

AN IDEA FOR THOSE QUIET NIGHTS I N JANUARY – POKER CLUBS

Have you thought how you might be able to overcome those quiet January nights after Christmas. What about establishing a night for a Poker Club?

The first question is what will this cost me? The second is do I need a licence to play poker on my premises?

The answer to the second question is no, provided you comply with certain rules. You would be well advised to take advice before setting up any poker club. But the principle is that organising “low level” gaming is exempt from the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005. So the answer to the first question is that the running costs can easily be covered within your entertainment budgets.

The rules stipulate that to seek protection from the exemption the maximum that can be staked by a person must not exceed £5 per game. However, the rub is that the aggregate amounts that may be staked on games in one day must not exceed £100, and the maximum amount or value of any prize must not exceed £100.

The Designated Premises Supervisor is required to ensure compliance with the “Code of Practice for Equal Chance Gaming in Clubs and Premises with an Alcohol Licence.” The DPS must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the gaming is low level.

Procedures should be put into place that prevent underage gambling. These include the location of the area to play the game and checking acceptable identification. No credit can be taken and all payments should be made in cash before the commencement of the game.

The rules apply to a game not a hand. Poker can only be played in line with the hours for the supply of alcohol within the licence. The game therefore must cease when the hours for sale alcohol terminate – irrespective of the fact that the premises may remain open for the provision of late night refreshment or consumption of alcohol.

The rules are quite complicated, and more detailed than I can relay in this article. But if you are interested in establishing a Poker Club at your premises particularly then it will be worth while taking advice to put a legal operation into practice.