

**LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE  
2 OCTOBER 2008**

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**FILM CLASSIFICATION PROCEDURE  
(Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection)**

**1 PURPOSE OF DECISION**

- 1.1 The Council recently received an enquiry from a premises that wished to exhibit a film which had not been classified by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). At present, the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy only contains reference to the re-classification of films, and therefore there is a need to clarify what the Council's procedure should be in cases where a film has not been subject to classification by the BBFC.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **That authority be delegated to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities, in consultation with the Chairman of the Licensing and Safety Committee, to determine applications for classification of films.**

**3 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

Borough Solicitor

- 3.1 The legal implications are identified within the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 3.2 There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 3.3 There are no implications arising from the adoption of this recommendation.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 3.4 There are no strategic risk management implications arising from the adoption of this recommendation.

**4 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 The BBFC is an independent, non-governmental body, which has classified cinema films since 1912, and videos since the passing of the Video Recordings Act in 1984. The BBFC use guidance which considers such issues as violence, language, sex, drugs, criminal activity, weapons, horror and bigotry.

- 4.2 The statutory powers to classify films are held by local councils, which are able to overrule any of the BBFC's decisions, including passing films they reject, banning films they have passed, waiving cuts, instituting new ones, or altering categories for films exhibited within the borough of Bracknell Forest.
- 4.3 The main aim of film classification is to ensure that the public are able to make appropriate viewing decisions and to protect vulnerable persons from the effects of viewing potentially harmful or unsuitable content, while respecting adult freedom of choice.

#### Background Papers

Video Recordings Act 1984

Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy (Jan 2008)

#### Contact for further information

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