

## **Written submission from Aberdeenshire Licensing Boards**

The three Divisional Licensing Boards for Aberdeenshire, namely South, Central and North considered the matter at meetings held on 5, 19 and 26 August 2015 respectively and agreed that the following joint response be submitted:-

**1    *What would be the benefits and disadvantages for you as a consequence of the UK Government's proposed provision in the Scotland Bill 2015?***

The proposal to devolve power to vary the number of gaming machines authorised by a betting premises licence is welcome. However the devolved powers proposed by the Bill will only apply B2 machines (gaming machines for which it is possible to stake more than £10 in a single game). Also it will only apply to betting premises issued after the date on which the clause comes into force and it only applies to betting premises licences.

**2    *What would be the benefits and disadvantages for you as a consequence of the proposed alternative provision suggested by the Scottish Government?***

The alternative provision has the advantage of extending the power beyond betting premises to gambling premises in general so as to include other premises such as casinos. It also has the advantage of not limiting the powers to new licence applications.

**3    *Which of these approaches do you prefer, and why?***

The Aberdeenshire Licensing Boards prefer the alternative provision suggested by the Scottish Government. This will go further towards achieving the recommendation of the Smith Commission that the Scottish Parliament be given powers to address the proliferation of fixed odds betting terminals (FOBTs)

**4    *Are there any changes in this area of law you would like to see which are not covered by either proposal, and why?***

**5    *Please make any further comment you feel is relevant to Committee's inquiry into FOBTs.***

Online gambling and the problems that it can lead to is a source of concern and whilst recognising that this goes beyond the scope of this particular call for evidence on FOBTs, the Boards would like to see consideration being given to whether it is possible to regulate this.