



# GLASGOW CHURCHES TOGETHER

**Participants** Church of Scotland    Methodist Church    Roman Catholic Church    Salvation Army  
Scottish Episcopal Church    United Free Church    United Reformed Church

**Office** c/o The Presbytery of Glasgow, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4JP

**Tel / Fax** 0141 332 6606    **e-mail** office@glasgowchurches.org.uk  
**website** www.glasgowchurches.org.uk

## **DRAFT GLASGOW LICENSING BOARD POLICY STATEMENT**

### **CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

From

GLASGOW CHURCHES TOGETHER and  
THE METHODIST CHURCH, Glasgow Circuit  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, Archdiocese of Glasgow  
THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway  
THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, Glasgow District.

and with the support of member churches who are submitting separate responses  
THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Presbytery of Glasgow  
THE UNITED FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Glasgow Area.

The SALVATION ARMY have already submitted a formal response (Nov 06) which fully represents their concerns.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Glasgow Churches Together is an initiative of the Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, Roman Catholic Church, Salvation Army, Scottish Episcopal Church, United Free Church and United Reformed Church in the Glasgow area. These seven churches enjoy the active participation and general adherence of a substantial number of people within the city boundary. The churches have a wide spectrum of views on gambling.

There are an officially estimated 300-350,000 people with gambling problems in the UK. The Churches do not wish any Glasgow Licensing Board's policy to further encourage gambling or to exacerbate the financial difficulties affecting the families and children of people with gambling problems.

It is regretted that any moral objections based on our Scriptures, traditions and long experience of providing social care for life's casualties are considered not valid in terms of this consultation. (Page 6, General Principles)

**In response to the draft Licensing Board Policy Statement, Glasgow Churches Together, the Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the United Reformed Church enjoy common ground in the following commendations, comments and suggestions.**

## **COMMENDATIONS**

The Licensing Board is to be commended for much of its endeavour to draw up a comprehensive, transparent and workable policy statement.

The Licensing Objectives are clear and the concern about the protection of children and vulnerable people is given prominence. (Page 2, section 1)

The appointment of the Local Child Protection Committee as the competent body to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm is commended. (Page 3, section 4)

## **COMMENTS**

The Churches are particularly concerned about protecting children and vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

- We wish the term ‘vulnerable people’ to be expanded to explicitly include families and children affected by people with gambling problems; and not to simply mean ‘vulnerable people’ who enter gambling premises. (Page 2, section 1, and throughout)
- We recommend that, for individual gambling premises licence applications, consultation forms be sent by the Licensing Board directly to the places or worship / gathering of all faith communities within the area liable to be affected. (Page 2, section 5)
- We would encourage the requirement of ‘proof of age’ schemes for all gambling premises. (Page 9, section 2, et al)

The Churches often find themselves dealing with the casualties of gambling problems, especially families and children.

- We urge the licensing authority, when hearing licence applications, to consult and engage more fully with those charities that support people with gambling problems. (Page 3, section 5)
- If not already good practice, we would urge that the prominent display and provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare be mandatory in all gambling premises. (Page 10, Section 2)
- If not already good practice, we would encourage the condition that rules be displayed in all gambling premises and venues, not just tracks. (Page 13, ‘Conditions on rules’)

- We would encourage the extension of Disclosure Scotland requirements to all gambling premises where 'vulnerable people' may be present, not just in terms of children in Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centres. (Page 15, Statement of Principles)

The Churches are not in favour of the licensing authority's submission for a premises licence for a regional casino. (Page 10, Section 4)

The Churches are not in favour of permitting the installation of ATMs within gambling premises. (Page 11, Credit, et al).

### **A SUGGESTION**

The Churches seek to improve the quality of life and security, especially for the most vulnerable in our society.

- We suggest that every local gambling premises, whether of chain or independent ownership, be required to make a significant contribution to the work of those charities dealing with problem gambling in their local area, ie: include some kind of social investment clause in the licence conditions.

### **CONCLUSION**

We thank the Licensing Board for the opportunity given to Glasgow Churches Together, its member churches and other faith communities to respond to the consultation on the draft Policy Statement.

As indicated in your letter of 16 October 2006, we trust that the responses of Glasgow Churches Together, the individual churches and other faith communities, will be given fully appropriate weighting alongside political, social and business interests.

Yours sincerely

Br Stephen Smyth  
Ecumenical Officer

12 January 2007