

## LICENSING ACT 2003 COMMITTEE

17 August 2021

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### LICENSING PRINCIPLES FOR GAMBLING ACT 2005

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#### Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to invite Members to approve a draft Statement of Licensing Principles for the Gambling Act 2005 to be released for consultation (**Appendix 1**).

#### Background

2. The Gambling Act 2005 requires licensing authorities to publish a Statement of Principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under the Act every three years. Darlington's current Statement of Licensing Principles was published in January 2019 and, as such, a new policy is due to be published in January 2022.
  3. The Gambling Commission provides guidance to Licensing Authorities and this was last updated by them on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Roles of the Gambling Commission and Local Authorities differ and these are highlighted in **Appendix 2**. Since publication of the previous principles there have been few changes to the guidance given to Local Authorities by the Gambling Commission.
  4. This Statement of Licensing Principles for Gambling recognises that gambling related harm creates challenges for Local Authorities, however the area of growth in recent years has been towards on-line gambling, which falls within the Gambling Commission's area of responsibility. Covid-19 has also had an impact on gambling behaviours, as for many months betting shops were not allowed to open. It is still uncertain what the long-term impact Covid-19 will have on gambling premises.
  5. The earlier proliferation of 'Fixed Odds Betting Terminals' (FOBT's), which saw a maximum permitted stake of £100 reduced to £2, resulted in a number of betting shops with these terminals close across the country (including some in Darlington) as bookmakers adapted their business models.
  6. Members will be aware that a census took place on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and data from that census will be relevant to the local area profile of this document. Any data published prior to final approval will be incorporated to provide the most accurate information available.
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7. Key stakeholders have already been made aware that this policy is to be renewed and were invited to make comment before formal public consultation.
8. Following formal consultation, this Statement of Licensing Principles will be returned to the Licensing Committee for approval before a final decision is made, which must be by full Council.

### **Recommendation**

9. Members are invited to approve this Licensing Principles for the Gambling Act policy document for public consultation.

**Dave Winstanley**  
**Group Director of Services**

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft statement of the Licensing Principles

Appendix 2 – Functions of Gambling Commission and Licensing Authorities