

## **Proposal to Pass a Resolution not to Issue Casino Licences and Proposed Amendments to the Council's Gambling Policy**

### **Extract from the report to Council 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

#### **4.0 Proposal to pass a No Casino Resolution**

- 4.1 In making the decision to pass a No Casino Resolution, the Authority may take into account any principle or matter and not just the licensing objectives. The licensing objectives in respect of the Gambling Act 2005 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.
- 4.2 The Authority's proposal to pass a No Casino Resolution in February 2014, subject to consultation on the proposed changes to the Gambling Policy and the decision of Council, was based on:
- i) The fact that since the original bid for the new casino licence was submitted there have been changes in the focus of the Authority's priorities and commitments to improving the wellbeing of people in Swansea. Tackling poverty was adopted by Full Council as a top priority for the City and County of Swansea on 26 July 2012.
  - ii) Swansea has an above average level of deprivation, with 17 (12%) of its 147 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) now ranked in the top 10% most deprived in Wales, as measured by the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation 2011. In terms of the overall index, the most deprived LSOAs in Swansea are in Townhill, Penderry and Castle. In response to this, Council adopted the "Target Area Approach" to tackling poverty in February 2013.
  - iii) Research on the social impacts of gambling, carried out in Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Executive in 2006 shows that disadvantaged social groups who experience poverty, unemployment, dependence on welfare, and low levels of education and household income are most likely to suffer the adverse consequences of increased gambling. Problem gambling can lead to debt, divorce, crime, depression and also suicide, all of which can have a negative impact on communities, particularly those already experiencing the stresses of life on a low income. This is a particularly important consideration in view of the current economic climate.
- 4.3 In addition to paragraph 4.2 of this report it was also considered that licensing objective 3, "Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling" was relevant in this case. The term "vulnerable persons" is not defined but the statutory guidance produced by the Gambling Commission states that for regulatory purposes it must be assumed that this group includes people who gamble more than they want to, people who gamble beyond their means and people who are unable to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling.