

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 2.00 pm on **Tuesday, 24 September 2024**

PRESENT

Councillors: Mark Walker (Chair), David Jackson (Vice-Chair), Dan Levy, Andrew Lyon, Paul Marsh, David Melvin and Sandra Simpson

Officers: Mandy Fathers (Business Manager – Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Services), Andrea Thomas (Licensing Officer) Max Thompson (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Christine Elsasser (Democratic Services Officer)

10 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Edward James, Martin McBride, Tim Sumner and Jane Doughty.

11 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made by members of the Committee.

12 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Councillor Dan Levy proposed that the minutes of a previous Committee meeting, held on 18 June 2024, be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record. This was seconded by Councillor David Jackson, was put to a vote, and was agreed by the Committee.

The Committee Resolved to:

I. Agree the minutes of a previous meeting, held on 18 June 2024, as a true and accurate record.

13 Participation of the Public

There was no public participation at the meeting.

14 Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles (Policy) Review 2024

Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Services, introduced the report, which provided details of the statutory requirement to review the current Policy and provides Committee with a draft document for consultation.

It was explained that Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 (the “Act”) required licensing authorities before each successive period of three years to:

- a) Prepare a statement of the principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under this Act during that period, and
- b) Publish the statement.

The next “successive period” would start on 31 January 2025. However, the Statement needed to be adopted by 31 December 2024 as it must be published at least 4 weeks before the date on which it comes into effect on the authority’s website and also be available for inspection by the public.

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It was to be noted that before determining its Policy, the Authority was required to consult with the police, persons who represent the interests of gambling businesses and those who represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by gambling businesses.

Annex A of the report set out, for consultation, the proposed Statement of Policy and Principles by which this Authority would exercise its functions during the period 2025 – 2028.

The proposed Statement largely mirrored the existing Statement of Policy and Principles. The opportunity had been taken to strengthen the policy in a number of areas as detailed in the report and due to time constraints, it was proposed to carry out a reduced consultation period of 6 weeks. Comments would be reported back to the Licensing Committee in November 2024, with a view to a recommendation being made to the Council to adopt the Policy at its meeting on 27 November 2024.

Members asked various questions and the following answers were provided:

- When inspections of gambling premises were made, the vendors had to show due diligence and would be required to keep an eye on betting records to ensure people did not run up large debts. Officers would share inspection forms with Members to see examples of various situations and also self – exclusion examples.
- The gambling commission held powers on advertising and marketing for gambling.
- In regards to the area map, it was suggested that other railway stations be added if possible.

Councillor Dan Levy proposed that the Committee agree the recommendations as set out on the report. This was seconded by Councillor David Jackson, was put to a vote, and was unanimously agreed by the Committee.

The Committee Resolved to:

- I. Consider the draft Statement of Principles at Annex A; and,
Approved a consultation exercise to seek the views of the trade and relevant stakeholders on the revised Policy.

The Meeting closed at 2.18 pm

CHAIR