

30th August 2012

Graham Burgess
Chief Executive
Wirral Council
grahamburgess@wirral.gov.uk

Dear Mr Burgess,

I am writing to you as Chairman on behalf of the National Casino Industry Forum (NCiF) the body that represents over 90% of UK land based casino operators.

As we know you're aware there is a requirement, under Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005, for your Authority to publish a Gambling Policy Statement every three years, the next Policy Statement being due to come into force on 31st January 2013, following consultation. As you also know, under the Gaming Act 1968 your Authority is one of the 53 'Permitted Areas' in Great Britain where casinos may operate.

As the representative body for the casino industry we would welcome the opportunity to contribute to your consultation process.

Casinos play an important part in the provision of entertainment and hospitality, bringing mature and responsible patrons to our town and city centres. Casinos are an attractive and positive addition to the overall offer of our evening economies, without any of the negative experiences of anti-social behaviour sometimes sadly attributable to late night venues. Last year casinos in the UK hosted almost 19 million visits, and provided an important source of local revenue, which could translate to:

- New £15 million **construction investment** in local authority areas to help to restore confidence locally
- Possibility of Section 106 Agreements to **boost local services**
- Local Authority **business rates boosted** by £250,000 pa
- Areas benefit from **£4-5 million of added value** in the local economy

It is also worth noting that as a, quite properly, highly regulated industry it is also a labour intensive business, providing disproportionately high employment opportunities with typically 100 to 200 staff on a premises. Some current casino venues provide up to 450 jobs (depending on the size of the casino). Employment is met at a local level, often to the young; also the lack of academic qualifications is not a barrier to employment.

Where based, casinos are an important and positive contribution to the night-time economy of an area. They do not contribute to, but instead help to mitigate problems by offering different types of entertainment in the late night economy not centred around social drinking. Casinos add attraction, vigour and variety to our town and city centres and encourage tourism.

We would welcome and encourage dialogue with your authority to ensure that any casino premises in your area is viewed positively as contributing to the variety of offer in the night-time economy.

Yours sincerely



Malcolm Moss
Chairman

