
REPORT OF LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2009

Chairman: * Councillor Mrs Lurline Champagne

Councillors : * Husain Akhtar * Ashok Kulkarni
* Don Billson * Mrs Vina Mithani
* Mrinal Choudhury * John Nickolay
* G Chowdhury * Phillip O'Dell
* Mano Dharmarajah * Raj Ray
* Thaya Idaikkadar * Tom Weiss
* Nizam Ismail * Jeremy Zeid

* Denotes Member present

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION I - Revised Gambling Policy for Approval

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Community and Environment which, set out a draft revised Gambling Policy and the responses received to the consultation exercise carried out between May and August 2009.

An officer reported that there were three main areas of change to the Policy which sought to eliminate issues relating to users of gaming machines as follows:

- to provide clarification regarding club formation where a club gaming permit was to be applied;
- how the Council, as the Licensing Authority, would determine the suitability of premises where an operator claimed that they were providing a skills with prizes machine;
- an addition of small society lotteries.

Whilst there were options available to the licensing authority regarding the fee structure, these were currently set by the Council at the maximum level allowable.

In response to questions, the officer confirmed that:

- the Gambling Commission regulated the advertisement of gambling and the increased use of remote gambling through the Internet;
- an area of concern was children using computers in Internet Cafes for gambling, as Data Protection rules prevented authorities from investigating which sites had been used;

- alcohol licensed premises that held gaming permits, such as public houses, were required to monitor the use of the machines on their premises by situating the machines near the bar. However, the characteristics of some machines were exempt from these provisions;
- private members' clubs that had failed to monitor the use of gaming machines on their premises had been prosecuted and cautioned for contravening the conditions attached to their permit and/or the Gambling Commission Code of Practice.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That the revised Gambling Policy be approved.

(See also Minute 120 and 124).