

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, 4 June 2019

PRESENT: Councillor K Dodds (Chair)

Councillor(s): W Dick, D Bradford, D Duggan, J Gibson,
S Gallagher, B Goldsworthy, H Kelly, J Kielty, K McClurey,
R Mullen, B Oliphant and M Ord

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): M Charlton and N Weatherley

LC64 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

LC65 CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of the Committee and the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair for the municipal year 2019/20 were noted.

LC66 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

LC67 HEARINGS AND REVIEWS BEFORE SUB-COMMITTEES

The Committee received a report providing details of Hearings and Reviews which have taken place before the sub-committee between 1 September 2018 – 30 April 2019.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted.

LC68 APPEALS AND PROSECUTIONS

The Committee received a report detailing licensing related appeals and prosecutions between 18 September 2018 and 20 May 2019.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted

LC69 LICENCES, NOTIFICATIONS, PERMITS AND REGISTRATIONS ISSUED UNDER THE GAMBLING ACT 2005

The Committee received a report providing details of Licences, Notifications, Permits and Registrations issued under the Gambling Act 2005 between 1 September 2018 and 30 April 2019.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted.

LC70 LICENCES AND CERTIFICATES ISSUED UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

The Committee received a report detailing the numbers of Licenses and Certificates issued under delegated powers between 1 September 2018 to 30 April 2019.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted.

LC71 OTHER APPLICATIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS PROCESSED UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

The Committee received a report providing details of other applications and notifications processed under the Licensing Act 2003 between 1 September 2018 and 30 April 2019.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted

LC72 LOCAL LICENSING GUIDANCE

The Committee received a report providing an update regarding the Local Licensing Guidance which is published in accordance with the Statement of Licensing Policy.

Paragraphs 3.17 – 3.20 of the Statement of Licensing Policy state that from time to time the Council will produce 'Local Licensing Guidance' to assist applicants and licensees in their understanding of local issues pertinent to their licensing obligations.

(<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/media/2465/LICENSING-POLICY-2016-2021/pdf/LICENSING-POLICY-2016-2021.pdf>)

The Council has produced an interactive mapping tool to enable free and ready access to data relevant to different locations across the Borough, as follows:-
<http://gis-gateshead.gov.uk/gatesheadmaps/HALO/app.html>

This tool is regularly updated to ensure that the most up to date information available is included.

Applicants are encouraged to use this tool prior to submitting their application, to help them shape their operating schedule. Licensees are encouraged to use the tool to ensure that their operating schedule remains appropriate over time.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted

LC73 UPDATE ON CHANGES TO THE MAXIMUM STAKES FOR FIXED ODDS BETTING TERMINALS

The Committee received a report updating them on changes to the maximum stakes on fixed odd betting terminals.

Fixed odds betting terminals (FOBTs) are electronic machines, sited in betting

shops, which contain a variety of games, including roulette. Each machine accepts bets for amounts up to a pre-set maximum and pays out according to fixed odds on the simulated outcomes of games.

The Gambling Act 2005 classifies FOBTs as B2 gaming machines and allows up to four machines in betting premises. There are around 33,000 B2 machines in Great Britain (Gambling Commission statistics, November 2018). Until this year the maximum stake on a single bet was £100.

FOBTs are controversial as critics suggest that it is possible to lose large amounts of money and claim that the machine have a casual role in problem gambling.

The gambling industry says there is no evidence of a casual link between B2s and problem gambling. Academic research suggest that the cause of problem gambling are complex and are not well understood.

In October 2017, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) announced a range of proposals to strengthen protections around gambling. These included lowering the maximum stake on FOBTs to between £50 and £2. A consultation on the proposals, including the level of the new stake, closed on 23 January 2018.

On 17 May 2018, the DCMS announced that the maximum stake would be lowered to £2.

The October 2018 Budget report stated that the reduced stake would come into effect in October 2019. Critics argued that this could put the lives of problem gamblers at risk. Tracey Crouch, the Sports Minister, resigned over the “delayed” implementation, claiming that it was “unjustifiable”.

On 5 November 2018, the Chancellor told the Treasury Select Committee that the Government had to implement the new stake “in a way that is balanced and fair and allows for an orderly transition”. However, amendments to the Finance Bill to bring the implementation date forward to April 2019 attracted cross-party support.

On Monday 1 April 2019 the reduction of the maximum stakes on fixed odds betting terminals (FOBT) came into effect. The reduction in maximum stakes saw stakes reduced from £100 to £2.

Within days however, some bookmakers were accused of bypassing FOBT rules with new roulette-style games. It was reported in the press that some bookmakers launched high-stakes roulette-style games on the same day restrictions on the machines came into force.

Betfred began offering a roulette-style game called Virtual Cycling, that allows gamblers to place bets on a piece of paper obtained over the counter, showing a graphic similar to a roulette table. The game features a maximum stake of £500.

Similarly, Paddy Power launched a betting game called Pick ‘n’ 36 and featuring a maximum stake of £100. Paddy Power’s game lets players bet on numbers between

1 and 36, as well as on other eventualities similar to roulette. A TV screen displays “hot” and “cold” numbers, giving the impression that the numbers selected are not random.

Government Ministers expressed concern that bookmakers appeared to be cheating the system and circumnavigating measure introduced to reduce harm. The Gambling Commission have advised that they are aware of these new products and are investigating. They have written to operators to remind them of their responsibilities to ensure that consumers are protected.

RESOLVED – that the information be noted

LC74 LICENSING APPEALS - CASE STUDY

The Committee received a presentation on Licensing Appeals undertaken, by the way of a recent case study.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted.

Chair.....