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## **CENTRAL LICENSING COMMITTEE 06.03.17**

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**Present:** Councillors Annwen Daniels, Anwen Davies, Annwen Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Louise Hughes, Eryl Jones-Williams, Tudor Owen (Chair) Angela Russell, Ann Williams, Elfed W. Williams, John Wyn Williams and R. H. Wyn Williams

**Also in Attendance:** Gareth Jones (Senior Planning and Environment Manager), Gwenan Mai Roberts (Licensing Manager), Geraint B. Edwards (Solicitor), Cheryl Morgan (Observing) and Lowri Haf Evans (Member Support Officer)

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dilwyn Morgan and Peter Read.

### **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

### **3. URGENT ITEMS**

None to note

### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee, that took place on 12 December 2016, as a true record subject to noting that Councillor Annwen Hughes was present.

### **5. REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY**

A draft Gambling Policy Statement was presented to the Members for consideration and approval before conducting a public consultation in accordance with the 2005 Gambling Act. The main purposes of the Gambling Act, along with the requirements of the Gambling Commission, were highlighted for gambling operators to assess the local risks to the licensing objectives that arose as a result of providing gambling facilities as well as having policies, procedures and risk measures to mitigate those risks.

It was noted that the draft Policy had been prepared in consultation with the North Wales Licensing Group, with the aim of ensuring consistency across the region. It was reiterated that Gwynedd had submitted the format and the other Councils of North Wales had adopted it. This was accepted as positive information.

It was reported that the consultation period would continue for 12 weeks, with the Licensing Authority addressing the responses received. After completing the process, the final draft Statement would be re-submitted to the Licensing Committee, who would recommend that the Full Council adopt it (this was required under Section 154 of the 2005 Gambling Act).

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted by individual Members:

- Concern of endless gambling promotion adverts on the television was highlighted
- Access to gambling services was too easy
- Companies encouraged people to buy lottery tickets by simplifying the internet payment process
- The vulnerable community must be considered - lack of spending money
- Gambling machines in public houses - needed to avoid these in family dining areas / out of reach of children
- The Health Board needed to be part of the consultation

In response to an observation regarding the concerns highlighted, it was noted that the management of television advertisements was beyond the remit the Licensing Committee and the Licensing Authority and that the Gambling Commission was responsible for the regulating.

It was suggested that a letter be sent to the Commission, Arfon and Dwyfor and Meirionnydd Assembly Members, and the local Members of Parliament, to express the Committee's concerns on easy access to gambling services. It was highlighted that the Committee had a duty of care to highlight this in order to protect vulnerable individuals.

In response to a question regarding using officers to carry out random inspections in betting shops, it was noted that inspections would not be carried out unless a risk assessment had been conducted, or evidence had been submitted that there were concerns / complaints on the location / shop. It was confirmed that there was a purchase test on items such as tobacco and alcohol, but not on betting items. It was highlighted that the reason for this was because it was not a statutory requirement, but should the Committee decide that this was beneficial, reasons for not doing so were not anticipated.

In response to an observation regarding the timing of the submission of a draft statement to the Committee before the election, and that the Committee's membership was likely to change by the period of receiving the final statement, it was noted that every Authority across North Wales had agreed to submit the statement within the same period.

**RESOLVED unanimously, to approve the draft Gambling Policy Statement in accordance with the 2005 Gambling Act for public consultation, and the following observations were proposed:**

- **the Licensing Authority to draft a letter in the Chair's name, and send it to the Gambling Commission to express the Committee's concern on the**
  - **overuse of betting advertisements**
  - **companies encouraging people to bet, and**
  - **access to gambling services being too easy.****A copy of the letter to be sent to Assembly Members (Arfon and Dwyfor Meirionnydd) and the local Members of Parliament; to the Members that represented Gwynedd Council on the North Wales Police and Crime Panel and to the Chief Officers of the North Wales Licensing Authorities.**
- **the Licensing Authority to discuss the best methods of drawing attention to the public consultation with Gwynedd Council's Communications Department - encourage use of social media.**

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 10.55am.