

## CASINO ADVISORY PANEL PUBLISHES GUIDANCE AND INVITES PROPOSALS FOR NEW CASINOS

The Casino Advisory Panel today invited local authorities in Scotland, England and Wales to let the Panel know formally if they wish to have a new casino in their area. The Panel has published detailed guidance setting out the background to this call for proposals, the process by which they intend to evaluate them, and the specific information that they wish to know about. The Panel has asked that all proposals should reach them by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006.

Chairman of the Panel, Professor Stephen Crow, said today,

“We know that there has been a great deal of speculation about where the 17 new regional, large and small casinos are to be located. We have already done some background research on the subject, but until we see all the evidence, we are keeping entirely open minds and have no preconceived ideas where the casinos should go. That is why today we have formally invited local authorities who want a casino to provide us with evidence about their areas.

“We have published detailed guidance setting out the criteria we are using and the information we will require in order to assist our decision making. We hope this guidance will enable local authorities to provide material for us that is both concise and relevant. We hope also that it will ensure that we get comparable information for all areas.

“I cannot emphasize too much that it is evidence we are looking for, not marketing. That is why we have been very specific about the information we need. It is also very important that proposals are sent to us by the closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> March so that we can allow time for a fair and thorough examination of that evidence.

“When we get the proposals before us, they will all be considered very carefully to see how the



evidence provided measures up to the criteria laid down for us by the Secretary of State and other Government policy. If we find we need additional information, we shall ask for it. Selected proposals will then go forward for further examination. In this further examination, representations from individuals and interested organisations will be sought before we decide what we are to recommend. The evidence for and against a number of selected alternative locations for the one Regional Casino will also be tested through the medium of examination in public. Throughout this process we expect fairness and rigour to be our watchwords”.

The guidance has been mailed out to all local authorities and can also be found on the Panel’s website <http://www.culture.gov.uk/CAP>

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**Notes to Editors:**

1. The Gambling Act recently passed by Parliament will allow three new types of casinos to operate in Britain. One “regional casino” will be permitted, along with eight large and eight small casinos.
2. It is expected that the regional casino will have a minimum total customer area of 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>, and be permitted up to 1,250 Category A unlimited jackpot gaming machines. Large casinos will have a minimum total customer area of 1,500 m<sup>2</sup>, and be permitted up to 150 Category B gaming machines, with a maximum jackpot of £4,000. Small casinos will have a minimum total customer area of 750m<sup>2</sup>, and be permitted up to 80 Category B gaming machines, with a maximum jackpot of £4,000. The one regional and eight large casinos will be permitted to offer bingo, and all three categories will be permitted to offer betting.
3. The Advisory Panel’s task is to recommend to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport the areas where the one regional casino and eight large and eight small casinos would best be located. The primary criterion, as laid down by the Secretary of State is:
  - to ensure that locations satisfy the need for the best possible test of social impact (which may require a range of locations of different kinds such as seaside resorts, edge of town developments or inner city centres);

Subject to that, the Secretary of State has also asked the Panel;

- to include areas in need of regeneration (as measured by unemployment and other social deprivation data) and which are likely to benefit in these terms from a new casino;
  - to ensure that those areas selected are willing to license a new casino.
4. The Panel has been asked to provide its recommendations to the Secretary of State by the end of 2006.
  5. Examinations in Public are a form of round-table conference that is more commonly used in the testing of Regional Spatial Strategy and formerly County Structure Plans. They bring together invited parties, for and against, in an informal setting where, led by the chair, they can discuss the main issues raised by a proposal. Examinations are held in public, but they are not public meetings.
  6. Professor Crow will **not** be available for interview. This is to prevent any undue bias or misinterpretation on the specific guidance and criteria that has been published.

The main contact for anything contained within this press notice will be: Jane Bransby, Secretary to the Casino Advisory Panel, tel. 020 7211 6453 or email [jane.bransby@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jane.bransby@culture.gsi.gov.uk)