

URN: 23-150

Report Title : Reallocation of unused casino licence

Report to: Council

Date of meeting : 14 December 2023

Responsible Director / Officer : Natasha Hayes; Executive Director of Place

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / INTRODUCTION

Following the governments review of the Gambling Act 2005 and the publication of the Gambling White Paper in April 2023, the Department for Media, Culture and Sport recently wrote to the Council requesting that we confirm whether we wish to retain the large casino licence, granted in 2008. To retain the licence, the Council must be able to provide persuasive evidence that this is likely to lead to the development of a large casino within a reasonable time frame. The Council must provide it's feedback to this request by 19th December 2023.

The reforms proposed in the White Paper make the rules on the number of machines in casino's more uniform across the sizes of casino and to allow sports betting.

This permission was given in May 2008 but no casino has yet to be developed, and a large casino does not feature in the Town Investment Plan (TIP)

RECOMMENDATION :

That Council agree with the proposal for the reallocation of the unused large casino licence.

1. Introduction

Great Yarmouth was granted permission to issue a Large casino licence under the Gambling Act 2005 in May 2008. This was 1 of 8 licences awarded in the UK.

The 2023 Gambling White Paper highlights that "300,000 people in Great Britain are estimated to be experiencing 'problem gambling', defined as gambling to a degree which compromises, disrupts, or damages family, personal or recreational pursuits, and a further 1.8 million are identified as gambling at elevated levels of risk"

Great Yarmouth is well served with an existing smaller casino, smaller casino's and slot machine arcades.

A lengthy competitive process was carried out which began in 2011 with the completion resulting in a provisional statement being awarded to Pleasure and Leisure Property Corporation

Plc in April 2012. Although originally awarded for 12 months, Pleasure and Leisure applied to the Licensing Committee for it to be extended for 4 years.

This provisional statement expired in April 2017 and therefore a large casino licence has not been issued, and no progress to implement a large casino has been made.

2. Current situation

A letter has been received from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, which asks the authority to confirm whether their intention is to develop a large casino or whether the Secretary of State can reallocate the licence.

To retain the current permission to issue a large casino licence, a substantive plan would be required to evidence how the authority is planning to implement this development within a reasonable timeframe. This evidence does not exist, nor does it form part of the wider regeneration plans in the Town that form part of the Town Investment Plan (TIP).

3. Recommendation

There is no strategic plan to seek to implement a large casino in the town, and the council is not able to provide the required evidence to DCMS to retain the licence. Furthermore, the Town is well served with existing casinos and smaller slot machine arcades. It is recommended that Council agree with the proposal for the reallocation of the unused large casino licence.

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Consultations	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	
Existing Council Policies:	
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	