



WARRINGTON

Borough Council

Via Email:
gamblingreview2017@culture.gov.uk

Councillor Judith Guthrie
Executive Member
Environment and Public Protection
(including Climate Change)

Town Hall
Sankey Street
Warrington
WA1 1UH

23rd January 2018

Our ref: Gambling Premises
Your ref:

Dear Sir/Madam

Consultation response on the proposed changes to Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures.

I write in respect to the above consultation and to set out the response of Warrington Borough Council.

As a Strategic Partnership, we are concerned about the increased prominence of gambling on the high street, TV and the internet, and the increase in problem gambling. We recognise the impact that this can have on the health and wellbeing of the individual and their families.

Our area profile shows that 13 of our Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) were identified as most at risk of gambling related harm.

The Council wrote to the Gambling Commission in July 2013 to express these concerns. We have also published a Gambling Policy, which seeks to work with others to lobby for changes in legislation to reduce the maximum stake on Fixed Odds Betting Terminals and for planning laws, which protects our local high streets from inappropriate clustering of gambling premises.

We are also concerned about the increased prominence of advertising of gambling services and the increased accessibility of gambling.

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The Council therefore welcomes this consultation and the recognition by Government of the need for the stake reduction for B2 gaming machines. We support the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's assessment that the current regulation of B2 gaming machines is inappropriate.

Responses to consultation questions:-

Q1. Do you agree that the maximum stake of £100 on B2 machines (FOBTs) should be reduced? If yes, what alternative maximum stake for B2 machines (FOBTs) do you support?

Yes, The Council agrees that the maximum stake on FOBTs should be reduced and that this stake should be £2, bringing them in line with other machines available on the high street. We note that this will have the greatest impact on problem gambling and we believe that higher stakes will not adequately tackle the issue, resulting in continued harm and indebtedness.

Q2-Q7, Do you agree with the Government's proposals to maintain the status Quo on other gaming machines.

Yes, we agree with the Government's position that there is a risk of potential harm, particularly within the B3 classification and that there is insufficient evidence for change. Any decision should not be made purely in fiscal terms and must give due weight and regard to the risk of harm and indebtedness.

Q8, Do you agree with the Governments proposal to increase the stake and prize for prize gaming?

We agree that the Gambling Commission should be asked to closely monitor the implications of any change.

Q9, Do you agree with the proposal to maintain the status Quo on the allocation for casinos, arcades and pubs?

We agree with the proposal to maintain the status Quo and agree that there is currently insufficient evidence in terms of the impact potential impact on gambling related harm.

Q10, Do you agree with the Government's proposals to bar contactless payments as a direct form of payment to gaming machines?

Yes, The Council agrees that the use of credit or debit cards as a direct form of payment to gaming machines would increase the risk of harm.

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Q 11, Do you support this package of measures to improve player protection measures on gaming machines?

Yes, the Council supports the improvement of player protection measures on gaming machines. However the Council would welcome greater transparency and availability of data on how gaming machines are played for the purposes of monitoring, evaluation and research. We recognise player control is only part of the solution and that a reduction to a £2 stake is still required to address the issue of harm.

Q 12, Do you support this package of measures to improve player protection measures for the online sector?

Yes, The Council is very concerned about the increased prevalence and accessibility of online gambling.

Q 13, Do you support this package of measures to address concerns about gambling advertising?

Yes, The Council is supportive of measures to address concerns around gambling advertising, particularly 'in play' advertising on TV during sporting events and pop ups on the internet. We welcome the call for further evidence.

Q14, Do you agree the Government should consider alternative options including a mandatory levy if industry does not provide adequate funding for RET?

Yes, The Council supports a mandatory levy for the purposes of research, education and treatment that supports individuals and families at risk of, or experiencing, gambling related harm.

Q 15, Do you agree with our assessment of the current powers available to local authorities?

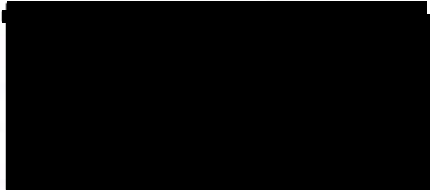
No, The Council does not agree with the Government's assessment of powers available to local authorities and supports stronger powers for councils to limit betting shop clustering.

Local authorities are unable to use existing planning or licencing powers to effectively challenge or control the number of betting shops in their local authority area.

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The Council believes that local authorities should be able to decide on proportionate numbers of betting shops and gaming machines on the high street. We would welcome consideration to the introduction of Cumulative Impact policies.

Yours faithfully



Councillor Judith Guthrie
Executive Member
Environment & Public Protection (including Climate Change)

Please contact: Dave Watson

Direct dial:

