

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services

Community Safety & Environmental Services Committee : 3 May 2006

Subject: Gambling Act 2005 – Casino Advisory Panel

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To update the Committee on the progress which has been made since the Council agreed to respond to the “Call for Proposals” from the Casino Advisory Panel, (CAP), to locate a Regional Casino in West Dunbartonshire.
- 1.2** To update the Committee on the public consultation exercise that took place as part of the formal response to the Casino Advisory Panel.

2. Background

- 2.1** An expression of interest was submitted to CAP by the due date of 31 December 2005, being one of 47 submissions received by them for a Regional Casino.
- 2.2** On 2 February 2006, a “Call for Proposals” was received by the Council from CAP, inviting proposals to be submitted by 31 March 2006.
- 2.3** A report concerning this matter was submitted to the meeting held on 1 March 2006 and the Committee agreed:-
 - (a) that the work undertaken to date by officers of the Council, in partnership with Scottish Enterprise Dunbartonshire, particularly in relation to the public consultation exercise be homologated;
 - (b) to respond formally to the “Call for Proposals” from the Casino Advisory Panel; and
 - (c) that a further report giving details of the consultation exercise carried out by the consultants would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.
- 2.4** The Council’s proposal was submitted by 31 March deadline and included information on demographics, social impact, regeneration, willingness to licence, probability of implementation and the opportunity for community benefits. A total of 27 other local authorities in Britain have also submitted proposals to have a Regional Casino in their area, with Glasgow and Midlothian being the other Scottish applicants.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** The public consultation was carried out by IBP Strategy and Research, an independent consultancy. The consultation exercise was structured in the following fashion:-
- (a) Four focus groups, each of 12 people, were drawn from the areas of Clydebank, Dumbarton, Old Kilpatrick and Bowling, respectively. These groups were divided evenly between males and females and under/over the age of 45.
 - (b) Invitations were issued to the secretaries of the 11 Community Councils in the West Dunbartonshire area and to the Chair of the Community Councils Forum to attend a dedicated focus group. Nine respondents agreed to participate, although in the event, only 5 attended on the night.
 - (c) One thousand face-to-face interviews were conducted with individuals. A quota was designed to ensure that the characteristics of the sample accurately reflected the known characteristics of the population of West Dunbartonshire. Criteria were set out in relation to broad age category, economic activity, gender and location.
- 3.2** Arising from the consultation exercise, the consultants concluded that there is considerable support in principle for a casino development as part of a wider International Entertainment Resort. Of the sample, 63% expressed support for this, compared to 24% who were against it and a further 12% who are not sure. Support for the proposal rose to 69% provided the specific concerns of the respondent are addressed. While there is a clear majority support for the siting for a development of this nature within West Dunbartonshire, the consultants note that there is a significant minority of people who would not support such a development under any circumstances. It should be noted that Bowling and Milton Community Council conducted a localised survey in part of their area, the result of which was a ratio of 2:1 opposed to the development in their immediate vicinity. However, this is inconsistent with the independent consultation exercise in that area which indicated only 20% opposed to such a development.
- 3.3** The principal benefit which people would see from such a development is job creation and people wish to be reassured as to the quality of these jobs and the opportunity for local people to access them. For many people, the availability of good quality, accessible, reasonably priced facilities for local people, which are additional to existing facilities available in the area, would be another important benefit.
- 3.4** The main concerns which people raised about such a development relate to the potential impact on problem gambling; whether jobs would benefit local people; impact on roads; and potential increases in crime levels.

- 3.5 With respect to potential sites, locations at Queens' Quays, the former Carless site, Old Kilpatrick and Bowling, were suggested. The potential sites at Queens' Quays and at Bowling were seen as acceptable by the majority of people across West Dunbartonshire.
- 3.6 The Panel intends to undertake the examination and evaluation of proposals by the end of Summer 2006. This will include consultations with a number of public agencies and consideration of the possibility of proposals being examined in public.
- 3.7 It is anticipated that the Panel will also consider and recommend on the location of a Regional Casino to the Secretary of State by mid December 2006.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1 There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The proposal to the Casino Advisory Panel to develop a Regional Casino in West Dunbartonshire was submitted by the Council on 31 March 2006.
- 6.2 The Council will provide any further information required by the Panel for the full evaluation of the submission.
- 6.3 The Council will await the decision by the Panel, by December 2006, on whether it favours the siting of a Regional Casino in West Dunbartonshire.
- 6.4 The public consultation that took place was independent and covered a sample of the views of local people. The majority view was in support of the siting of a Regional Casino in the area.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 **The Committee is invited to note the submission of a proposal to develop a Regional Casino in West Dunbartonshire and the findings of the public consultation exercise.**

Wards Affected: All

Background Papers: Letter, 8 November 2005, from Department for Culture, Media and Sports.
Letter, 31 January 2006, from Department for Culture, Media and Sport "Call for Proposals".
Submission by West Dunbartonshire Council to the Casino Advisory Panel for a Regional Casino.
International Entertainment Resort for West Dunbartonshire
Project Report on Community Consultation by the IBP Strategy and Research.

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