

Gambling Statement of Principles

Consultation Summary Report

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Introduction

Hackney Council consulted on the Draft Gambling Statement of Principles for 8 weeks from 23 July until 14 September 2018. 13 responses were received from Hackney residents, and 2 responses from stakeholders.

Background

Hackney Council is the Licensing Authority under the Gambling Act 2005. This gives the Council responsibility for issuing gambling premises licences and a range of permits to local authorities.

Since 2007 the Council's Licensing Committee has been responsible for granting premises licences for:

- Bingo premises
- Betting premises, including tracks (for e.g. horse or dog racing)
- Amusement arcades
- As well as issuing a range of permits and notices for gambling activities.

The Act makes clear that when Licensing Authorities are carrying out their duties to licence premises and issue permits, they have to bear the following licensing objectives in mind:

- To prevent gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime;
- To ensure that gambling is carried out in a fair and open way;
- To protect children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

About Hackney's draft revised gambling Statement of Principles

In January 2007, the Council produced and published its gambling statement setting out the principles it would apply in deciding whether to grant or refuse applications. The gambling Statement of Principles seeks to promote the licensing objectives and guidance from the Gambling Commission, an independent co-regulator of gambling operators. This sets out how the Council has built on these core objectives, developing an approach to licensing premises for gambling that reflect local circumstances in the Borough.

The Council is required to review the Statement at least once every three years and to consult upon the draft before it is adopted.

Making sure the draft Statement is relevant to our local circumstances

In drafting this Statement, the Council has been mindful of the demographics of the borough and how that links to the licensing objectives set out in the Gambling Act 2005.

There are currently 55 licensed gambling premises in the borough: 52 betting shops and 3 adult gaming centres. This has reduced since 2007 when there were 72 premises in total.

At present there are no casinos in Hackney and the Council has previously passed a 'no casino' resolution and will consider this step again will consider this step again shortly in the future.

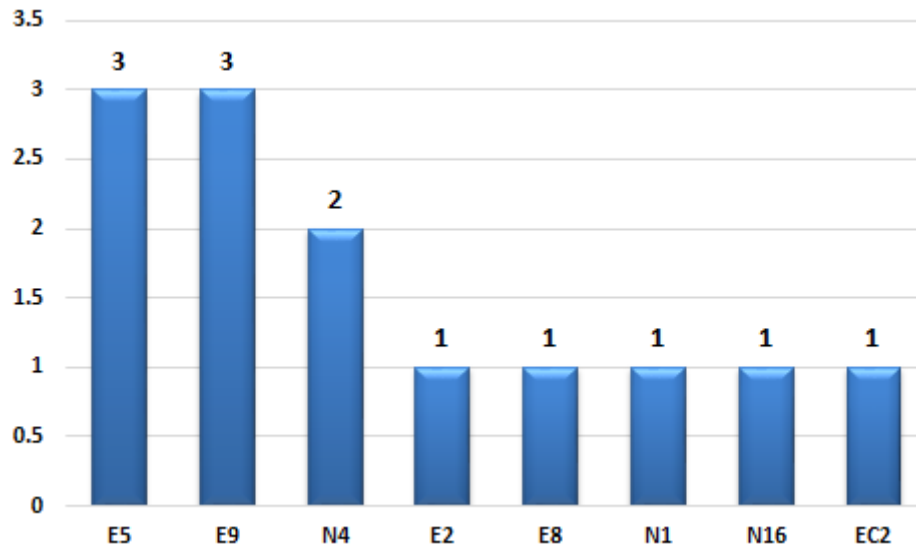
The Council welcomes the opportunity to receive views on this draft Statement and the feedback on the impact it is having on managing gambling activity for the benefit of the economy and the community in Hackney.

Consultation approach

The consultation was created on Citizen Space and was available on the consultation website.

Summary of responses

A respondents who took part in the consultation were Hackney residents from varied postcode areas.



All respondents stated that they had not visited a gambling premises in the last 12 months.

Respondents were asked to give their views on the importance of risks which needed to be assessed by licensees. The following gives the key themes for each risk:

Crime and Disorder - Anti-social behaviour

- Opening hours are too long and offer no service to the public
- Youths congregate by slot machines
- Increased likelihood of anger and violent behaviour on a major win or major loss
- One of the most important factors in assessing the risks of licences
- Drinking and smoking outside premises, along with urinating and littering.

Security at all gambling premises

- There should be security at each premises
- This is the choice of the licensee and is not of importance to the general public

Protection of children and vulnerable persons

- Issue of young people attracted by slot machines in betting shops
- Betting shops should not pose any risk of encouragement to young people
- Too many betting shops in Hackney. Should take pride in not allowing any more places
- Gambling premises have a responsibility to protect
- Age of entry should be raised to 21
- This is the responsibility of the Council

- Haggerston Square betting shop in the middle of 3 schools where kids come after school to buy food and drink

Location of gambling premises and gambling machines

- Volume of betting shops detracts from the high street
- No more than one per area
- Gambling machines not visible from the open door
- Should not be near schools
- Not accessible on the high street
- Should be limited to within ½ mile of another gambling premises
- Should not be positioned near places that sell alcohol
- Statistics show addictions between gambling, alcohol and drugs

Hours of operation

- Hours that match fixtures are reasonable. Out of hours virtual race cards are not
- Nothing after 9pm
- Should follow alcohol licencing rules
- Normal business hours of 9am to 5pm

10 respondents stated that they do live in close proximity to a gambling premises.

5 respondents stated that they think anti-social behaviour is an issue at these premises.

What steps (if any) do you think operators should take to prevent or reduced anti-social behaviour?

- Reduce opening hours
- Pay a contribution towards local crime enforcement
- Provide a suitable place to smoke so that staff and customers are not all standing by the entrance
- Hire security by the door
- Ask staff to clean outside the premises to pick up litter, bottles, cigarette butts, etc.
- Educate their customers

Any other comments

- There is a general problem with the number of gambling establishments
- Introduce a cap which would limit the amount of betting shops allowed in each area
- There are 'laws' which prevent councils to prevent more establishments (converting license from say a pub to gambling, bank to gambling) but this does not seem to be working. Implement the same principles as the Alcohol Statement of Principles as this does work

- FOBT machines should be made illegal
- Gambling and the encouragement of gambling premises needs to be included in curtailing its activities and the number of premises. This would help with poor people who have a gambling addiction problem to make it harder for them, which is a good thing
- Gambling premises should not be sited in residential areas, for example Green Lanes near Newington Green
- Betting shops and casinos prey on the poor and the young, and have no place in the society
- The poorest and most vulnerable are the least likely to recover from losses - and the most likely to have them.
- A ban on television and online gambling advertisements would be a good thing
- Local tax collected for betting so the local authority can use the money raised to combat problems of betting
- These shops ruin people and places.
- They do not bring any value to anyone other than money to the council (who rents out the premises) and the betting companies

APPENDIX

Two responses were received from the Gambling Commission and GamCare. The section below provides a summary of the comments received.

The detailed responses have been passed on to the Licensing Team.

Gambling Commission

- References were made to the draft Statement of Principles report for a few amendments regarding stakes and prizes, and the local risk assessment. These have been passed on to the Licensing Team to take into account before finalising the report.

GamCare

- 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.
- To develop a risk map of your local area so that you are aware of both potential and actual risks around gambling venues.
- 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.