



The Leader's Office
Norwich City Council
City Hall
St Peters Street
Norwich
NR2 1NH

Ms Chloe Smith, MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

7 December 2017

Your reference

Our reference JBR/Counl/2017-11-28

Dear Ms Smith

Fixed Odds Betting Terminals

At a meeting of full council on 28 November 2017, members of Norwich City Council considered a motion on fixed odds betting terminals.

Following a recent decision of the council's licensing committee; members of Norwich City Council have raised concern about the proliferation of gambling premises on our high streets and the harm they pose to people vulnerable to problem gambling.

There is currently a government consultation underway entitled 'Consultation on proposals for changes to Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures'. The council's response is listed below and we call on you to reinforce our response and support our call for new powers so Norwich City Council can do more to help some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Council therefore resolves to:

- (1) note and castigate this government's timid and tentative approach to such an important issue affecting many members of society;
- (2) respond to the government's consultation:
 - (a) expressing a call for the current £100 maximum FOBT stake to be brought in line with maximum stakes for other gaming machines allowed elsewhere on high streets (£2) and in casinos (£5);
 - (b) calling for cumulative impact tests to be introduced to enable councils to reject applications for new betting shops where there are already existing clusters of shops;
 - (c) for licensing law to be updated to allow councils to take health issues associated with problem gambling and anti-social behaviour concerns into account when considering applications;

(d) request the government provides:

- (i) new planning powers to place betting shops in a separate use class so that councils can use planning powers to control the number opening in their area;
- (ii) extend licensing powers to give councils the power to revoke or reduce existing licenses for FOBTs;
- (iii) better mitigate harm caused by these machines by increasing the time between plays, requiring pop-ups and breaks in play;
- (iv) enforce data collection to ensure that gambling operators are required to collect data on machine use;
- (v) ensure correct staff training and security by providing all employees with adequate training and stop single staffing;
- (vi) require customers to top up FOBTs over the counter giving staff the opportunity to interact with people and intervene if they are playing for a long time and losing too much money;
- (vii) insert pop-ups on screens to appear to warn players who have been playing for longer than the average amount of time;
- (viii) impose a limit on what can be staked without registering with the shop so that if a player wants to stake more than a set limit on a FOBT they must be registered with the shop and use a loyalty card. The limits will be set on the basis of research data.

Yours sincerely

