

**Racecourse Association:**

Dear Mr. Smith,

**Revision of Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy - Consultation**

Thank you for your letter on 25/05/2018 regarding the Draft Statement of Gambling Principles for Guildford Borough Council.

We would advise you that we have no venues in your area, and therefore will not be responding to your document.

Kind Regards

*Matthew Taylor*

The Racecourse Association Ltd

## **HMRC**

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for sending us access to your consultation document for your Gambling Policy Statement.

As one of the responsible authorities quoted in your appendices can I ask you to amend our postal contact address from 21 India Street to:-

HM Revenue and Customs  
Excise Processing Teams  
BX9 1GL  
United Kingdom

Our contact telephone number is now 0300 322 7072 Option 7.

Our email address remain the same, [NRUBetting&Gaming@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:NRUBetting&Gaming@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

Kind Regards

## **GamCare:**

Hello,

Thank you for your email, we appreciate your interest in our work.

While we do not have the resources available to allow us to personally respond to each Local Authority which contacts us regarding their refreshed Statement of Principles, we have compiled a list of the issues or factors which we think it would be helpful to consider below, more information is available via the [Gambling Commission](#).

The function of the Statement is to reflect locally specific gambling concerns and to reflect the Council's wider strategic objectives. The active use of the Statement is one means by which you can make clear your expectations of gambling operators who have premises in your area. This allows operators to respond to locally specific requirements and adjust their own policies and procedures as required.

- A helpful first step is to develop a risk map of your local area so that you are aware of both potential and actual risks around gambling venues. A useful explanation of area-based risk-mapping has been developed with Westminster and Manchester City Councils, which gives some guidance on those who may be most vulnerable or at-risk of gambling-related harm. For more information please see [www.geofutures.com/research-2/gambling-related-harm-how-local-space-shapes-our-understanding-of-risk/](http://www.geofutures.com/research-2/gambling-related-harm-how-local-space-shapes-our-understanding-of-risk/)
- Consider that proposals for new gambling premises which are near hostels or other accommodation or centres catering for vulnerable people, including those with learning difficulties, and those with gambling / alcohol / drug abuse problems, as likely to adversely affect the licensing objectives set out by the Gambling Commission. This is also relevant regarding the proximity to schools, colleges and universities.
- A detailed local risk assessment at each gambling venue – pertinent to the environment immediately surrounding the premises as well as the wider local area – is a good way to gauge whether the operator and staff teams are fully aware of the challenges present in the local area and can help reassure the Local Licensing Authority that appropriate mitigations are in place.
- Does the operator have a specific training programme for staff to ensure that they are able to identify children and other vulnerable people, and take appropriate action to ensure they are not able to access the premises or are supported appropriately?
- Does the operator ensure that there is an adequate number of staff and managers are on the premises at key points throughout the day? This may be particularly relevant for premises situated nearby schools / colleges / universities, and/or pubs, bars and clubs.

- Consider whether the layout, lighting and fitting out of the premises have been designed so as not to attract children and other vulnerable persons who might be harmed or exploited by gambling.
- Consider whether any promotional material associated with the premises could encourage the use of the premises by children or young people if they are not legally allowed to do so.

We would suggest that the Local Licensing Authority primarily consider applications from [GamCare Certified operators](#). GamCare Certification is a voluntary process comprising an independent audit assessment of an operator's player protection measures and social responsibility standards, policy and practice. Standards are measured in accordance with the GamCare Player Protection Code of Practice. If you would like more information on how our audit can support Local Licensing Authorities, please contact [mike.kenward@gamcare.org.uk](mailto:mike.kenward@gamcare.org.uk)

For more information on GamCare training and other services available to local authorities, as well as recommended training for gambling operators, please see the attached brochures.

If there is anything else we can assist with please do let us know.

Kind regards,  
Catherine

**Catherine Sweet**  
**Head of Marketing and Communications**  
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**Ash Parish Council:**

Dear Lisa,

Further to our meeting last night, I can confirm there is no formal response from Ash Parish Council.

Thank you.

**Sarah Groom**, Clerk to the Council

Ash Parish Council

The Ash Centre

Ash Hill Road

Ash, Surrey

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[www.ashpcsurrey.gov.uk](http://www.ashpcsurrey.gov.uk)

**Bingo Association:**

Dear Licensing Team

I have looked at your draft gambling policy statement and noted that in 26.3 relating to Bingo Premises, the paragraph discussing splitting premises states:

“The Council notes the Guidance at paragraph 18.9 regarding the unusual circumstances in which we might permit pre-existing premises to be split into two adjacent premises and in particular, that it is not permissible to locate sixteen Category B3 gaming machines in one of the resulting premises, as the gaming machine entitlement for that premises would be exceeded.”

Since 2011, (SI 2011 1710, attached) there has been no numerical limit on the number of Category B3 machines (unless a premises licence was acquired after that date). The limit for B3 gaming machines in licensed bingo premises was increased to 20% of the available machine estate and therefore reference to a number in the Policy document is misleading. Interestingly, the South Buckinghamshire and Rhondda Cynon Taf’s draft policy contained the same paragraph and I have written to them as well making the same observation.

I hope that this is useful.

With kind regards

Cherry

**Cherry Hosking**  
Company Secretary

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**Gosschalks Solicitors:**

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

**Licensing Unit**

Guildford Borough Council  
Millmead House  
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Surrey, GU2 4BB

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**Email:** rjt@gosschalks.co.uk  
**Our ref:** RJT / MJM / 097505.00005  
#GS1770714  
**Your ref:**  
**Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Gambling Act 2005 Policy Statement Consultation**

We act for the Association of British Bookmakers (ABB) and have received instructions to respond on behalf of our client to the current consultation on the Council's review of its gambling policy statement.

The Association of British Bookmakers (ABB) represents over 80% of the high street betting market. Its members include large national operators such as William Hill, Ladbrokes Coral and Paddy Power, as well as almost 100 smaller independent bookmakers.

Please see below for the ABB's response to the Council's current consultation on the draft gambling policy statement.

This response starts by setting out the ABB's approach in areas relevant to the local authority's regulation of betting shop premises, and its commitment to working with local authorities in partnership. The response finishes by highlighting matters within the policy statement which the ABB feels may need to be addressed.

Betting shops have been part of the British high street for over 50 years and ensuring a dialogue with the communities they serve is vital.

The ABB recognises the importance of the gambling policy statement in focusing on the local environment and welcomes the informed approach this will enable operators to take for example, with regard, to the new requirements for local area risk assessments and ensuring the right structures are in place in shops that are appropriate for that area.

Whilst it is important that the gambling policy statement fully reflects the local area, the ABB is also keen to ensure that the statutory requirements placed on operators and local authorities under the Gambling Act 2005 remain clear; this includes mandatory conditions (for instance, relating to Think 21 policies) and the aim to permit structure. Any duplication or obscuring of these within new processes would be detrimental to the gambling licensing regime. The ABB also believes it is important that the key protections already offered for

communities, and clear process (including putting the public on notice) for objections to premises licence applications, continue to be recognised under the new regime.

Any consideration of gambling licensing at the local level should also be considered within the wider context.

- the overall number of betting shops is in decline. The latest Gambling Commission industry statistics show that numbers as of March 2017 were 8,788 - a decline of 349 since March 2014, when there were 9,137 recorded.
- planning law changes introduced in April 2015 have increased the ability of licensing authorities to review applications for new premises, as all new betting shops must now apply for planning permission.
- successive prevalence surveys and health surveys tells us that problem gambling rates in the UK are stable (0.6%) and possibly falling.

### **Working in partnership with local authorities**

The ABB is fully committed to ensuring constructive working relationships exist between betting operators and licensing authorities, and that where problems may arise that they can be dealt with in partnership. The exchange of clear information between councils and betting operators is a key part of this and the opportunity to respond to this consultation is welcomed.

### **LGA – ABB Betting Partnership Framework**

In January 2015 the ABB signed a partnership agreement with the Local Government Association (LGA), developed over a period of months by a specially formed Betting Commission consisting of councillors and betting shop firms, which established a framework designed to encourage more joint working between councils and the industry.

Launching the document Cllr Tony Page, LGA Licensing spokesman, said it demonstrated the *"desire on both sides to increase joint-working in order to try and use existing powers to tackle local concerns, whatever they might be."*

The framework builds on earlier examples of joint working between councils and the industry, for example the Medway Responsible Gambling Partnership which was launched by Medway Council and the ABB in December 2014. The first of its kind in Britain, the voluntary agreement led the way in trialing multi-operator self-exclusion. Lessons learned from this trial paved the way for the national multi-operator self-exclusion scheme now in place across the country. By phoning a free phone number (0800 294 2060) a customer who is concerned they are developing a problem with their gambling can exclude themselves from betting shops close to where they live, work and socialise. The ABB is working with local authorities to help raise awareness of the scheme, which is widely promoted within betting shops.



The national scheme was first trialed in Glasgow in partnership with Glasgow City Council. Cllr Paul Rooney, Glasgow's City Treasurer and Chairman of a cross-party Sounding Board on gambling, described the project as "*breaking new ground in terms of the industry sharing information, both between operators and, crucially, with their regulator.*"

### **Primary Authority Partnerships in place between the ABB and local authorities**

All major operators, and the ABB on behalf of independent members, have also established Primary Authority Partnerships with local authorities. These partnerships help provide a consistent approach to regulation by local authorities, within the areas covered by the partnership; such as age-verification or health and safety. We believe this level of consistency is beneficial both for local authorities and for operators.

For instance, Primary Authority Partnerships between Milton Keynes Council and Reading Council and their respective partners, Ladbrokes and Paddy Power, led to the first Primary Authority inspection plans for gambling coming into effect in January 2015. By creating largely uniform plans, and requiring enforcing officers to inform the relevant Primary Authority before conducting a proactive test-purchase, and provide feedback afterwards, the plans have been able to bring consistency to proactive test-purchasing whilst allowing the Primary Authorities to help the businesses prevent underage gambling on their premises.

### **Local area risk assessments**

Since April 2016, under new Gambling Commission LCCP provisions, operators have been required to complete local area risk assessments identifying any risks posed to the licensing objectives and how these would be mitigated. Licensees must take into account relevant matters identified in the licensing authority's statement of licensing policy, and any local area profile, in their risk assessment. These must be reviewed where there are significant local changes or changes to the premises, or when applying for a variation to or for a new premises licence.

The ABB fully supports the implementation of risk assessments which will take into account risks presented in the local area, such as exposure to vulnerable groups and crime. The new requirements build on measures the industry has already introduced through the ABB Responsible Gambling Code to better identify problem gamblers and to encourage all customers to gamble responsibly.

This includes training for shop staff on how to intervene and direct problem gamblers to support services, as well as new rules on advertising including banning gaming machine advertising in shop windows, and the introduction of Player Awareness Systems which use technology to track account based gaming machine customers' player history data to allow earlier intervention with any customers whose data displays known 'markers of harm'.

## **Best practice**

The ABB is committed to working pro-actively with local authorities to help drive the development of best practice with regard to local area risk assessments, both through responses to consultations such as this and directly with local authorities. Both the ABB and its members are open and willing to engage with any local authority with questions or concerns relating to the risk assessment process, and would encourage them to make contact.

Westminster Council is one local authority which entered into early dialogue with the industry, leading to the development of and consultation on draft guidance on the risk assessment process, which the ABB and our members contributed to. Most recently one operator, Coral, has been working closely with the Council ahead of it issuing its final version of the guidance, which we welcome.

The final guidance includes a recommended template for the local area risk assessment which we would point to as a good example of what should be expected to be covered in an operator's risk assessment. It is not feasible for national operators to submit bespoke risk assessments to each of the c.350 local authorities they each deal with, and all operators have been working to ensure that their templates can meet the requirements set out by all individual local authorities.

The ABB would be concerned should any local authority seek to prescribe the form of an operator's risk assessment. This would not be in line with better regulation principles. Operators must remain free to shape their risk assessment in whichever way best meets their operational processes.

The ABB has also shared recommendations of best practice with its smaller independent members, who although they deal with fewer different local authorities, have less resource to devote to developing their approach to the new assessments. In this way we hope to encourage a consistent application of the new rules by operators which will benefit both them and local authorities.

## **Concerns around increases in the regulatory burden on operators**

The ABB is concerned to ensure that any changes in the licensing regime at a local level are implemented in a proportionate manner. This would include if any local authority were to set out overly onerous requirements on operators to review their local risk assessments with unnecessary frequency, as this could be damaging. As set out in the LCCP a review should only be required in response to significant local or premises change. In the ABB's view this should be where evidence can be provided to demonstrate that the change could impact the premises' ability to operate consistently with the three licensing objectives.

Any increase in the regulatory burden would severely impact ABB members at a time when overall shop numbers are in decline, and operators are continuing to absorb the impacts of significant recent regulatory change. This includes the increase to 25% of Machine Games

Duty, limits to staking over £50 on gaming machines, and planning use class changes which require all new betting shops in England to apply for planning permission.

### **Employing additional licence conditions**

It should continue to be the case that additional conditions are only imposed in exceptional circumstances where there are clear reasons for doing so. There are already mandatory and default conditions attached to any premises licence which will ensure operation that is consistent with the licensing objectives. In the vast majority of cases, these will not need to be supplemented by additional conditions.

The LCCP require that premises operate an age verification policy. The industry operates a policy called "Think 21". This policy is successful in preventing under-age gambling. Independent test purchasing carried out by operators and the ABB, and submitted to the Gambling Commission, shows that ID challenge rates are consistently around 85%. The ABB has seen statements of principles requiring the operation of Challenge 25. Unless there is clear evidence of a need to deviate from the industry standard then conditions requiring an alternative age verification policy should not be imposed.

The ABB is concerned that the imposition of additional licensing conditions could become commonplace if there are no clear requirements in the revised licensing policy statement as to the need for evidence. If additional licence conditions are more commonly applied this would increase variation across licensing authorities and create uncertainty amongst operators as to licensing requirements, over complicating the licensing process both for operators and local authorities

### **Other concerns**

Where a local area profile is produced by the licensing authority, this be made clearly available within the body of the licensing policy statement, where it will be easily accessible by the operator and also available for consultation whenever the policy statement is reviewed.

### **Considerations specific to the Draft Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles 2019 - 2022**

The heading to Part B is "Promotion of the licensing objectives" and therefore there is a reference within paragraph 9.2 that the applicant will need to demonstrate how it will "promote" one of the licensing objectives. The promotion of the licensing objectives is a fundamental principle in Licensing Act 2003 applications but the only body upon whom Gambling Act 2005 confers a duty to promote the licensing objectives is the Gambling Commission. The licensing authority is required to have regard to the licensing objectives when exercising most of its functions whilst applications and the operation of licensed premises are required to be "reasonably consistent" with the licensing objectives. In the circumstances, the references to "promotion" and "promote" should be amended.

Furthermore, within paragraph 9.1, there is a statement that the council will have to be satisfied that premises “*will not adversely affect the licensing objectives and is compliant with the Commissioner’s Guidance, Code of Practice and this Policy Statement*”. This reference should also be amended to reflect the fact that the council will need to be satisfied that applications/operations will be reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives.

It appears that the first sentence of paragraph 16.3 may be incomplete. This sentence indicates that “*The council will need to be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the particular location of the premises would be harmful to the licensing objectives*” but does not indicate what the consequences of that satisfaction may be. This sentence should be redrafted in order that the consequences of such satisfaction are clear.

Paragraph 16.6 contains a list of bullet points that the licensing authority recommends be considered by operators when making their risk assessment. The second bullet point (“*gaming trends that may reflect benefit payments*”) should be deleted as this is not a relevant consideration when assessing a risk to the licensing objectives. The only way in which this could be relevant is if the licensing authority had determined that those in receipt of benefits were automatically vulnerable or more likely to commit crime as a result of gambling. We are certain that this predetermination has not taken place.

Similarly, the final bullet point relating to antisocial behavior should be deleted as issues of nuisance and anti-social behavior are not relevant considerations as far as an assessment of a risk to the licensing objectives is concerned.

Paragraph 21 explains the licensing authority’s approach to the imposition of additional conditions. We welcome the acknowledgement in paragraph 21.1 that all Gambling Act 2005 premises licences are subject to mandatory and default conditions which are usually sufficient to ensure operation in accordance with the licensing objectives and therefore it is unlikely that the council will need to impose further conditions.

This section would, however, be assisted if the statement made in paragraph 12.2 could be reiterated i.e. that additional conditions will only be attached where there is evidence of a risk to the licensing objectives in the circumstances of a particular case.

Paragraphs 27.2 and 27.3 refer to betting machines. The draft Statement of Principles would be assisted if a clear distinction could be made between betting machines and gaming machines. Whilst the licensing authority has the power, in certain circumstances, to restrict the number of betting machines, it may not restrict the number of gaming machines. The holder of a betting premises licence may make available for use up to 4 gaming machines of categories B, C or D (Section 172(8) Gambling Act 2005).

## **Conclusion**

The ABB and its members are committed to working closely with both the Gambling Commission and local authorities to continually drive up standards in regulatory compliance in support of the three licensing objectives: to keep crime out of gambling, ensure that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way, and to protect the vulnerable.

Indeed, as set out, the ABB and its members already do this successfully in partnership with local authorities now. This includes through the ABB Responsible Gambling Code, which is mandatory for all members, and the Safe Bet Alliance (SBA), which sets voluntary standards across the industry to make shops safer for customers and staff.

We would encourage local authorities to engage with us as we continue to develop both these codes of practice, which are in direct support of the licensing objectives, as well as our processes around local area risk assessments.

Yours faithfully,

**GOSSCHALKS**