

Local area profile

- 6.47** Licensing authorities will find it useful to complete their own assessment of the local environment as a means of ‘mapping out’ the key characteristics of the local area, which can be reviewed and updated to reflect changes to the local landscape. For the purpose of this Guidance, we refer to such assessments as *local area profiles*. Completion of a local area profile is not a requirement on licensing authorities but there are significant benefits for both the licensing authority and operators, in having a better awareness of the local area and risks. Importantly, risk in this context includes potential and actual risks, thereby taking into account possible future emerging risks, rather than reflecting current risks only.
- 6.48** An effective local area profile is likely to take account of a wide range of factors, data and information held by the licensing authority and its partners. An important element of preparing the local area profile will be proactive engagement with responsible authorities as well as other organisations in the area that can give input to ‘map’ local risks in their area. These are likely to include public health, mental health, housing, education, community welfare groups and safety partnerships, and organisations such as Gamcare or equivalent local organisations.
- 6.49** Good local area profiles will increase awareness of local risks and improved information sharing, to facilitate constructive engagement with licensees and a more coordinated response to local risks. The local area profile will help to inform specific risks that operators will need to address in their risk assessment, discussed at paragraph 6.41 above, which will form a part of any new licence application, or an application to vary a licence.
- 6.50** For example, an area might be identified as high risk on the basis that it is located within close proximity to a youth centre, rehabilitation centre, or school. The licensing authority might indicate, for example, that they would expect licensees to take appropriate steps to ensure that advertising relating to their premises, or relating to events at their premises, is not displayed at a time when children are likely to be near the premises. The licensee would be reasonably expected to have sufficient controls in place to mitigate associated risks in such areas and, if not, the licensing authority would consider other controls themselves.
- 6.51** It is for licensing authorities to determine whether to include a local area profile within the body of their statement of policy or separately. If included in the statement of policy, the licensing authority’s view of local risks would be a consideration for local gambling regulation in the context of s.153 of the Act. Licensing authorities may consider this is best achieved by making reference to the local area profile, so that it can be reviewed and updated without the need for full consultation.
- 6.52** There is no prescriptive template for a local area profile, as each assessment will be influenced by local circumstances. However it is expected that it will draw upon the knowledge and expertise of responsible authorities and be updated on a regular basis to reflect changes to the local environment.
- 6.53** As stated, there is no mandatory requirement to have a local area profile, but there are a number of benefits:
- it enables licensing authorities to better serve their local community, by better reflecting the community and the risks within it
 - greater clarity for operators as to the relevant factors in licensing authority decision making, will lead to improved premises licence applications, with the operator already incorporating controls and measures to mitigate risk in their application
 - it enables licensing authorities to make robust but fair decisions, based on a clear, published set of factors and risks, which are therefore less susceptible to challenge
 - it encourages a proactive approach to risk that is likely to result in reduced compliance and enforcement action.