

SOUTH NORFOLK LICENSING AND GAMBLING ACTS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the South Norfolk Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee of South Norfolk Council, held on Tuesday, 30 July 2024 at 9.30 am.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: J Easter (Chairman), , G Blundell, K Cross, J Eddy, B McClenning, C McConnell, R Savage and I Spratt

Apologies for Absence: Councillors: M Dewsbury

Officers in Attendance: S Harris (Licensing Team Leader), R Utton (Legal Advisor - Birketts) and L Palmer (Democratic Services Officer)

33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Dewsbury.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

35. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 20 September 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

36. GAMBLING ACT 2005 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES (GAMBLING ACT POLICY REVIEW)

The Chair referred members to the report in the supplementary papers which had additional comments for their consideration.

The Licensing Team Manager presented the report. South Norfolk Council was required under the Gambling Act 2005 to have in place a Statement of Principles which would set out how the Council proposed to process applications and uphold the requirements of the legislation. This must be reviewed every three years and

the current policy would expire on 31 January 2025.

The updated policy took into account changes issued by the Gambling Commission, best practice approaches and clarity on how the authority expected gambling operators to engage with vulnerable and/or underage persons.

Following consideration of the draft document by committee, the revised policy would be subject to a six week consultation, starting on 14 August 2024. Key stakeholders, such as gambling charities, statutory consultees, license holders and various representatives of the gambling industry would be consulted directly. Comments would be collated and the final proposed policy document would be brought back to the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee to be referred to full Council and would come into force in January 2025.

A member asked for clarification on the meaning of Small Society Lotteries. The Licensing Team Manager explained that these were usually schools or village halls that would sell raffle tickets over the course of a year to raise money. The profit must be under £20,000 to be classed as a Small Society Lottery. Events where tickets were sold and prizes drawn the same day were exempt from registering as a Small Society Lottery.

A member asked if school PTAs were covered under these regulations. The Licensing Team Manager confirmed that they were and that some school PTAs were already registered with the Council. Members could highlight this requirement to organisations they were involved in within their communities and refer them to the Licensing Team for information.

In response to a member's question on test purchases, the Licensing Team Manager explained that the Gambling Commission had operatives who would make visits to premises and conduct test purchases. There were stringent safeguards in place to protect any young people involved so that they were not put at risk. There had been no intelligence that test purchases were warranted in any of the South Norfolk premises, but Licensing Officers would be invited to attend if the Gambling Commission was to make a test purchase in the area.

Members discussed the proximity of gambling premises to schools and housing for vulnerable adults. Members understood the separation of the licensing and planning functions of the council and the Licensing Team Manager said that the Licensing Team should be notified of planning applications with licences to be determined. The right to refuse a license was maintained, even if planning permission was granted.

A member commented that there was no mention of where toilets would be located within a premises. Young people could be working in another part of the building and should not have to walk through an over 18 area to use the facilities. The Licensing Team manager agreed that the location of rest facilities could be considered for inclusion at an appropriate point in the policy.

A member asked how the policy related to gaming machines in pubs, as these could be accessed by children under 18. The Licensing Team Manager explained that if a premises had up to two gaming machines, the Licensing Authority had to be notified. If there were more than two machines, a permit was required, and the machines had to be in sight of the bar. The DPS was

responsible for the premises complying with these requirements and Licensing Officers would undertake routine visits at which the gaming machines would be inspected to ensure they were compliant. She added that only games of chance were licensed; those that required an element of skill, such as trivia machines, were exempt.

In response to a member's question around signage for the Challenge 25 Policy, the Licensing Team Manager confirmed that all premises with an alcohol licence and betting shops were required to have an age checking scheme in place with signage explaining acceptable forms of ID. Members agreed that the policy should specify that the signage must be displayed prominently.

A member referred to the section of the policy on travelling fairs and commented that the Norfolk Showground had travelling fairs there for more than 27 days of the year. The Licensing team Manager said that most travelling fairs had games of skill, and these were exempt from the legislation. Members agreed that they would like to see the banning of animals as prizes at fairs when the Animal Licensing Policy was reviewed.

Members discussed the reference to the designation of a Children's Safeguarding Lead. They recommended that all staff be trained to the same level in safeguarding and asked that the policy read that there should always be at least one member of staff on the premises who was a designated safeguarding lead.

It was **RESOLVED** to ask the Licensing Team Manager to consider inclusion of the following points in the draft policy:

1. The addition of a bullet point to section (3) 'Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling' to read:

"Consideration should be made to the location of rest facilities to ensure that young people do not need to enter adult only areas to use the facilities".
2. To add a requirement to the Challenge 25 Policy section that Challenge 25 signage should be prominently displayed throughout the venue.
3. To add to the Safeguarding Children section of the policy that a designated and trained Child Safety Lead must be on duty at all times.

(The meeting concluded at 10.44 am)

Chairman