



**GBG Licensing Group  
By Teams  
22 April 2025**

Attendees:

Simon Reynolds (Buzz Bingo)	Debbie Bollard (Hough & Bollard)
Richard Bradley (Poppleston & Allen)	Anthony Denby (Leisure Electronics)
Heidi Hards (Buzz Bingo)	Charlotte Meller (GBG)
Peter Hannibal (GBG)	Steve Sharp (GBG)

*Apologies: Andrew Cotton*

**Item 1 Minutes from January 2025 meeting**

1. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the discussions.

**Item 2 Correspondence from Minister regarding the Gambling Act Review**

2. The GBG Board wants a direct response on the points raised and the issues that letter is silent on e.g. Cashless.
3. The Group discussed the reference to “providing targeted support for bingo clubs,” with a consultation expected in the summer with regulations to follow, which could involve conditions on operator licences, which would be easier than (retrospectively) putting conditions on premises licences.
4. Noted that some operators and systems developers are watching the casino developments with interest.

**Item 3 Brent Letter**

5. Again the GBG Board has requested a response, setting out facts and figures about the state of land-based gambling and pushing back on the 6-point plan.
6. It was noted that a number of the councils that signed the letter did not undertake any premises inspections during 2023/24 according to the statistics on the Commission’s website (the 2024/25 data has yet to be published). Several signatories do not appear to have a current Gambling Policy Statement on their websites.

7. There is a strong possibility that the respective licensing officers were not sighted on the letter signed by their Councillors.
8. **Action:** CM to have a conversation with the IoL to find out if they were aware of the letter. (**Post meeting note:** The IoL were unaware of the letter and suggested that we also put an article in a future IoL publication addressing the points in the letter.)

#### **Item 4 Sheffield City Council Vs Royal Amusements Case**

9. Concerns on this Judgement include:
  - An appeal to the High Court which would make it binding.
  - The focus on public health (which is not a licensing objective nor a Responsible Authority) and the point made by the Judge that an operator can't possibly identify all PH risks nor mitigate for them.
  - Generic statements about PH, rather than actual robust local data.
  - Citing a Licensing Act case which took place during the pandemic.
  - Over reliance on the connecting the Local Risk Assessment (LRA) with the grant of the premises licence when the LRA is a requirement of the LCCP.

#### **Item 5 Local Authority issues**

10. The number of conditions being added to applications are increasing as resistance to gambling premises increases but on whole applications are being granted.
11. Still examples of the police asking for conditions which are already part of the Gambling operator licence and requesting conditions which would be added to an alcohol licence.
12. Examples of conditions include having temporary door staff (and reviewing after 6 months) and expectations that the premises "polices the high street" and controls people who hang around the vicinity of the premises, even though they are not customers.
13. **Action:** CM to reach out to Pub Watch to see how much they engage with gambling premises and explore the opportunities to do more.

#### **Item 6 ARE Expo**

14. Over 50 Licensing officers and Police are signed up to attend the joint GBG/IoL sessions on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April at ARE.
- Next meeting: 29 July (By Teams, 10 – 11.30)**