

## **ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CASINO ADVISORY PANEL: DATE FOR THE EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC OF BLACKPOOL COUNCIL'S PROPOSAL FOR A REGIONAL CASINO TO BE SITUATED IN ITS AREA**

Prof Stephen Crow, Chair of the Casino Advisory Panel, today announced that the Panel will be holding an examination in public (EiP) into the proposal of Blackpool Council to be permitted to licence a regional casino. The EiP will be held in Blackpool on Friday 8 September 2006. He said:

“Based on its analysis of the written evidence that has so far been submitted, the Panel has shortlisted the proposal made by the Council for a regional casino to be situated in its area. At the EiP the panel will hear more from Blackpool Council and other invited participants on the merits of the proposal for a regional casino in the area. The Panel will also be holding an EiP in each of the other seven local authority areas that have been shortlisted for a regional casino. The further evidence provided will assist the Panel to make its recommendation to the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport as to where in Britain the regional casino should be located.”

“The EiP will take the form of a round table discussion by the Council and participants invited by the Panel. In inviting participants the Panel will see that as full a range of views as possible is represented. As Parliament has already decided that there should be one regional casino in Britain, the Panel will expect participants to give their views on why or why not it should be in Blackpool rather than their views on gambling generally”.

“Members of the public and organisations who would like to be EiP participants should write to the Panel Secretariat no later than 4.00pm on Thursday 10 August 2006 setting out a brief summary (in no more than 1500 words) of the case that they would wish to make during the discussion. The Panel will then assess those applications and issue invitations. The Panel's decision on the list of participants will be final. There will also be space available in the EiP venue on a first come first served basis for members of the public generally who wish to observe the proceedings.”

“More detailed guidance on the EiP process and questions that the Panel have asked each of the eight shortlisted local authorities in advance will be published on the Casino Advisory Panel website in the next few days. A venue in Blackpool for the EiP will be announced on the Casino Advisory Panel website as soon as details have been confirmed. Details can also be sought from the Panel Secretariat – contact information in notes to editors below.”

ENDS



**Notes to Editors:**

1. The period for filing applications to be considered by the Casino Advisory Panel to be a participant in the discussion at the Blackpool EiP closes on Thursday 10 August. Applications are welcomed by email or by letter. Applications and any queries about the EiP process should be addressed to: **Ms Kate Rounce, Casino Advisory Panel Secretariat, DCMS, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH. Email: [kate.rounce@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:kate.rounce@culture.gsi.gov.uk). Tel: 020 7211 6394.**
2. The examination of proposals began with a view to sifting them down to manageable numbers for further examination, having regard to the set criteria and Government policy generally. The output of this activity has been a short-list for further examination. The eight local authorities that have been shortlisted for a regional casino are Blackpool, Brent, Cardiff, Glasgow, Greenwich, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield. The EiP is the next stage in the examination process for this category of casino.
3. The Gambling Act 2005 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. The Advisory Panel's task is to recommend to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport the areas where those 17 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 employment 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.