



**GBG Licensing Group
By Teams
28 July 2026**

Attendees:

Neil McCartney (Crown)	Debbie Bollard (Hough & Bollard)
Andrea Rushworth (Crown)	David Lucas
Sam Moore (Buzz Bingo)	Peter Hannibal (GBG)
Antony Denby (Leisure Electronics)	Charlotte Meller (GBG)
Andrew Cotton (Irwin Mitchell)	

Apologies: Tony Lister, Jax Dunkley, Elizabeth Speed

Item 1 Gambling Impact Assessments

1. DCMS has advised that if there is pressure to implement GIAs before the Commission has consulted on statutory guidance, then there could be scenario where non statutory guidance is in place until the statutory guidance consultation takes place.
2. OHID Levy funding to local authority public health teams can be used to produce evidence of gambling harm risks, and treatment needs, which licensing authorities could draw upon to inform their GIA evidence base.
3. GBG's initial list of items to be considered when developing the GIA guidance has been shared with DCMS, with the caveat that it is an organic list and will be added to.

Item 2 Gambling Commission issues

4. OL Fees:
 - Noted that operators have been informed by GC if their bandings have changed but details of exact new fees have yet to be sent out.
 - Several GBG Members have indicated much higher than 25% increase in fees.
 - Anonymised information about the impact of the fee changes, will be shared with DCMS at their request.
5. Both DCMS and GC are looking for examples of how administrative and regulatory burdens could be reduced. (25th Sept deadline).
 - GBG Members have provided comments on the draft GC Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment document which will be submitted this week.
 - DH highlighted an admin process that could be simplified. There is a simple process for address management but to add or remove an activity an entire variation application is required – almost as if applying for a new OL.

Action: Members to submit other examples, including if guidance is unclear or more guidance needed.

Item 3 Housing Committees & Local Government Committee

6. GBG will be submitting evidence to this Committee which has launched an Inquiry about revitalising the high street, which specifically singles out the clustering of LBOs along with vape shops and barbers and looks at planning powers to get rid of unwanted businesses on high streets.

Action: Members to let us have points for inclusion.

Item 4 LA issues

7. The Group raised several issues:
 - a. Hearings in Brent on consecutive days reached different outcomes despite the LA public health concerns being the same (one granted and one refused) , with differences noted in how the 2 hearings were run, including Committee members saying they had never been in a gambling premises. Attendees were asked to set out what conditions they thought could be added to mitigate the issues and protect the vulnerable from harm.
 - b. A hearing pending in Islington, which already has “gambling vulnerability areas” in its policy statement.
 - c. Noted that GC is still trying to resolve issues in relation to casinos caused by the late publication of its guidance for LAs last year.
 - d. The SILA requirements (Sensitive Information in Licensing Applications) are unlikely to be implemented before the commencement of the rest of Martyn’s Law. GBG has asked DCMS for an update on their engagement with the Home Office on how this will apply to gambling premises (particularly those with alcohol licences).
 - e. GBG will be involved again in the IoL’s National Training Event, with a session on facial recognition.

Item 5 Gambling Sprint

8. GBG has advised DCMS there is appetite for a gambling sprint (like the Licensing Act’s Sprint in 2025) and so we are collating a list of potential issues which could be considered.
9. DH suggested it would be helpful to have the Regs changed to mirror the Licensing Act whereby when an application is made electronically, it is down to the LA to share it with the Responsible Authorities (some LAs will do that now for gambling applications but that is not currently the due process).

Action: Members to let us have other ideas for the Sprint list.

Item 6 AOB

- Noted that there was no scheduled date for the Hammersmith & Fulham Judicial Review (regarding its Policy Statement).
- Discussed the recent Evolution case which highlighted the importance of operators knowing who they are supplying their games to, how and where those games are being accessed in practice, and maintain effective ongoing controls that give them confidence their products are not supporting illegal gambling.

Next meeting: Tuesday 3 November 10 – 11