



**Sandwell**

**Metropolitan Borough Council**

# **GAMBLING ACT 2005 – STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

April 2025 to March 2028

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# GAMBLING ACT 2005 – STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Sandwell is one of the larger metropolitan boroughs located at the centre of the West Midlands and is predominantly urban in character.

The Borough is composed principally of six towns rather than a single, dominant centre. The towns are Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich. At the last count, the population of the Borough was 327,378.

Sandwell is still heavily reliant on manufacturing, although service industries now form almost 60% of total employment within the Borough. Sandwell is also a densely-populated area and has the highest number of residents per unit of residential land in the West Midlands. In contrast, the Borough also has the highest proportion of parks and open spaces amongst the seven metropolitan districts in the area.

Sandwell has high levels of deprivation and is ranked the 12<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority area out of 317 (Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019).

[Previous IMD results](#) for this measure show that Sandwell's position has declined slightly relative to other districts in England. Sandwell was 13<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority in 2015.

The Gambling and betting industry is a key contributor to the UK economy, directly generating an average of £2.3 billion towards the UK GDP.

However, it is also recognised that such entertainment can lead to negative impacts on the individual gambler, their family and the wider community such as financial problems, mental and physical health issues, job loss and absenteeism, criminality, and the well-being of children and carers.

The BGPS 2010 referred to two problem gambling screening instruments. One of which was the DSM-IV criteria for pathological gambling (based on a 1994 paper in the US), the other was a Canadian report from 2001. These were used to then calculate **problem** gambling rates in the UK. In a comparison table with other national prevalence surveys the rates of problem gambling was estimated at 0.7-0.9%. The figures of problem gambling are now much lower. Figures published by the Gambling Commission in February

2022 show that the rate of problem gambling in the year to December 2021 was 0.3%, having fallen from 0.6% over the last 18 months.

Sandwell MBC wishes to minimise any negative impact from licensed gambling.

Operators are expected to take account of the Gambling Objectives to safeguard those who participate in gambling activities.

The Statement of Principles has a key role in ensuring that Sandwell MBC delivers on its Vision 2030 commitments including:

- Ambition 1 – “Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience.
- Ambition 5 - “Our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protected in our homes and local neighbourhoods “and
- Ambition 8 “Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families”

The statement of principles endeavours to mitigate risks associated with gambling by delivering corporate plan key objectives which includes:

Best start for children and young adults - By ensuring licensees complete local area risk assessments, it is envisaged that the:

- potential risk of harm from underaged gambling will be reduced whilst maintaining adequate control measures to support addicted gamblers and vulnerable persons. Managing risk is critical as addiction to gambling and associated vulnerabilities can have a negative impact on finances and may contribute to food poverty and in turn the wellbeing of children.
- Community Resilience - Adequate consultation and transparency on licence applications will enable implementation of a regulatory environment which is balanced in terms of encouraging community participation to tackle concerns, educate communities and for Sandwell MBC to take enforcement action as necessary. The community will be able to be at the forefront of tackling gambling related issues which affect them and their lives by preventing gambling through vigilance and raising concerns with Sandwell MBC to prohibit gambling becoming a

source of crime or disorder and protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

- Age well and live well – Research has shown that demographics can have a fundamental negative effect on people’s lives and that health equalities can result in stress, inappropriate lifestyles which impact on life expectancy. By supporting vulnerable groups and tackling underaged gambling or crime and exploitation, this will help in people making good choices and leading healthier and balanced lifestyles.
- Inclusive Economy – By managing the risk of crime and exploitation of vulnerable groups from gambling, activities relating to licensed premises within the Borough will provide balanced leisure activities for communities and generate sustainable positive economic outputs by existing companies generating income and from the influx of new business to a thriving business environment. This will help with sustainability of employment, the growth in jobs for all including young and disabled persons and the promotion of Sandwell as a location in which people wish to live, work and raise families.

## **1.1 LIST OF CONSULTEES**

Sandwell MBC is committed to ensuring that upon reviewing this Statement of Principles, consultation shall be completed in line with Cabinet Office consultation principles guidance. The guidance is available via the following link: [Cabinet Office consultation principles guidance](#)

In preparing the Statement of Principles, the following key organisations and agencies were consulted in accordance with Section 349(3) of the Act.

## **1.2 RESPONSIBLE AUTHORTIES**

The Licensing Authority  
The Gambling Commission  
Chief Constable, West Midlands Police, West Midlands Police Headquarters,  
Lloyd House, Birmingham  
West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service  
Planning Department  
Environmental Health  
Local Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB)  
HM Revenue and Customs

Any other person Prescribed by secretary of state by regulation (i.e. they can add new ones if they want)

For applications for a premises on a vessel on water:

The Environment Agency  
The Canal and River Trust

### **1.3 PERSONS / BODIES REPRESENTATIVE OF THE INTERESTS OF PERSONS CARRYING GAMBLING BUSINESS IN SANDWELL**

Betting Offices and/or their Registered Offices  
Bingo Halls Casinos  
British Amusement Catering Trade Association (BACTA) Responsibility in Gambling Trust  
British Beer and Pub Association Association of British Bookmakers  
British Beer and Pub Association BBPA Midland Counties Breweries  
Chamber of Commerce Licensing Solicitors  
Gamcare  
Gaming Machine Companies  
General Secretary Casino Operators Association of the UK National Casino Industry Forum  
Operators of Gambling Premises in Sandwell Amusement Arcades  
The British Casino Association Business in Sport and Leisure  
The Gambling Commission The Bingo Association

### **1.4 PERSONS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE INTERESTS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, RESIDENTS AND OTHERS LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY THE EXERCISE OF SANDWELL MBC'S FUNCTIONS**

All Members of the Council (Councillors)  
Members of Parliament for the Sandwell area  
MEP's for the Sandwell area

## **2 GAMBLING ACT 2005**

This Statement of Principles is intended to meet the Licensing Authority's obligations under Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 (referred to in this Statement as "the Act").

In carrying out its licensing functions under the Act, Sandwell MBC will act in accordance with the relevant legislation, adopt the principles of better regulation, regulate gambling in the public interest and aim to permit the use

of premises for gambling as it thinks fit so long as it is in line with Section 153 of the Act. That is:

- in accordance with any relevant [Codes of Practice](#) issued by the Gambling Commission
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives, and
- in accordance with this Statement of Principles

There are 3 licensing objectives which are central to the regulatory regime created by the Act. These are:

- preventing gambling from being a source of crime or 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 Act provides for 3 categories of licence:

- operating licences
- personal licences
- premises licences

Sandwell MBC is responsible for issuing premises licences. The Gambling Commission is responsible for issuing operating and personal licences.

## **2.1 DECLARATION**

In preparing this Statement of principles, Sandwell MBC declares that it has had regard to the licensing objectives of the Act, any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission including their [Guidance to licensing authorities](#), codes of practice and any responses received from those consulted prior to the preparation of this Statement of principles.

## **2.2 THE GAMBLING COMMISSION**

The Gambling Commission regulates gambling in the public interest. It does so by keeping crime out of gambling in line with Section 24(2) of the Act:



- by ensuring that gambling is conducted fairly and openly
- by protecting children and vulnerable people
- by making assistance available to persons who are or may be affected by problems related to gambling

The Commission provides independent advice to the government about the way gambling is carried out, the effects of gambling and the regulation of gambling generally.

The Commission has issued Guidance under Section 25 of the Act regarding the way local authorities exercise their licensing functions under the Act and, in particular, the principles to be applied by local authorities. The Gambling Commission's guidance can be accessed via the following hyperlink: [Gambling Commission guidance to licensing authorities](#).

The Commission has issued several [codes of practice](#) under Section 24 of the Act about the manner in which facilities for gambling are provided, including the advertising of gambling facilities.

The Gambling Commission can be contacted as follows:

By telephone on 0121 230 6666 or by going to their website and completing the online form to submit an enquiry – follow link: [Online Form](#)

### **3 AUTHORISED ACTIVITIES**

“Gambling” is defined in the Act as either gaming, betting, or taking part in a lottery.

- Gaming means playing a game of chance for a prize
- Betting means making or accepting a bet on the outcome of a race, competition, or other event or process; the likelihood of anything occurring or not occurring, or whether anything is true or not
- A lottery is where persons are required to pay in order to take part in an arrangement, during the course of which one or more prizes are allocated to one or more members of a class by a process which relies wholly on chance

The main functions of a Licensing Authority are to:

- Licence premises for gambling activities
- Grant permits for gambling and gaming machines in clubs
- Regulate gaming and gaming machines in alcohol licensed premises
- Grant permits to family entertainment centres for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines
- Grant permits for prize gaming
- Consider notices given for the temporary use of premises for gaming
- Consider occasional use notices for betting at tracks
- Register small societies lotteries

Spread betting is regulated by The Financial Conduct Authority.

Remote Gambling is regulated by the Gambling Commission.

The National Lottery is regulated by the National Lottery Commission.

#### **4 GENERAL STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

Where children, young persons and other vulnerable people are allowed access to premises where gambling takes place, each application will be considered on its own merits. Sandwell MBC may take whatever steps are considered necessary to either limit access generally or by introducing reasonable and proportionate measures to safeguard those participating in gambling activities and to prevent under age gambling where it believes it is right to do so, especially where it receives representations to that effect.

#### **5 THE LICENSING OBJECTIVES UNDER THE GAMBLING ACT**

##### **5.1 PREVENTING GAMBLING FROM BEING A SOURCE OF CRIME OR DISORDER**

The Gambling Commission plays the leading role in preventing gambling from being a source of crime and maintains rigorous licensing procedures that aim to prevent criminals from providing facilities for gambling.

Anyone applying to Sandwell MBC for a premises licence will have to hold an operating licence from the Commission before a licence can be issued, (unless the premises is a “track” for which an operating licence is not necessary). Therefore, where concerns arise about a person’s suitability to hold a licence, Sandwell MBC will bring those concerns to the attention of the Gambling Commission.

If an application for a licence or a permit is received in relation to premises which are in an area noted for problems with organised crime, Sandwell MBC will, in consultation with the Police and other relevant authorities, consider whether specific controls need to be applied to prevent those premises from being a source of crime. This could include conditions being put on the licence, such as a requirement for door supervisors.

As far as nuisance is concerned, there are already powers in existing anti-social behaviour and other licensing legislation to deal with measures designed to prevent nuisance, whether it arises because of noise from a building or from general disturbance once people have left a building. Sandwell MBC does not therefore intend to use the Act to deal with general nuisance issues, for example, parking problems, which can easily be dealt with using alternative powers.

Issues of disorder would normally only be dealt with under the Act if the disorder amounts to activity which is more serious and disruptive than mere nuisance and it can be shown that gambling is the source of that disorder. A disturbance might be serious enough to constitute disorder if police assistance was required to deal with it. Another factor which could be taken into account is how threatening the behaviour was to those who could see or hear it and whether those people live sufficiently close to be affected or have business interests that might be affected.

## **5.2 ENSURING GAMBLING IS CONDUCTED IN A FAIR AND OPEN WAY**

The Gambling Commission does not expect local authorities to become concerned with ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way as this will either be a matter for the management of the gambling business or will relate to the suitability and actions of an individual. Both issues are adequately addressed by the Commission through the operating and personal licensing regime.

Because betting track operators do not need an operating licence from the Commission, Sandwell MBC may, if the circumstances warrant it, require conditions to be applied to the licence relating to the suitability of the environment in which the betting activity takes place.

### **5.3 PROTECTING CHILDREN AND OTHER VULNERABLE PEOPLE FROM GAMBLING**

Within the framework of the act, it is the intention that children and young persons should not be allowed to gamble and should therefore be prevented from entering gambling premises which are “adult only” environments.

In practice, steps are generally taken to prevent children from taking part in, or being in close proximity to gambling which they are not permitted to participate in. There are also some restrictions on advertising so that gambling products are not aimed at children or advertised in such a way that makes them particularly attractive to children.

When considering whether to grant a premises licence or a permit Sandwell MBC will consider whether any measures are necessary to protect children, such as the supervision of entrances, the segregation of gambling from areas frequented by children and the supervision of gaming machines in non-adult gambling specific premises such as pubs, clubs, betting tracks etc.

The Act seeks to protect what are termed as “vulnerable people”. Although there is no specific definition of this term, Sandwell MBC includes in this description, among others, people who gamble more than they want to, people who gamble beyond their means and people who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling, perhaps due to a mental impairment, alcohol or drugs.

Sandwell MBC is required by Regulations to state the principles it has applied in exercising its powers under Section 157(h) of the Act to designate, in writing, a body which is competent to advise Sandwell MBC about the protection of children from harm. These principles are:

- the need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of Sandwell MBC’s area and;
- the need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons rather than any particular vested interest group

Sandwell MBC has therefore designated the Sandwell Children’s Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) for this purpose. Sandwell MBC will always treat each case on its own individual merits and when considering whether specific measures are required to protect children and other vulnerable people will balance its considerations against the overall principle of aiming to permit the use of

premises for gambling.

SCSP consists of statutory partners composing of Sandwell Council, Sandwell Children's Trust, West Midlands Police and Sandwell Clinical Commissioning Group. Other partners include the Voluntary Sector and Education. SCSP provides a means of encouraging engagement with agencies which have a vested interest in the young and vulnerable.

Businesses, particularly licensed businesses, can play a vital and positive role in helping to identify and protect those that are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse whether they are children, young persons or adults and preventing such exploitation and abuse from occurring by doing the right thing and sharing any suspicious information that sexual exploitation or abuse of children and vulnerable persons is taking place with the relevant authorities or agencies.

More information about Child Sexual Exploitation, including learning resources, can be found at [Children and Education – Sandwell Intranet](#).

If you are worried a child may be suffering significant harm, or if you are concerned a child has suffered harm, neglect or abuse, please follow the advice below:

If you believe a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, you should contact the police by dialling 999.

If you have concerns about a child or young person but believe they are not at immediate risk, you can:

- Contact the Sandwell Safeguarding Team on 0121 569 3100
- Contact the NSPCC on **0808 800 5000** (free service, lines open 24 hours a day). They will listen to your concerns, offer advice and support and can take action on your behalf if a child is in danger. You can also report concerns anonymously. For further information or to report your concerns online visit: [www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/)

If you have concerns for an adult who may be gambling beyond their means or who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling, perhaps due to a mental impairment, alcohol or drugs you can:

- Contact Sandwell Adult Safeguarding Team on **0121 569 2266**.
- Contact Gamcare on **0808 8020 133**.

The offences relating to the protection of children and young persons can be found at Section 46 to 58 of the Act.

The Act details types of gambling which are exceptions such as low risk gambling activities such as private non-commercial betting, Lottery or Pools and a Cat D Gaming Machine.

Where premises are subject to age restrictions there are procedures in place to conduct age verification checks, these checks will be taken into account when considering the licence.

Risks to children and young people should be identified within the premises risk assessment along with controls to mitigate the risks.

The 2005 Act provides for a Code of Practice on access to gambling premises by children and young persons and the Council will work closely with the Police to ensure the appropriate enforcement of the law.

Where premises are subject to age restrictions their procedures must be in place to conduct age verification checks, these checks will be taken into account when considering the licence.

## **6 PREMISES LICENCES**

A premises licence can authorise the provision of gambling facilities at the following:

- Casino premises
- Bingo premises
- Betting premises, including betting tracks
- Adult gaming centres
- Family entertainment centres

Premises can be “any place” but the Act generally prevents more than one premises licence applying to any one place. A single building could be subject to more than one premises licence provided they are for different parts of the building and those parts can be genuinely regarded as being separate “premises”. It is recommended that applicants familiarise themselves with paragraphs 7.5 to 7.11 of the Commission’s Guidance in this respect (Follow link: [Premises](#) to access information). With regard to “splitting” premises Sandwell MBC has particular regard to paragraphs 7.31 and 7.39 of the Commission’s Guidance (Follow link: [Multiple Activity Premises](#) to access

information). Applicants will need to satisfy Sandwell MBC that premises are genuinely “different” and “separate” in each case.

Any entrances and exits from parts of a building covered by one or more licences need to be separate and identifiable so that the separation of the premises is not compromised, and that people are not allowed to “drift” accidentally into a gambling area. In this context, it should normally be possible to access the premises without going through another licensed premises or premises with a permit.

The relevant access provisions for each premises type is as follows:

Type of Premises	Access Provisions
Casino	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The principal entrance to the premises must be from the “street”</li> <li>• No entrance to a casino must be made from premises that are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons</li> <li>• No customer must be able to enter a casino directly from any other premises which holds a gambling licence</li> </ul>
Adult Gaming Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No customer must be able to access the premises directly from any other licensed gambling premises</li> </ul>
Betting Shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access must be from a “street” or from other premises with a betting license</li> <li>• No direct access from a betting shop to another premise used for the retail sale of merchandise or services. In effect, there cannot be an entrance to a betting shop from a shop of any kind unless that shop is itself a licensed betting premises</li> </ul>
Tracks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No customer must be able to access the premises directly from a casino or Adult Gaming Centers.</li> </ul>
Bingo Premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No customer must be able to access the premises directly from a casino, an Adult Gaming Centers or a betting premises other than a track</li> </ul>
Family Entertainment Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No customer must be able to access the premises directly from a casino, an Adult Gaming Centers or a betting premises other than a track</li> </ul>

Other than an application for a betting premises licence in respect of a track, Sandwell MBC is not able to issue a premises licence unless the applicant holds the relevant operating licence from the Gambling Commission.

When considering applications for premises licences Sandwell MBC will consider each case on its own merits without regard to demand. With regard to whether the environment is appropriate to gambling, Sandwell MBC will take into account any representations made by the Commission.

Sandwell MBC will maintain a register of premises licenses issued which will be available for public inspection on request. Please contact the Licensing Team by email to [licensing\\_team@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:licensing_team@sandwell.gov.uk)

## **7 RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES / NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR REPRESENTATION**

These are generally public bodies that must be notified of all applications and who are entitled to make representations to Sandwell MBC if those representations are relevant to the licensing objectives.

Section 157 of the Act defines those authorities; for our purposes they are as follows: -

- The Gambling Commission
- The Chief Officer of Police
- West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service
- The Local Planning Authority
- Environmental Health
- Local Safeguarding Children Board
- HM Revenue and Customs
- A Licensing Authority in whose area the premises are situated

Any concerns expressed by a responsible authority in relation to their own functions cannot be considered unless they are relevant to the application itself and to the licensing objectives.

Each representation will, however, be considered on its own individual merits.

## **8 INTERESTED PARTIES**

Interested parties can make representations about licence applications or apply for a review of an existing licence.



An interested party is someone who:

- lives sufficiently close to the premises likely to be affected by the authorised activities or,
- has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities or,
- represents persons in either of the two groups above

Sandwell MBC is required by Regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under the Act to determine whether a person is an Interested Party.

Each case will be determined upon its merits, however, in determining whether someone lives sufficiently close to a particular premise so as to be affected, Sandwell MBC will take into account, among other things:

- the size of the premises
- the nature of the premises
- the distance of the premises from the person making the representation
- the nature of the complaint
- the potential impact of the premises

In determining whether a person has a business interest which could be affected Sandwell MBC will consider, among other things:

- the size of the premises
- the catchment area of the premises (how far people travel to visit the premises)
- whether the person making the representation has business interests in the catchment area that might be affected

If an existing gambling business makes a representation that it is going to be affected by another gambling business starting up in the area then Sandwell MBC would not normally consider this, unless it is supported by other evidence, as such a representation relates to demand or competition and not to the licensing objectives.

Trade associations, trade unions, residents' and tenants' associations will generally not be viewed as interested parties unless they are representing a

specific member or members who are held to be an interested party in accordance with the provisions of Section 158 of the Act.

A school head or governor will generally not be viewed as an interested party unless they are representing the interests of pupils or parents who are held to be interested parties in accordance with the provisions of Section 158 of the Act.

A community group will generally not be viewed as an interested party unless they are representing the interests of vulnerable people who are held to be interested parties in accordance with the provisions of Section 158 of the Act. Sandwell MBC is committed and will encourage improved engagement with agencies including the voluntary and community sector partners who have a vested interest in the young and vulnerable to ensure representations about licence applications or a review of an existing licence. Sandwell MBC administers and monitors the voluntary sector support grants budget and therefore has close links with voluntary and community sector groups via grant agreements and agreed monitoring arrangements. The voluntary and community sector provide support to young and vulnerable groups ranging from debt advice, employment and training opportunities as well as victim support.

Persons who are democratically elected, e.g. Councillors and Members of Parliament, are interested parties. Sandwell MBC will not require such elected persons to provide evidence that they have been asked to represent any particular person providing the elected person represents the area/location that will be affected by the licence/permit application or review.

Sandwell MBC may, in certain circumstances, consider a representation to be either frivolous or vexatious. This will generally be a matter of fact given the circumstances of each individual case but, before coming to a decision Sandwell MBC will normally consider:

- who is making the representation and whether there is a history of making representations that are not relevant
- whether it raises a “relevant” issue or not, or
- whether it raises issues specifically to do with the premises which are the subject to the application

More detailed information on the making of representations can be found in Appendix 1. The guidance note has been prepared in accordance with

relevant Statutory Instruments and Gambling Commission guidance.

## **9 LOCAL RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Operators are required to consider local risks to the licensing objectives by the provision of gambling facilities at their premises. They are required to have policies, procedures and controls in place to mitigate those risks. Operators shall ensure that their local risk assessments are up to date, reviewed at least yearly, are kept readily available and retained on the premises.

Operators are required to undertake/update/share with Responsible Authorities (as appropriate in accordance with the Guidance and the Licence Conditions Codes of Practice) a local risk assessment in the following situations:

- when applying for a new premises licence
- when applying to vary the premises licence
- when significant changes occur in local circumstance (see below)
- when there are significant changes at the premises (see below)
- when requested to do so by Sandwell MBC

In this context risk includes any actual, potential and any possible future emerging risks to the licensing objectives.

The risk assessment should be specific to the local area within which the premises is situated and should be sufficiently detailed to enable Sandwell MBC and the operator to consider whether any conditions are required to mitigate the risks.

When completing the risk assessment Sandwell MBC expects operators to attach significant importance to their local risk assessment and that they must have regard to the local area profile created by Sandwell MBC and to Sandwell MBC's Statement of Principles. Controls to mitigate risk should be relevant and proportionate to the premises.

Where appropriate we would expect the applicant to consider the following matters when carrying out their risk assessments. This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other factors which should be considered. A risk assessment should be undertaken for each new application and matters which should be considered will vary.

The list below gives examples of actual, potential or future emerging risks associated with Locations, this list is not exhaustive and is provided as guidance only:

- The location of schools, sixth form colleges, youth centres etc
- banks and other financial institutions
- playgrounds, leisure/community centres and other areas where children will gather
- hostels or support services for vulnerable people, such as those with addiction issues or who are homeless
- any gambling or addiction support/treatment centres
- any known information about issues with problem gambling in the area and persons vulnerable who may be adversely harmed by entering a gambling premises
- the surrounding night time economy, and possible interaction with gambling premises
- patterns of crime or anti-social behaviour in the area, and specifically linked to gambling premises
- the socio-economic makeup of the area
- the density of different types of gambling
- premises in the area.

This is not an exhaustive list, risks and identified controls to mitigate risks will be individual to each premises.

Examples of actual, potential or future emerging risks associated with underage gambling:

- Ensuring appropriate staffing levels at different times of the day i.e. when a local school or college closes and the students begin to vacate the grounds
- Proximity of machines to the entrance door
- The position of gambling machines
- Using age verification policies including 'Think 21' and 'Think 25' to prevent underage gambling
- Enhanced staff training where the premises is close to a school or college.

This is not an exhaustive list, risks and identified controls to mitigate risks will be individual to each premises.

Local risk assessments shall also:

- Show how vulnerable people, such as people with gambling dependencies are protected

- Include self-exclusion details as a control measure. Self-exclusion being a process when an individual asks a gambling operator to be excluded from gambling with them for a set length of time. In practice, it means the individual will be refused service in the venues where they have self-excluded. By law, this must be provided as an option by gambling operators in Great Britain
- Include details of how the premises will share information with nearby agencies, including the frequency and mechanisms it intends to use to do so
- Include control measures to mitigate risks when the footfall is the highest.

#### Significant changes in local circumstances:

- Operators must consider what is happening in their local area and it is their responsibility to identify significant changes which may require a review and possible amendment to their risk assessment. A significant change can be temporary, and any temporary changes should be considered, and adjustments made to the risk assessments if necessary.
- Sandwell MBC will provide information to gambling operators when it feels a significant change has occurred in the local area. Sandwell MBC will set out what that change is and may provide information on any specific concerns it may have that should be considered by operators.

The following lists set out some examples of what the Sandwell MBC considers to be significant changes in local circumstances. The list is not exhaustive, and each premise will be considered on its own merits. Operators must consider whether any change in the locality of their premises is one that may be considered significant.

- The local area is classified or declassified by Sandwell MBC as being an area of heightened risk within its Local Area Profile
- Any substantial building development or conversion of existing premises in the local area which may increase or decrease the number of visitors. For example, where premises are converted to a local supermarket or a new office building is constructed nearby
- Any new pay day loan establishment or pawn brokers open in the local area
- Relevant changes are made to the provision, location and/or timings of public transport in the local area, such as a bus stop which is used by

children to attend school is moved to a location in proximity to gambling premises

- Educational facilities increase in the local area. This may occur as a result of the construction of a new school/college or where a significant change is made to an existing establishment
- The local area is identified as a crime hotspot by the police and/or Sandwell MBC. Police reports and call outs shall therefore be considered
- Any vulnerable group is identified by Sandwell MBC or venues relating to those vulnerable groups are opened in proximity to gambling premises e.g. additional homeless hostels or gambling or mental health care/support facilities in the local area
- A new gambling premises opens in the local area
- Attempts to gamble by under 18s

Sources of information available to assist operators with completing risk assessments:

## **LOCAL AREA PROFILE**

Sandwell MBC has produced six profiles based on the Six Towns in the Borough which will assess the local environment and identify local concerns and risks.

The profile will take account of a wide range of factors, data and information held by Sandwell MBC and its partners. Responsible authorities and other relevant organisations will be invited to take part in the preparation of the profile. The profile will enable operators to clearly identify the risks and concerns in the community when completing their risk assessment.

The Local Area Profiles can be accessed at:

<https://www.sandwelltrends.info/sandwell-town-profiles/>

## **CENSUS**

The above link for the local area profiles also enables operators to access the Census Town Profiles which provide an overview of the social economic conditions within each of the six towns of Sandwell. The Census Town Profiles provide information on population change and structure, economic status, ethnic background and health.

## **RISK TOOL**

A Risk Tool for Sandwell Gambling Licences has been developed as a guide to applicants applying for new gambling licences or to renew an existing licence. The purpose of the tool is to assist applicants with the completion of applications, and not as the sole means for risk assessment. The tool provides premises information, for premises that are considered at risk and in close proximity to the intended gambling premise location. The tool can be found on the Sandwell Trends website. A link to the page can be found below. Once the page is opened select the Gambling Location Risk Tool:

[Sandwell Trends - Gambling Location Risk Tool](#)

The information given when accessing the tool should only be used as a guide to support other methods of intelligence gathering.

## **BE GAMBLE AWARE**

Who provide information to help people make informed decisions about their gambling.

GambleAware is an independent, grant-making charity commissioning prevention and treatment services across England, Scotland and Wales in partnership with expert organisations and agencies, including the NHS, across three areas:

- Commissioning the National Gambling Treatment Service
- Producing public health campaigns on a national scale and providing practical support to local services
- Commissioning research and evaluation to improve knowledge of what works in prevention.

## **10 CONDITIONS OF LICENCE**

The mandatory and default conditions that are attached to all Gambling Act 2005 premises licences are designed to be, and usually are, sufficient to ensure operation that is reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives and that additional conditions will only be imposed by Sandwell MBC where there is a clear risk to the licensing objectives that is not adequately addressed by

the mitigation measures, policies and procedures outlined in the applicant's risk assessment.

The risk assessment is a dynamic document which (in accordance with SR code provision 10.1.2) must be reviewed if there is a significant change in local circumstances. As risks change or new risks are identified, the policy, procedures and mitigation measures to address those identified risks may be changed very quickly.

However, if the mitigation measures are the subject of premises licence conditions, then an application for variation of the premises licence will be required to change those conditions. This could delay any change and would cause unnecessary expense and administration for both operators and the licensing authority.

Any conditions imposed by Sandwell MBC will be proportionate to the circumstances they are intended to address. In particular, Sandwell MBC will ensure that any conditions are:

- relevant to the need to make the premises suitable as a gambling facility
- directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for
- fairly and reasonably related to the scale and type of premises
- reasonable in all other respects.

Conditions relating to the good conduct of gambling premises will primarily be set as mandatory or default conditions by the Secretary of State. Sandwell MBC will only consider imposing conditions in this regard in the light of local circumstances, especially where there are specific risks or problems associated with a particular locality, a specific premises or class of premises. Duplication with other statutory or regulatory regimes will be avoided. Each case will be assessed on its own individual merits.

## **11 CASINOS**

Sandwell MBC has re-affirmed a "no casino" resolution on the basis of all material considerations in order to promote the power of wellbeing of the people it represents, to promote the health of the people it represents and to promote the prevention of crime and disorder within the Borough.

Existing casino operators have "grandfather" rights and are entitled to a casino premises licence under the Act issued by Sandwell MBC.



Sandwell MBC will be mindful when considering applications, of section 152 of the Gambling Act 2005 which states that a premises licence may not be issued in respect of a premises if a premises licence already has effect.

The Gambling Commission are responsible for issuing codes of practice about access to casino premises by children and young persons, which would mean that no one under 18 would be able to enter casino premises and entrances to the casino or gambling area would be required to be properly supervised.

The Gambling Commission may issue further guidance to local authorities generally regarding licence conditions in respect of casino premises.

## **12 BETTING**

Anyone wishing to operate a betting office will require a betting premises licence from Sandwell MBC. Children and young persons will not be permitted to enter premises with a betting premises licence.

Betting premises may make available gaming machines for use where there are also substantive facilities for non-remote betting provided and available in the premises.

It is not possible for an operator to offer gaming machines on premises which are licensed for betting without offering sufficient facilities for betting. The Gambling Commission and Sandwell MBC take the view that customers need to be offered a balanced mix of betting and gaming machines, in line with the licensing objective of protecting vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, "betting" should therefore remain the primary element of the gambling facilities being offered. In this regard, betting may be provided by way of betting terminals or over a counter (i.e. face to face).

If Sandwell MBC receives an application to vary a betting premises licence in order to extend the opening hours, it will need to satisfy itself that the reason for the application is in line with the need for operators to ensure that the main gambling activity associated with the licence type is actually going to be offered at the premises and not replaced merely by making gaming machines available.

In other words, applicants will need to demonstrate that the extension of hours is not designed solely to benefit from the gaming machine entitlement and that the use of gaming machines remains ancillary to the “primary” purpose of the licence, i.e. to provide betting on the premises. In all cases, each application will be considered on its own individual merits.

### **13 TRACKS**

Only one premises licence can be issued for any particular premises at any time unless the premises are a “track”. A track is a site where races or other sporting events take place.

Track operators are not required to hold an “operator’s licence” granted by the Gambling Commission, therefore premises licences for tracks issued by Sandwell MBC may contain requirements for premises licence holders about their responsibilities in relation to the proper conduct of betting. Indeed, track operators have an important role to play, for example, in ensuring that betting areas are properly administered and supervised.

Unlike betting offices, a betting premises licence in respect of a track does not give an automatic entitlement to use gaming machines.

When considering whether to exercise its power to restrict the number of betting machines at a track Sandwell MBC will consider the circumstances of each individual application and, among other things, will consider the potential space for the number of machines requested, the ability of track staff to supervise the machines, especially if they are scattered around the site, and the ability of the track operator to prevent children and young persons and vulnerable people betting on the machines.

### **14 BINGO**

The holder of a bingo operating licence will be able to provide any type of bingo game including cash and prize bingo.

Commercial bingo halls will require a bingo premises licence from Sandwell MBC.

It is important that where children are allowed to enter premises licensed for bingo, they are not allowed to participate in any bingo game. When considering applications of this type, Sandwell MBC will therefore take into account, among other things, the location of the games or machines, access to those areas, general supervision of the premises and the display

of appropriate notices.

A limited number of gaming machines may also be made available at bingo licensed premises.

Bingo is classed as equal chance gaming and it will be permitted in alcohol licensed premises and in clubs provided it remains within the threshold. The threshold is reached if the bingo played during any seven-day period exceeds

£2,000 (either in money taken or prizes awarded) once in a year. If the threshold is exceeded the establishment will be subject to a bingo operating licence which will have to be obtained from the Gambling Commission.

As with the previous section in relation to bettering premises, if an application for variation is made to extend the licensing hours of bingo premises, Sandwell MBC will want to establish that the primary purpose of the premises throughout the extended period remains the provision of bingo facilities. Gaming machines may only be made available for use in licensed bingo premises on days when sufficient facilities for playing bingo are also available for use.

In this regard, in cases where bingo is being offered exclusively by means of Electronic Bingo Terminals (EBTs) there must be more individual player positions made available for bingo than there are gaming machines available for use.

Where playing is permitted, on the licensed premise, using mobile electronic devices, then it should only be permitted within the licensed area.

## **15 GAMING**

A gaming machine can cover all types of gambling activity, including betting on “virtual” events.

The Act itself prescribes the number and category of gaming machines that are permitted in each type of gambling premises.

Subject to the provisions of the Act, gaming machines can be made available in a wide variety of premises, including:

- casinos
- bingo premises
- betting premises (including tracks)

- adult gaming centres
- family entertainment centres
- clubs
- pubs and other alcohol licensed premises
- travelling fairs

A machine is not a gaming machine if the winning of a prize is determined purely by the player's skill. However, any element of "chance" imparted by the action of the machine would cause it to be a gaming machine.

Sandwell MBC will, where appropriate, seek to encourage premises licence holders to adopt and adhere to any codes of practice which may be introduced by the amusement trade industry from time to time.

Sandwell MBC will treat every application for a permit on its own merits, regardless of the number of machines applied for. Applicants for permits in respect of alcohol licensed premises may, where the number of machines applied for is 3 or more, be asked to provide additional information, for example in the form of a plan, in order to satisfy Sandwell MBC that the premises are suitable for the purpose and will not result in the "primary" use of the premises being changed to one of gambling.

The Gambling Commission have introduced a Code of Practice for gaming machines in clubs and premises with an alcohol licence which can be accessed via the Commission's website. Link: [Gambling Commission Codes of Practice](#) The code includes sections relating to:

- the location and operation of machines
- access to gambling by children
- a good practice guide for permit holders

For general information about the issue of permits to relevant premises, including alcohol licensed premises, please direct your enquiries to the

Licensing Team by telephone 0121 569 6744 or by email to [licensing\\_team@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:licensing_team@sandwell.gov.uk).

## 16 LOTTERIES

All lotteries are unlawful unless they are run in accordance with an operating licence issued by the Gambling Commission or it is an "exempt" lottery as defined by the Act. One of those exemptions is in respect of what are termed "small societies lotteries" and Sandwell MBC

is responsible for registering these “small” lotteries.

A society will be allowed to register with Sandwell MBC if it is a “non-commercial” lottery, in other words, it is established and conducted:

- for charitable purposes
- for the purpose of enabling participation in, or of supporting, sport, athletic or a cultural activity; or
- for any other non-commercial purpose, other than for private gain

Sandwell MBC maintains a register of small societies lotteries. Please contact the licensing team for further information by telephone 0121 569 6744 or by email to [licensing\\_team@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:licensing_team@sandwell.gov.uk).

The Gambling Commission has strengthened its guidance to licensing authorities as a result of some small society lotteries avoiding applying for an operating licence from the Commission by obtaining 2 or more registrations with the same or different licensing authorities.

A society lottery is a large lottery requiring an operating licence if the arrangements for it are such that its proceeds may exceed £20,000 or the aggregate proceeds in any calendar year exceed £250,000.

If a society has separate branches with different aims and objectives it is acceptable for them to hold more than one Licensing Authority registration.

If Sandwell MBC received more than one registration which appears to come from the same society the applicant may well be asked to provide further information in support of the application so that Sandwell MBC can satisfy itself that the societies are genuinely separate and the aims and objectives are different.

Similar checks may be carried out on societies at the time the annual registration fees are due and if the limits on proceeds are likely to be exceeded, the matter will be referred to the Gambling Commission for further investigation.

## **17 EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION**

To ensure the licensing objectives as outlined above in Section 2, Gambling Act 2005 are met, Sandwell MBC will establish a close working relationship with the police, the Gambling Commission and, where

appropriate, other responsible authorities.

Licensing authorities are required to include how they will apply their Statement of Principles with regards to the exchange of information between it and the Gambling Commission, as well as other persons listed in Schedule 6 to the Act.

The principle that Sandwell MBC applies is that it will act in accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 in its exchange of information which includes the provision that the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation. Sandwell MBC will also have regard to any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission to local authorities on this matter, as well as any relevant regulations issued by the Secretary of State under the powers provided in the Gambling Act 2005.

Details of applications and representations which are referred to the Licensing Committee or a Licensing Panel may be published in reports that are made publicly available in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The personal details of those making representations may be disclosed to applicants and other parties to a hearing and will normally only be withheld on the grounds of personal safety where Sandwell MBC is specifically requested to do so.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) also provides the public with a general right of access to information held by public authorities and subject to exemptions, be supplied with a copy of that information. Information about how the authority handles FOIA requests can be found at the Sandwell MBC's website. Please follow link to access details: [Freedom of Information](#).

FOIA requests must be submitted to the Sandwell MBC in writing. You can either fill in the online form by following the link: [FOIA Form](#) or send an email or letter stating what information you would like to receive. Emails should be sent to: [info\\_management@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:info_management@sandwell.gov.uk) and letters should be addressed to:-

Information Management Unit  
Oldbury Council House  
Freeth Street  
Oldbury

West Midlands  
B69 3DE

Unless restricted by the Gambling Act, details about applications, licenses and representations will be made available in our public register. Representations that we accept will be copied in their entirety to applicants, to provide an opportunity for mediation and to ensure that the rights of the applicant are not compromised.

Operators/premises are expected to share relevant information with the Sandwell MBC to enable it to develop its understanding about the risk of gambling in its area such as:

- information about test purchasing exercises (subject to primary authority agreements where they exist)
- information as the number of self-exclusion and underage attempts to gamble
- details of where a child or young person repeatedly attempts to gamble on their premises, this may provide Sandwell MBC with an opportunity to consider safeguarding concerns
- information about how vulnerable people will, including those with gambling dependencies be identified and protected.

Sandwell MBC is committed to providing information to gambling operators when it feels a significant change has occurred in the local area. This will enable operators to effectively manage risks by reviewing and updating local risk assessments and for operators to share information appropriately with nearby agencies such as treatment centres. See local risk assessments section for full details of significant changes.

Sandwell MBC will also ensure local area profiles based on the Six Towns in the Borough are current in order to assist operators in assessing the local environment, identifying local concerns and risks in the community to fully complete risk assessments. This process will facilitate the effective implementation of control measures by operators to mitigate and manage risks.

## **18 ENFORCEMENT PROTOCOLS**

Sandwell MBC is required by Regulations under the Act to state the principles to be applied by it in exercising the functions under Part 15 of the Act in respect of the inspection of premises and the powers under 346 of the Act to institute criminal proceedings in respect of the offences

specified.

Sandwell MBC will have regard to the principles of better regulation and the Regulators' Code. In addition, Sandwell MBC will act in accordance with the relevant legislation, be guided by the Commissions Guidance and will endeavour at all times to be:

- proportionate – Sandwell MBC will only intervene when necessary any remedies will be appropriate to the risk posed and costs identified and minimised
- accountable – decisions will be justified and subject to public scrutiny
- consistent – any rules and standards will be joined up and implemented fairly
- transparent – Sandwell MBC will be open and any licence conditions will be kept simple and user friendly, and
- targeted – regulation will be focused on the problem with the aim of minimising side effects.

We are committed to the objectives of the Black Country Better Business for All (BBFA) initiative which is to:

- Reduce the regulatory burden on businesses
- Promote dialogue between businesses and regulatory services
- Improve the business perception of regulators
- Encourage the right balance between encouragement, education and enforcement
- Develop a joint offer of support from regulatory services for businesses
- Build trust between regulators and businesses.

The Black Country Regulators Operating Framework that has been approved and adopted by the four Black Country Authorities including Sandwell MBC and includes:

- A Regulator and Business Charter
- Service Standards, and
- An Enforcement Policy (which takes into account the requirements of the Regulators Code)

This document will ensure the same regulatory approach, aligned to BBFA principles, is applied across all relevant regulatory services within the Black Country region. The Black Country Operating Framework can be



viewed <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/1734/black-country-regulators-operating-framework>.

We aim to prioritise and direct our regulatory effort effectively using intelligence and relevant risk assessment schemes.

Such risk assessments will have regard to all available, relevant and good quality data. We will give due consideration to the combined effect of the potential impact and likelihood of non-compliance; this approach will enable us to focus our resources on the areas that need them most and to ensure that persistent offenders are identified quickly.

In general, the Gambling Commission will take the lead role on the investigation and, where appropriate, the prosecution of illegal gambling.

Sandwell MBC will continue to work with the Commission, the police and other enforcing authorities to provide for the targeting of agreed problem or high-risk premises. A lighter touch will be applied to those premises which are shown to be well managed and maintained. Inspections will generally be undertaken on a reactive basis. The overall aim is to permit the use of premises for gambling. With that in mind it is intended that action will generally be taken against “problem” premises through the review process. Test purchasing is one method by which Sandwell MBC, in partnership with The Gambling Commission can measure the compliance of licensed operators, or groups of licensed operators, with aspects of the Gambling Act 2005. In conducting test purchasing, we may work in partnership with Gambling Commission which have the primary responsibility for issues related to individual gambling premises. Test purchasing is also a means by which operators themselves can demonstrate the effectiveness of their policies and procedures. When conducting test purchase operations due regard will be given to the Age Restricted Products and Services: A Code of Practice for Regulatory Delivery 2014.

## **19 MODERN DAY SLAVERY**

Human trafficking and other forms of slavery continue to exist.

Modern slavery can take many forms including people trafficking and forced labour, sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation.

The Home Office estimates there are 13,000 potential victims in the UK. More about the authorities approach to tackling Modern Day Slavery can be found <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/modernslavery>.

Any concerns should be reported by calling the Police on 101, the UK Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700 or the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

## **20 MONEY LAUNDERING**

Licensed premises have a key role to play in preventing the laundering of money generated by illegal activity. The Gambling Commissions guidance for gambling and betting industry can be viewed at <https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/licensees-and-businesses/aml>.

## **21 THE LICENSING PROCESS**

Sandwell MBC's licensing functions under the Act will be carried out by the Licensing Committee, supported by a number of Licensing Panels and by officers acting under the delegated authority of the committee.

Where there are no areas of contention it is considered that many of the functions will be largely administrative. In the interests of efficiency and effectiveness these will, for the most part, be carried out by authorised officers (as authorised by the Scheme of Delegations). Please see the most recent Scheme of Delegations which is published on Sandwell MBC's website - Follow link to access [Scheme of Delegation](#).

Where there are relevant representations in respect of an application the matter will be determined by the Licensing Committee or one of its sub-committees, as will any application for the review of a licence.

Factors which will be considered when considering applications and reviews include:

- history of premises operation
- compliance history
- attitude of the licence holder
- results of interventions
- consultation with responsible authorities
- the seriousness of non-compliance
- completeness of risk assessments

Guidance for applicants can be found in Appendix 2.

## 22 POLICY REVIEW

This Statement of Principles is not intended to override the right of any person to make an application under the Act, and to have that application considered on its merits. Equally, this Statement of Principles is not intended to undermine the right of any person to make representations about an application or to seek a review of a licence where provision has been made for them to do so.

In preparing this Statement of Principles, Sandwell MBC has had regard to any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission and has given appropriate weight to any views received as part of the consultation process. This Statement will be kept under review from time to time and, in accordance with the Act, will be subject to review every three years. Before a Statement or revision comes into effect, Sandwell MBC will publish a notice of their intention to publish a Statement or revision. The notice will:

- specify the date on which the statement or revision is to be published
- specify the date on which the statement or revision will come into effect
- specify the internet address where the statement or revision will be published and the address of the premises at which it may be inspected
- be published on the authority's website and in/on one or more of the following places for at least four weeks before it comes into effect:
  - a local newspaper circulating in the area covered by the statement
  - a local newsletter, circular, or similar document circulating in the area covered by the statement
  - a public notice board in or near the principal office of the authority
  - a public notice board on the premises of public libraries in the area covered by the statement.

Sandwell MBC will ensure that upon reviewing this Statement of Principles, consultation shall be undertaken in line with Cabinet Office consultation principles guidance. The guidance is available via the following link: [Cabinet Office consultation principles guidance](#).