activity
- **Local and national concerns about gambling** - evidence and observations from local and national regulators, operators, trade bodies, treatment providers, charities and public agencies
- **Developing research evidence on gambling related harm** - a review of recent developments and best practice and how it can be used in Gateshead to minimise gambling related harm.

This report sets out the scope of the review.

1. Background

2. The Gambling Act came into force in 2007 and put in place a comprehensive and cohesive regulatory regime based on three fundamental objectives:

- 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

3. The Council's overall vision for Gateshead, as described in Gateshead's Sustainable Community Strategy (the refreshed Vision 2030) is:

“Local people realising their full potential, enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, equal, safe , prosperous and sustainable Gateshead”

and it is recognised that understanding the harm caused by problem gambling and the regulation of gambling activities plays an important role in realising this vision.

4. Gambling has always formed part of the entertainment culture but in recent years there have been significant changes in the way gambling is conducted and it is important that we understand the nature of these changes and the harms that can be caused by irresponsible and problem gambling.
5. There have been highly publicised national concerns about the prevalence of some types of gambling activity but there has been no work done locally yet to establish the local prevalence and impact.
6. Gateshead Council’s Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles 2016 - 2019 sets out an intention to examine and publish information (Local Licensing Guidance) about localities in the borough to assist gambling operators in assessing the local risks to the licensing objectives posed by the provision of gambling facilities at each of their premises that they can put in place policies, procedures and control measures to mitigate those risks.
7. In order for this information to be relevant and useful it is essential that a comprehensive examination is made of the available data and its relevance to gambling related harm.
8. For these reasons the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee has chosen to undertake a review of the impact of gambling in Gateshead as part of the 2016/17 programme.

9. **Scope of the review**

10. The review will focus on:

- **Gambling in Gateshead** – the distribution, types and number of premises licensed for gambling and how this has changed over time; the types of gambling taking place in the borough
- **The legal framework for regulation of gambling and the role of the regulators** - the Gambling Act 2005 and the respective roles of the Gambling Commission and Gateshead Licensing Authority; the impact of other regulatory regimes on gambling activity
- **Local and national concerns about gambling** - evidence and observations from local and national regulators, operators, trade bodies, treatment providers, charities and public agencies
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11. The Process

12. The process and timescales are identified at Appendix 1. It is proposed that the review is undertaken within a 10 month period (June 2016 to April 2017).

13. Who will be involved?

14. Organisations involved in the provision and regulation and analysis of gambling activities including officers from Gateshead Council, the Gambling Commission, gambling operators, treatment providers and those involved in current research into gambling related harm

15. Recommendations

- That the Communities and Place OSC confirms the impact of Gambling in Gateshead as its review topic for 2016/17
- The focus of this work should be centred around the areas highlighted in paragraph 10 above.

Progress of the Review

This appendix sets out the standard framework for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to agree and conduct policy reviews and includes proposals specific for this review.

Stage 1

The scope, purpose and intended outputs of the Review should firstly be agreed by Cabinet and the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Proposal

- 20 June 2016 - Scoping report to Scrutiny Committee

Stage 2

Evidence may be gathered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee making visits as necessary or inviting persons and organisations to give evidence before it. Relevant Strategic Directors and the Chief Executive will assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as necessary. The evidence gathered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be written up by officers.

Proposal

- 12 September, 31 October, 5 December 2016, 30 January 2017 - To have evidence-gathering events that will involve research, presentations by relevant officers, outside organisations and site visits if appropriate (details to be confirmed).

Stage 3

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will then meet (as many times as is necessary) to analyse the information gathered and prepare its conclusions.

Proposal

- 6 March 2017 - Committee to consider an interim report, prepared by the Lead Officers, and to analyse the evidence presented.

Stage 4

Officers will then prepare a report on the issue based on the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Officers will submit this report to the next practicable meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to secure agreement that the report is a fair, accurate and complete reflection of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's conclusions.

Proposal

- 24 April 2017 - Draft final report to be considered by the Committee.

Stage 5

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will then present this report to the Cabinet. The Cabinet may take note of the report, approve all or some of the report's recommendations or refer the report to full Council or to an Advisory Group for further consultation.

Proposal

- Date to follow