

DECISION OF THE CASINO ADVISORY PANEL REGARDING THE SHORTLISTS OF SUCCESSFUL PROPOSALS

Prof Stephen Crow, Chair of the Casino Advisory Panel today confirmed the position of the Panel in regards to their previous Shortlisting announcement. In a letter sent to all proposing Local Authorities he said:

“You will be aware from the press release published on our website dated 24 May 2006 and our previous correspondence with you that the Casino Advisory Panel (the “Panel”) has announced the shortlists of successful proposals which will be taken forward for further evaluation with respect to areas in which the regional, large and small casinos respectively are to be situated.

“As part of the ongoing evaluation process, the short-listed local authorities were subject to a further period of consultation. This further period for representations was intended to enable consultees such as Regional Planning Bodies, Regional Development Agencies and comparable bodies in Wales and Scotland to make representations to the Panel on the proposals that have been shortlisted and to enable members of the public to express their opinions on the proposals, whether in opposition or support. The closing date for the making of such representations to the Panel was 28 June 2006. This was set out in the Panel’s press release dated 24 May 2006.

“In light of the additional representations which were received by the Panel since 24 May 2006, it is clear that there has been some confusion as to whether the further consultation period was intended to give local authorities who were not included on the shortlists an opportunity to make further submissions. Some authorities have specifically raised this with the Panel, whose position has been that it would not ignore any significant, new material that could not reasonably have been included in the original bids. Accordingly, a number of authorities have made further representations. However, the Panel is concerned that not all authorities may have been aware that this limited opportunity existed.

“Having regard to this, and having taken into account the wider public interest and the need to ensure there is a “level playing field” between all authorities, the Panel has decided to announce an additional period within which further submissions may be made by local authorities. Any local authority that has previously submitted a proposal in any of the regional, large and small categories will be able to make further submissions to the Panel subject to the detailed requirements set out in points 1 to 8 below.



“It should be noted that the shortlists previously announced have been confirmed and the further period for submissions will not affect the position of those already on the shortlists. Rather, it is an opportunity for non short-listed local authorities to submit further information subject to the detailed requirements set out below. The Panel is prepared to extend the shortlists if, taken together with the existing information previously submitted, a local authority produces information that the Panel considers justifies its inclusion on the relevant shortlist.

“It follows that, while they are welcome to do so, there is no necessity for authorities that have already been short-listed to submit additional information.

“In order to assist local authorities in identifying the areas on which they may wish to concentrate in making further representations, the Panel has published a short statement on its website explaining the evaluation process, together with the moderated score sheet for each local authority proposal and the rankings. This is in addition to the comments on each proposal which have already been published on the Panel’s website. In view of the process by which the scores were derived, the Panel does not consider that it is practicable or necessary to provide any further information regarding individual proposals. The statement provides local authorities with sufficient material to consider where any further submissions should be directed.”

He concluded:

“The Panel has already devoted considerable time to its assessment of the original proposals. The Panel considers that these proposals should have contained the vast majority of the information, which the local authorities considered relevant. Accordingly, given its resources, the short time frame for consideration of further submissions, and in the interests of fairness to all those authorities that have put forward a proposal, the Panel considers it necessary to impose a number of requirements in relation to any further information to be submitted. These are set out in the notes to editors below.

Finally, we would stress that the Panel's role is ultimately to recommend to the Secretary of State the best areas in which casinos should be situated and that this is assessed in the light of the criteria applied and the statutory limits as to the types and numbers of casinos permitted. The process is therefore of necessity highly competitive. In this competition it is inevitable that some areas that might have benefited from the development of a regional, large or small casino will be omitted. This will undoubtedly cause disappointment to some.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Department for Culture, Media and Sport
CASINO ADVISORY PANEL

1. The Panel will only consider information and material that is compelling and new and that could not have been submitted with the original proposal.
2. The new information and material must address one or more of the key lines of enquiry set out in the original Call for Proposals, namely:
 - Type of area
 - Social impact
 - Need for regeneration
 - Willingness to licence
 - Probability of implementation
 - Regional context
 - Community benefits
 - Unique characteristics
3. Submitted statements must not exceed 5 pages of A4.
4. Local authorities are urged to focus any further submissions on the merits of their own proposals and not as a comparative exercise with proposals submitted by other local authorities.
5. All local authorities who have previously submitted proposals are entitled to make use of this opportunity to make further submissions in respect of the type of casino to which their original proposal relates (although those local authorities that have already been confirmed on the regional shortlist will have the opportunity to produce further information at the examination-in-public (EiP) stage). The Large and Small proposals will also be further examined but by the process of additional correspondence and written representation by third parties.
6. Any information or material that has been provided by local authorities to the Panel after the period for original submissions closed on Friday 31 March 2006 has not been considered by the Panel, and will need to be resubmitted in accordance with the requirements above before it will be considered by the Panel.
7. Any further submissions or material should be sent to: Ms Valerie Curtis, Secretary to the Casino Advisory Panel, DCMS, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH. Email: Valerie.Curtis@culture.gsi.gov.uk
8. The period for filing further submissions closes on **14 August 2006** and no information will be accepted after this date.