

# Gambling Policy **Consultation Response Report**

Produced by Consultation and Engagement Team  
**for Dorset Council**

**November 2023**

## Consultation Response Report

<p><b>What was the consultation about?</b></p>	<p>The Council, as Licensing Authority under the Gambling Act 2005, is required to publish a Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy at least every three years. The purpose of the policy statement is to define how the Council will exercise its responsibilities under the Act.</p> <p>Changes have been provisionally made to the existing statement of Gambling Licensing Policy, to meet the statutory guidance above.</p> <p>These changes were presented in the form of a draft revised statement of Gambling Licensing Policy 2024-27, with respondents asked to give their views on the proposed changes.</p>
<p><b>Over what period did the consultation run?</b></p>	<p>The consultation ran for 4 weeks finishing on Thursday 9 November 2023.</p>
<p><b>What consultation methods were used?</b></p>	<p>The consultation was available both electronically online and in paper form via post upon request.</p> <p>The consultation was promoted widely through both the local press and social media. The consultation had a separate communications plan and consultation plan prepared beforehand.</p>
<p><b>How many responses were received overall?</b></p>	<p>7 overall responses were received.</p>
<p><b>How representative is the response to the wider population?</b></p>	<p>It is worth noting that the number of responses is low – meaning it is difficult to draw firm conclusions.</p> <p>Two responses were from members of the public, two were from a Parish or Town Councillor, one from a Dorset Councillor, one response on behalf of an organisation and one respondent identified as ‘other’.</p> <p>From the respondents that identified as a ‘member of the public’, the response was split 50% between one male and one female.</p> <p>50% (1 respondent) of residents that answered this question stated their ethnic group was White British.</p> <p>Responses from disabled people were quite high at 50% compared to an approximate Dorset figure of 4.6% based on those claiming either Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance. However, the sample size was drawn from two members of the public.</p>

<b>Where will the results be published?</b>	Results will be published on the council's website <a href="http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk">www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</a>
<b>How will the results be used?</b>	Results from this survey will be used to inform the new policy.
<b>Who has produced this report?</b>	Consultation Team, Dorset Council, November 2023.

## Background

The Council, as Licensing Authority under the Gambling Act 2005, is required to publish a Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy at least every three years. The purpose of the policy statement is to define how the Council will exercise its responsibilities under the Act.

The draft revised policy has been prepared by officers and is now ready to be published, in draft format, for a period of public consultation.

The changes to the policy are of a minor nature and generally consist of updated statistics and links to other policies as well as some enhancements to the protections for vulnerable persons. We expect there to be further changes to the Gambling Act 2005 by the Government in the near future and once those changes are made the policy will be reviewed again and a further consultation carried out at that time.

The Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy sets out how the council will carry out its functions under the Gambling Act 2005 with a view to promoting the licensing objectives namely:

- prevent gambling from being a source of crime and disorder, being associated with crime or disorder, or being used to support crime.
- ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way.
- protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

The Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy has been prepared in line with the requirements of the Gambling Act 2005, as well as the Statutory Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission.

As required by Act and guidance issued by the Gambling Commission, the Council, in carrying out its licensing functions under the Act will aim to permit the use of premises for gambling as long as it is considered to be:

- in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission,
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Commission,

- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives and
- in accordance with this Policy Statement published under section 349 of the Act

## The Consultation

This consultation survey was directed at organisations and residents of Dorset Council. It asked for their thoughts on the revised policy, and if anything had not been included, or if they felt something was missing.

## Analysis Method

Again, it is worth noting the low number of responses for this consultation. Typically, open text comments would be coded and themed, but this was not possible in this case due to the small base size. Therefore, all comments have been left verbatim. Note: some figures may not sum due to rounding.

## Please let us know your thoughts on the proposed revised policy

Type of respondent	Comment
<b>Member of the public</b>	As a gambling addict I would like to see more done in the way of facilities and groups for gambling addictions in weymouth. Previously they're was a gamblers anonymous group at St Paul's Church on Abbotsbury Road in weymouth where people could open up about their addictions if they wished and share with the group. Unfortunately the group stopped 2 years ago due to lack of support and financial reasons. More should be made available for gambling recovery. Possibly in the way of counseling services or groups for people to share and access recovery.
<b>Member of the public</b>	This is a request for comments on the policy. I am trying to find the survey.
<b>Elected member</b>	Fully supportive of the proposed changes, many are just simple tweaks and rewording.
<b>Parish Council (an official response from Verwood Town Council)</b>	Generally we agree with the changes. There are a few grammatical/typo errors that one Councillor pick up; "5.2 In the new blue text "licenses" is used as a noun and in each case it should be

	<p>“licences” – as it is in 5.3 and elsewhere in the document.</p> <p>13.2 In the third bullet point “experiencing” should be “experiencing”</p> <p>8.2 where the phrase “decided upon its merits” is used. One of the first things I was taught as a JP is that cases should always be judged on their “facts” (i.e. objectively) and not on their “merits” (i.e. subjectively).”</p> <p>Hope that helps.</p>
<p><b>Parish Council (an official response from Lyme Regis Town Council)</b></p>	<p>Lyme Regis Town Council supports Dorset Council's Licencing Policy and the promotion of:</p> <p>the prevention of gambling being a source of crime and disorder</p> <p>ensuring gambling is conducted in a fair and open way</p> <p>the protection of vulnerable persons</p>
<p><b>Other (Public Health Dorset)</b></p>	<p>Public Health Dorset support the amendments to the draft policy. The additional measures set out in Para 13.27 are welcome, in particular training for staff to identify potential gambling related harm and offer support to those who are potentially vulnerable.</p> <p>The framing of the gambling as a public health that require a whole system approach to harm reduction is welcome and we would value the opportunity to discuss opportunities to do so beyond licensing policy e.g. through the Dorset Local Plan which offers the opportunity to limit the proliferation of gambling premises in some circumstances.</p>
<p><b>An official response on behalf of an organisation (Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership)</b></p>	<p>We broadly welcome the Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy 2024 – 2027 and the proposed changes.</p> <p>We support the need to protect children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling. We would like to make the following comments</p> <p>Parental gambling</p>

	<p>Gambling establishments need to be aware of the potential impact of parental gambling on children including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The financial impact e.g., parents who are addicted to gambling often spend large amounts of money on their habit, leaving little or nothing left for their children. This can lead to financial instability, relationship breakdown, a lack of resources for basic needs such as food, clothing, and housing. In extreme cases, it can even result in homelessness.</li><li>- Children of gamblers may also suffer emotional effects. They may feel a sense of shame or stigma because of their parent's addiction, leading to social isolation and a lack of close relationships. They may also feel a sense of abandonment or neglect if their parent is spending more time gambling than with them or meeting their needs. This can lead to low self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness.</li><li>- The stress and anxiety that comes with living with a gambling parent can also have physical effects on children. They may experience sleep problems, weight loss or gain, and even physical symptoms such as stomach aches and headaches.</li><li>- A child experiencing a parent's mood swings, lack of communication, or attention to what they need, due to being distracted by their phone and /or gambling, may feel neglected and unloved.</li><li>- If a parent gambles, it makes this behaviour seem normal. Parents are role models for their child and growing up in an environment that encourages taking a risk for instant reward rather than achieving what you want through hard work and reward, gives a child a negative message. Gambling establishments may observe or become aware of children at risk of harm or neglect and need to be able to identify and respond to abuse or neglect appropriately through having clear safeguarding policies and procedures and training.</li></ul>
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	<p>Extra-familial harm</p> <p>We are also aware that children and young people are exploited and come to harm outside their families. If there are concerns about a particular location and the risk of extra-familial harm then this should be a factor in deciding where a gambling establishment should be located. In addition, gambling establishments need to be aware of and recognise extra-familial harm and what to do if they have concerns.</p> <p>Vulnerability</p> <p>A stated we support the recognition of concerns about vulnerability and gambling. We would support language that is strength based. We would also support reference to recognise the vulnerabilities of children and young people with special educational needs including learning disabilities, neurodiversity and other learning difficulties. This should be extended to include the same population of adults.</p> <p>The statement may also want to reference the vulnerabilities in relation to young people who have been in Local Authority care. They may have experienced abuse, neglect and trauma. This can lead to significant emotional, behavioural and mental health needs, putting them at increased risk in relation to problematic gambling.</p> <p>Areas of deprivation</p> <p>We support the concerns raised in the report that identify links with problematic gambling and deprivation. It is essential that this is a factor in deciding the location of gambling establishments.</p> <p>Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (PDSCP)</p>
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	<p>S7 references the role of the PDSCP. We are unclear what this section means. The PDSCP is a multi-agency safeguarding arrangement made up of the three statutory partners (NHS, Police and Local Authority). It does coordinate multi-agency safeguarding across the Dorset and BCP areas but is not specifically held account by democratically elected people but only so far as the individual partners are.</p> <p>The PDSCP would not provide specific advice to operators and partners but does offer a multi-agency training offer, hosts multi-agency policies and procedures and can signpost to other resources such as NSPCC. As part of this the website does contain information about what to do if you are worried that a child or young person is at risk of harm</p>
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**Is there anything that has not been included in the policy that you feel is missing or things that we haven't taken account of?**

<b>Parish Council (Lyme Regis Town Council)</b>	Part E - Enforcement details enforcement principles but doesn't give an indication of how Dorset council will proactively enforce its policy.
<b>Elected Member</b>	No
<b>Verwood Town Council</b>	No
<b>On behalf of an organisation (Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership)</b>	See above