

STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY 2025-2028

Reporting Officer: Head of Democratic Services

Summary

- 1.1 At a meeting on 12 December 2024, Cabinet recommended to Council the adoption of a revised Statement of Gambling Policy. The revised version has been subject to statutory consultation and includes minor updates based on changes in guidance and to reflect updated working practices. The document will provide local businesses and residents with an up-to-date and fit-for-purpose policy on gambling matters in the Borough.
- 1.2 This report, therefore, seeks Council's agreement to adopt the revised Policy, as one of the Council's policy framework documents.

RECOMMENDATION: That the revised Statement of Gambling Policy be adopted as a policy framework document.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 During 2024, a review of the Council's Statement of Gambling Policy was undertaken, as required every 3 years under legislation. Cabinet on 12 September 2024 agreed to consult on a revised version. The formal consultation period commenced on 13 September 2024 and ended on 25 October 2024 and included responsible authorities, other stakeholders, the Licensing Committee and Residents' Services Select Committee.
- 2.2 Since 12 January 2023, there have been only minor changes to legislation and guidance and as such there are very few changes proposed to this policy. This has been incorporated into the revised policy.

In summary, the changes relate to:

- Sentence Structure: Improved in various paragraphs.
 - Terminology Updates: Words like "empowered" replaced with "authorised", "not complied with" replaced with "breached".
 - Additions: New sentences and sections added, such as Representations, Direct Marketing, and Duty to Protect/Martyn's Law.
 - Authority References: "Council" replaced with "Licensing Authority"
 - Guidance Inclusions: New paragraphs added for 'Think 25' guidance and Appeals section.
 - Equality Act: Added reference to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
 - Contact Details: Updated for Responsible Authorities
- 2.3 The Licensing Authority received three submissions during the consultation. These were from Gamble Aware, the Lotteries Council and Gamcare.
 - 2.4 The revised Policy continues to provide the Council with a local licensing framework that is up-to-date and effective in ensuring a safe and regulated environment for service users of gambling establishments. It also ensures that there are methods for robust enforcement and review of problem gambling premises.

2.5 The Cabinet report and Policy, setting out the rationale for the document's adoption, are attached including the comments from the Licensing Committee and Select Committee.

Financial Implications

The costs to the Council of implementing the Statement of Gambling Policy are met from gambling licence fees and contained within the existing revenue budgets. The Council's Licensing Service is able to recover costs through fees and charges relating to gambling licences. The rates of Gambling Licences are defined by statute.

Legal Implications

The consultation process followed by the Council has complied with section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 and the Licensing Authority Policy Statement (England and Wales) Regulations 2006. There are no legal impediments to Full Council agreeing the recommendation set out in the report.

Background Papers: Statement of Gambling Policy 2025-2028