

REPORT TO POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 11 JUNE 2009

COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP – POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Committee on a policy and procedures for entering into commercial sponsorship agreements.

2 Background

- 2.1 In November 2008, Consumer Focus Scotland issued a document entitled “Guidelines on Commercial Sponsorship in the Public Sector”. The guidelines were produced with support from the Scottish Government and are endorsed by CBI Scotland, the Scottish Food and Drink Federation, ISBA (the Voice of British Advertisers) and NHS Health Scotland.
- 2.2 The guidelines set out seven principles of commercial sponsorship in the public sector and three procedures for commercial sponsorship in the public sector. The seven principles are:
- The benefits to consumers and/or the public should outweigh the costs of commercial sponsorship
 - Commercial sponsorship should not undermine health promotion
 - Extra care should be taken when consumers are children or young people
 - Caution must be taken in accepting commercial sponsorship from alcohol companies
 - Commercial sponsorship cannot promote tobacco products
 - Marketing through sponsorship should be proportionate
 - Commercial sponsorship should be used for additions or improvements, not to fund core services
- 2.3 The three procedures are:
- Public sector organisations should have a policy and procedure on commercial sponsorship
 - Commercial sponsorship must be based on a written agreement
 - Commercial sponsorship must be evaluated

3 Discussion

- 3.1 To date, commercial sponsorship within Aberdeenshire Council has been ad hoc. The Council does not have a policy on commercial sponsorship, and it is left to individual officers to negotiate on sponsorship agreements. Despite the lack of a policy, the Council has attracted over £250,000 worth of sponsorship in cash and in kind over the past year. This ranges

from £70,000 from Nexen Energy towards the provision of a wind turbine in connection with the Pitcaple Environmental Project to sponsorship of a Technology Conference at Meldrum Academy by local companies Andersons of Inverurie and Celebrations of Turriff at £100 each. The amount of sponsorship can vary from year to year depending on whether companies decide to continue sponsorship, or whether it is one-off.

- 3.2 As can be seen in paragraph 2.3, public sector organisations are advised to develop a policy and procedure on commercial sponsorship. A draft policy and procedures has been developed for Aberdeenshire Council, and this is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. This document draws heavily on the principles and procedures set out in Consumer Focus Scotland's guidelines, and has been developed in conjunction with officers in Services who are currently involved with sponsorship.
- 3.3 The draft policy and procedures have been the subject of a consultation with Area Committees, the Management Team, the Community Planning Executive and the Community Planning Board. In addition, a public consultation was carried out and two responses were received. With the exception of the Community Planning Board, the responses are set out in Appendix 2 to this report, along with the Officers' comments on the responses. The Community Planning Board is due to meet on 3 June 2009, and its comments will be tabled at the Committee.
- 3.4 Where appropriate, amendments have been included in the draft policy and procedures.
- 3.5 During the consultation period, Consumer Focus Scotland issued further guidelines on commercial sponsorship, specifically aimed at schools. The draft policy and procedures attached at Appendix 1 will apply to schools, and it is considered that no further amendments are required to these as a result of this recent publication.
- 3.6 The issue within the draft policy and procedures which has raised the most debate during the consultation exercise relates to sponsorship from alcohol related companies. Views expressed by Councillors in particular have ranged from a complete ban on sponsorship from alcohol related companies to agreement with the wording within the draft policy and procedures. No changes have been made to the draft policy in relation to sponsorship from alcohol related companies, but clearly, this is an issue that will require to be considered by the Committee.
- 3.7 Although not part of the formal consultation, an email was received on 24 April from the Scotch Whisky Association in response to an article in the "Press and Journal" on 1 April 2009. This has been attached as Appendix 3 to the report.
- 3.8 There are close links between sponsorship and procurement, and to facilitate these links, the Head of Procurement has agreed to maintain a central register of sponsorship.

4 Proposals

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Committee consider the responses to the consultation, particularly in relation to alcohol, and agree a policy and procedures for commercial sponsorship.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 An exercise was undertaken across all Services to identify where commercial sponsorship agreements already exist. Services that indicated that they were involved in sponsorship, principally Education, Learning and Leisure and Planning and Environmental Services, were consulted during the development of the policy and procedures.
- 5.2 The draft policy and procedures have been the subject of a consultation with Area Committees, the Management Team, the Community Planning Executive and the Community Planning Board. A public consultation was also carried out.

6 Area Implications

- 6.1 Commercial sponsorship can bring additional benefits to individual Council Areas or to the Council as a whole.

7 Policy Implications

- 7.1 Currently, the Council does not have a policy on commercial sponsorship. The adoption of the draft policy will rectify this situation. The policy could be used to raise awareness of sponsorship amongst Council employees. The policy will also strengthen links with the private sector and support the key theme of partnerships.

8 Staffing Implications

- 8.1 All work in relation to commercial sponsorship will be undertaken using existing staffing resources.

9 Sustainability Implications

- 9.1 Commercial sponsorship can bring benefits in terms of sustainability. In particular, agreements that are currently in place with reprocessing companies help to contribute towards the costs of recycling waste.

10 Financial Implications

- 10.1 Commercial sponsorship can bring additional income to the Council which can be used to provide enhanced services and raise the Council's profile with the public.

11 Recommendations

- 11.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the responses to the consultation, particularly in relation to alcohol, and agree a policy and procedures for commercial sponsorship.**



**Charles Armstrong
Director of Finance**

Report prepared by Ross Brennan, Chief Accountant
19 May 2009

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APPENDIX 1

DRAFT ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR¹

1. Definition

- 1.1 Sponsorship is defined as “Any commercial agreement by which a sponsor, for the mutual benefit of the sponsor and the sponsored party, contractually provides financing or other support in order to establish an association between the sponsor’s image, brands or products and a sponsorship property in return for rights to promote this association and/or for the granting of certain agreed direct or indirect benefits”²
- 1.2 This means that sponsorship is a business arrangement where the sponsor can legitimately expect to benefit, usually by taking advantage of marketing opportunities through the sponsorship arrangement. It is not a donation, nor is it a means by which the Council or the sponsoring company manages, measures and reports on its commitment to the improve its positive impact on its residents and the environment, nor is it a commercial contract.

2. Examples

- 2.1 There are three forms of commercial sponsorship, and these are outlined below:
- Financial sponsorship - e.g. a cash payment to sponsoring of street furniture, sporting events etc., in return for company branding on publicity material
 - In-kind sponsorship - e.g. provision of equipment by the private company or access to staff of the private company
 - Promotions - e.g. voucher schemes where consumers collect points by collecting a company's product with the council subsequently receiving resources in exchange or loyalty schemes where consumers collect points by using the council's services and can then exchange them for private sector goods.
- 2.2 Where the selling of advertising space on posters, directories etc. is covered by a procurement contract, this is a commercial contract even though it may behave like commercial sponsorship.

¹ This Policy and Procedures are based on the document “Guidelines on Commercial Sponsorship in the Public Sector” issued by Consumer Focus Scotland November 2008

² International Chamber of Commerce (2006) Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice: Consolidated ICC Code Paris: ICC (www.iccwbo.org)

3. Policy

- 3.1 The Council will only enter into Commercial sponsorship agreements if the benefits to consumers and/or the public outweigh the costs. The potential benefits and costs to be considered are shown in Appendix A.
- 3.2 The Council will not accept commercial sponsorship that undermines health promotion. In particular, the Council will not accept sponsorship from companies that produce or promote food with a high fat content, or high sugar drinks.
- 3.3 Extra care should be taken where consumers are children or young people. The Council will not enter into commercial sponsorship agreements that lead to the advertising or promotion of products to under 18s that contain alcohol, are high in fat, saturated fat, salt or sugar, include a direct exhortation to children to buy advertised products or persuade their parents or other adults to buy advertised products for them or are likely to result in physical, mental or moral harm of children or could be seen to exploit the vulnerability or lack of experience of children. Commercial sponsorship could be used to reinforce positive, healthy behaviour.
- 3.4 Caution must be taken if accepting commercial sponsorship from alcohol companies. Any such agreement must ensure that any resulting marketing conforms to industry standards.
- 3.5 The Council will not enter into any agreement with a tobacco company or any other company which would promote a tobacco product.
- 3.6 The Council will ensure that the marketing benefit resulting from commercial sponsorship is proportionate and that the association made between the company and the Council is responsible. Publicity may be offered through the Council's Corporate Communications Team.
- 3.7 The Council will not use commercial sponsorship to fund its core services, but will only use it for additions or improvements.
- 3.8 The Council's name and logo will not be used by sponsors without the permission of the Council.

4. Procedures

- 4.1 Commercial Sponsorship will be co-ordinated by the Procurement Team, who will maintain a central register of all commercial sponsorship agreements.
- 4.2 Each Service will nominate an officer or officers within that Service who will be authorised to enter into commercial sponsorship agreements on behalf of the Council. Details of these officers will be passed to the Procurement Team.

- 4.3 All commercial sponsorship agreements must be based on a written agreement. For agreements with a value less than £1,000, an exchange of letters will be sufficient evidence of a written agreement. For agreements with a value in excess of £1,000, a full contract is required. Items that should be included in a full contract are shown in Appendix B.
- 4.4 Following the completion of the commercial sponsorship, the Service will carry out an evaluation of the agreement. Evaluations will be kept in the central register. The evaluation should include:
- An assessment of whether the consumers/public benefitted from the sponsorship
 - Any unforeseen costs to the Council
 - Whether the sponsorship met the aims of the sponsoring organisation
 - Views of consumers/public on the sponsorship
 - Media reaction to the sponsorship
 - Would the staff involved do anything different in future?



APPENDIX 2

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION ON COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP POLICY

Area Committees (6 Responses)

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
Garioch Area Committee – 17 March 2009	A detailed discussion took place between Members and a number of differing views were articulated.	Noted.
	Some welcomed the policy and the effort made to regulate the acceptance of sponsorship and acknowledged the importance of extra funding for the Council.	Noted.
	However, it was generally agreed that this was a complex issue that would require careful consideration to minimise risk to the Council.	Noted.
	There was a feeling that the Council would have to be cautious about the companies that it entered into agreements with as the Council, by accepting sponsorship, was endorsing not only the products but the company concerned and the actions that were taken by this company.	Noted.
Garioch Area Committee – 17 March 2009 (Continued)	In fact, some took a stronger view and felt that it was not appropriate for the Council to take sponsorship of any kind. It was stressed that the ethical practices of the companies would have to be considered and how any association with the Council would be viewed by the public.	There would be practical difficulties in determining ethical practices. Each case should be considered on its own merits.

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	<p>It was pointed out that difficulties could arise for the Council accepting money from companies that it may have to take decisions about in the future e.g. planning permission.</p>	<p>There should be no perception that a company is being treated favourably in return for sponsorship.</p>
	<p>Some Members felt that accepting sponsorship from alcohol related companies was appropriate in particular circumstances i.e. locally produced whisky or beer or if the money was used to promote sensible drinking habits, but others felt that sponsorship from alcohol related companies should not be accepted under any circumstances.</p>	<p>The guidelines from Consumer Focus Scotland point out the need to exercise caution when dealing with sponsorship from alcohol related companies, and this is the view that is reflected in the draft Policy. It is for the Committee to decide whether it accepts this position in the policy.</p>
<p>Garioch Area Committee – 17 March 2009 (Continued)</p>	<p>It was suggested that there should be Councillor involvement in decisions taken when the amount concerned was greater than £1,000.</p>	<p>Delegation of these decisions to officers is considered to be appropriate. Where larger amounts of sponsorship are involved, it is likely that these will be part of a larger project which would be reported to the appropriate Committee.</p>
	<p>The Committee agreed to pass these comments to the Policy and Resources Committee.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
Buchan Area Committee – 17 March 2009	The Committee agreed to commend the report and recommend approval of the draft policy and procedures for Commercial Sponsorship to the Policy and Resources Committee.	Noted.
Formartine Area Committee – 24 March 2009	The Council should be cautious in accepting sponsorship from companies connected to production or sale of alcohol, due to the social costs of excessive consumption, but accept that in some parts of Aberdeenshire alcohol production is an important part of the economy both in terms of employment and in generating tourism and an appropriate balance needed to be struck.	The guidelines from Consumer Focus Scotland point out the need to exercise caution when dealing with sponsorship from alcohol related companies, and this is the view that is reflected in the draft policy. It is for the Committee to decide whether it accepts this position in the policy.
Formartine Area Committee – 24 March 2009 (Continued)	The Council should exercise similar caution in entering into commercial relationships with companies associated with gambling as this is also a growing social problem.	No action is proposed because of the Council's involvement with funding from the National Lottery.
	A distinction should be drawn between the sale of advertising space, which is a direct commercial transaction and the receipt of sponsorship, which could imply a greater endorsement of a company, product or service.	Noted.

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	<p>There should be procedures built into the policy to allow officers to refer proposals to the Policy and Resources Committee to make the final decision on commercial arrangements where there is the risk of controversy arising from the arrangement.</p>	<p>Delegation of these decisions to officers is considered to be appropriate. Where larger amounts of sponsorship are involved, it is likely that these will be part of a larger project which would be reported to the appropriate Committee.</p>
	<p>The Council should be aware that many companies are involved directly or indirectly (through investments or funding for example), in practices, which are regarded as 'unethical' by individuals and groups and take care in when entering into commercial arrangements with such companies and be aware of the risk of adverse publicity associated with any such arrangements.</p>	<p>There would be practical difficulties in determining ethical practices. Each case should be considered on its own merits.</p>
<p>Kincardine & Mearns Area Committee – 24 March 2009</p>	<p>The Committee suggested that the definition should be kept simple and plain English used.</p>	<p>The definition is a direct quote from the International Chamber of Commerce. Additional explanatory text has been added.</p>
	<p>The Committee also agreed that if managed properly sponsorship would be beneficial to the Council.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p>Members of the Committee had differing views on sponsorship for alcohol companies but agreed that the issue relates to alcohol abuse, its implications on society and health.</p>	<p>Noted,</p>

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	<p>The Committee then agreed to forward the following comment to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration:</p> <p>The Council will not enter into any agreement with an alcohol company or any other company which would be deemed detrimental to healthy living.</p>	<p>The guidelines from Consumer Focus Scotland point out the need to exercise caution when dealing with sponsorship from alcohol related companies, and this is the view that is reflected in the draft policy. It is for the Committee to decide whether it accepts this position in the policy.</p>
<p>Banff & Buchan Area Committee – 31 March 2009</p>	<p>The Committee agreed the terms of the draft policy referred to in the report.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Marr Area Committee – 31 March 2009</p>	<p>Following a full discussion on potential difficulties associated with commercial sponsorship from the development industry and industries producing/supplying goods considered to undermine health promotion including tobacco and alcohol products and food products which were high in fat, saturated fats, salt or sugar, the Committee agreed to submit the following comments on the draft document to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration:</p> <p>That the use of the word “cost” in the first sentence of paragraph 3.1 and elsewhere within the document be reviewed and replaced with disbenefit, negative impact or other appropriate wording</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>No action proposed, in the interests of Plain English.</p>

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	To express reservations with regard to accepting commercial sponsorship from the development industry	There should be no perception that a company is being treated favourably in return for sponsorship.
Marr Area Committee – 31 March 2009 (Continued)	In terms of commercial sponsorship from direct alcohol companies, that views expressed at the meeting included a complete ban on any such sponsorship and a thorough investigation and clear policy in terms of accepting commercial sponsorship from alcohol companies bearing in mind the industry's contribution to the economy of Aberdeenshire	The guidelines from Consumer Focus Scotland point out the need to exercise caution when dealing with sponsorship from alcohol related companies, and this is the view that is reflected in the draft policy. It is for the Committee to decide whether it accepts this position in the policy.
	To recommend that the Policy provide some flexibility and discretion and avoid being too prescriptive and, in that connection, to recommend that the second sentence of paragraph 3.2 be deleted.	The sentence is taken from the guidelines from Consumer Focus Scotland. No action proposed.

Management Team (1 Response)

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
Management Team	Agreed that a clause be added to the procedures to prevent the Council's name and logo being used without the Council's permission.	Agreed. This has been added to the draft policy at paragraph 3.8.
	Further agreed that a report be submitted to the Community Planning Board on 3 June 2009, before going to Policy & Resources Committee on 11 June 2009.	Agreed. The comments from the Community Planning Executive are attached. The comments from the Community Planning Board will be tabled at the Committee.

Public Consultation (2 Responses)

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
Kevin Hutchens Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities) Housing & Social Work	By way of introduction over the 20 years that I have worked for Aberdeenshire Council I have secured a wide range of donations, funding from Corporate Social Responsibility budgets and formal sponsorship for projects. Some of this has been in partnership with the voluntary sector, other services within the Council and other statutory sector organisations. I am also aware that other officers within Social Work have been part of this process either individually or collectively as part of a team.	Noted.
	Not all "appeals" are successful and very often where success is secured it is as a result of a long period of work /talking to the company/business concerned. Nevertheless all such contacts can help to build up useful community links.	Noted.
Kevin Hutchens Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities) Housing & Social Work (Continued)	Examples of success are ;- i) Securing of workteams to help on community projects. This has been a particular feature of the Pitcaple Environmental Project where oil companies regularly offer to send up work groups to the project to carry out work including building a Pagoda (Talisman Energy Ltd), clearing some land (Exxon Mobil - reported in their newsletter) and landscape work (Britannia Oil Company). All of this has been much appreciated and has served as team building for the staff concerned with relatively little publicity for the companies concerned. The value of this varies from work group to work group, but a good estimate for a group that stays for a week might be at least £5,000.	Noted.

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	<p>ii) Direct donations at no cost, very often delivered by the company concerned. For example a secure steel container at Pitcaple Environmental Project, breads for the Father of the Bard project and folders from Ledingham and Chalmers for the same project. The first was secured by myself as a result of two phone calls one of which was to a Managing Director, with the delivery made free of charge. The Father of the Bard project has proved particularly successful at securing small donations/sponsorship, but still seeks a major sponsor and each month holds a Burness business lunch where an appeal is made. Although I have not researched it there will be some donations made at Christmas to some daycare centres.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Kevin Hutchens Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities) Housing & Social Work (Continued)</p>	<p>iii) Corporate Social Responsibility donations/sponsorship/help in kind. These are very often difficult to define unless companies tell you that they are applying this policy or using this budget. However examples include Scottish Water Solutions who donated a Portacabin and infrastructure to a joint project led by a voluntary organisation in Methlick. Exxon Mobil who gave £10,000 towards a turbine. Talisman Energy who gave £10,000 to Pitcaple Environmental Project for the installation of Geothermal energy. Nexen Energy who gave £70,000 towards a turbine linked into the Pitcaple Environmental Project and most of the Oil company work teams described above.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	<p>iv) Formal sponsorship. A pledge of £5,000 from Renewable Energy Systems is seen as part of their sponsorship of Pitcaple Environmental Project. To date part of this pledge has been used to pay for a noise assessment of a proposed on site turbine that was useful in helping the project group not to go ahead with a particular model at a particular location.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Kevin Hutchens Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities) Housing & Social Work (Continued)</p>	<p>By way of comment it needs to be said that many of these links above have come about quite informally, often from chance conversations and contacts. However more formal approaches have been used including formal meetings with Corporate Affairs Officers, Company Secretaries, Telephone conferences to Scottish and in one case Norwegian contacts and formal written approaches. Very often there is no formal written agreement for smaller donations and donations in kind, but this has not been the case with many of the larger donations.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p>Also it is important to note that often the support given is not necessarily that originally asked for or seen as part of the main needs of a particular project. Nevertheless it is fair to say that most donations are appreciated, although I do know of one project that has had to have a small degree of selection over what it accepts, and more importantly when it accepts help.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p>It is also important to note that success in securing such additional support should not obscure the fact that is crucial that adequate funding is given for core services.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	<p>In terms of the general need for a Council policy this has been raised before, but has not been seen as a necessity. While a policy may be required to progress this as a wider corporate issue I would have concerns if this created barriers between valuable community projects and the communities they serve, which include business interests.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Kevin Hutchens Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities) Housing & Social Work (Continued)</p>	<p>Formal comments on the draft are as below.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p>i) Definition. The difference between sponsorship , donations and Corporate Social Responsibility actions needs to be brought out. A basic definition is included in page 5 and appendix A of the Consumer Focus Scotland document on guidelines on Commercial Sponsorship. What is not brought out is that sponsorship is not discounting, as this is a normal commercial transaction.</p>	<p>Additional explanatory text has been added to the definition.</p>
	<p>ii) Examples, see above which is a very brief summary. One addition that needs mentioning is that Social Work have helped fund a fundraiser for one of our key partners Pitcaple Environmental Project Limited, and to date this is the only organisation I know that has used on line shopping malls to fundraise at little or no cost to the organisation.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p>iii) Policy. While a policy is needed it is crucial that any such policy does not create barriers that would hinder community involvement.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
Kevin Hutchens Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities) Housing & Social Work (Continued)	iv) Policy 3.1. What is not considered in any depth in the Consumer Focus document and the Aberdeenshire Council draft policy is ensuring that where service users be they children, people with disabilities or old people are used by donors /sponsors in publicity their rights including the right to be represented in a positive way are respected. At the very least in any photocal their permission needs to be sought to be included in the session. In the same way as anybody else would wish the best picture to be used this should always be the case for People with disabilities. Also the way people are described in writing needs to be considered ensuring that a positive representation is used. Barnardos have done some good work on this as have several of the charities supporting children and adults with disabilities.	It is considered that this would be too prescriptive. No action proposed.
	v) Policy 3.3. There should be positive encouragement of initiatives that support healthy living or the environment, see paragraph 3.7 of the Consumer Focus document.	Additional text added to paragraph 3.3.
	vi) I agree fully with 3.4 and 3.5.	Noted.
	vii) I agree with 3.6, however it may be that there should also be mention of the publicity that might be offered via Corporate Communications.	Additional text added to paragraph 3.6.
Kevin Hutchens Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities)	viii) I fully agree with paragraph 3.7, however it needs to be realised that sponsorship can be used as leverage for other funding.	Noted.

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
Housing & Social Work (Continued)	ix) Procedures the eight point checklist as put forward by Consumer Focus Scotland on page 22 of its document should be adopted as recommended good practice.	All of the items in the checklist are covered in section 3 of the draft policy. No action proposed.
	x) I have some concerns regarding 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 as written as they may unduly create a barrier to community involvement, a proforma for use within the Council for sponsorship may be a good substitute, with the provision that a copy should be sent to the Procurement team. There is also a need for an inventory of existing sponsorship, CSR donations and also in addition grants given to various areas of the Councils work with a note of all the responsibilities that flow from this.	Noted. No changes are proposed. Information on existing sponsorship agreements has been gathered in writing the report, and this will be passed to the Procurement Team.
	xi) A basic proforma should be used for evaluation purposes.	Guidelines for evaluation are contained in Appendix A. No action proposed.
	xii) The appendix B needs to include details of reporting arrangements, publicity, joint publicity and details of any partners involved in the sponsorship.	Additional text added to Appendix B

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
Kevin Hutchens Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities) Housing & Social Work (Continued)	By way of conclusion I welcome the initiative taken by Consumer Focus Scotland to progress guidelines for commercial sponsorship in the public sector. However because there are guidelines (and not a legal requirement) I would suggest there is merit in Aberdeenshire Council delaying a decision and holding a seminar together with the community and voluntary sector and local business on this subject with keynote speakers from Consumer Focus Scotland, Scottish Business in the Community plus possibly a grass roots practitioner such as myself to look at what the best way forward is, in the light of the need for continued positive community engagement and clear guidelines which aid this process. This could be used as a positive springboard for future sponsorship bids and accessing donations and CSR contributions.	No action proposed.
	Finally a note of caution recent research suggests Corporate giving is likely to decrease by at least 34%, while this may not be as great in the NE, early indications are that the Oil industry may be cutting back in the near future due to a decline in profits. A copy of the news release regarding this research is set out below. http://www.tsiconsultancy.com/corporate-giving-to-be-cut-by-a-third/	Noted.
	If you wish further information, or wish to discuss my idea of a seminar please do not hesitate to contact me.	Noted.
Rev Robert Jones CA	I am not against sponsorship in general. They can provide benefits not otherwise available, especially in the sports arena.	Noted.

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	<p>In 3.2 and 3.3, while prohibition of high fats and sugar is emphasised, the prohibition as regards alcohol only applies to under-18s. Our police and social work departments have so much trouble with excessive alcohol indulgence that it must break their hearts to see their employers even contemplating the sponsorship of alcohol related products (I am in no way teetotal).</p>	<p>The guidelines from Consumer Focus Scotland point out the need to exercise caution when dealing with sponsorship from alcohol related companies, and this is the view that is reflected in the draft policy. It is for the Committee to decide whether it accepts this position in the policy.</p>
	<p>There is no mention of a bar on the promotion of gambling. Again, ask your social work department, and they will tell you all you need to know to want to put a ban on gambling.</p>	<p>No action is proposed because of the Council's involvement with funding from the National Lottery.</p>
	<p>Great care will need to be taken to ensure that any accepted sponsorship does not later land the council in a compromised position, e.g. in a planning application where the applicant has been a generous sponsor.</p>	<p>There should be no perception that a company is being treated favourably in return for sponsorship.</p>
	<p>don't underestimate the wider impact that the policy may have. Look into implications for projects not intended to be affected by the policy.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Community Planning Executive (1 Response)

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
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Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
Community Planning Executive	Ross Brennan, Council Chief Accountant spoke to the report, which is a response to guidelines from Consumer Focus Scotland. The policy and procedures were summarised – they had been subject to public consultation. The following comments were made:	Noted.
	lack of sustainability implications with regard to companies giving sponsorship	Each case should be considered on its own merits.
	transparency regarding income	Noted.
	rules regarding alcohol companies needs to be more seriously considered	The guidelines from Consumer Focus Scotland point out the need to exercise caution when dealing with sponsorship from alcohol related companies, and this is the view that is reflected in the draft policy. It is for the Committee to decide whether it accepts this position in the policy.
	implications for partnerships that the council are involved with	Noted.
Community Planning Executive (Continued)	don't underestimate the wider impact that the policy may have. Look into implications for projects not intended to be affected by the policy.	Noted.

Respondent	Comments	Officers' Responses
	Relation to planning issues	There should be no perception that a company is being treated favourably in return for sponsorship.
	It was agreed that the comments would be incorporated into a revised covering report for the Board.	Noted.

