

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Director of Public Health

TITLE: **RESPONSE TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TASK AND FINISH GROUP'S REPORT ON GAMBLING AND GAMBLING RELATED HARM IN BARNSLEY**

REPORT TO:	CABINET
Date of Meeting	1 June 2022
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Deputy Leader
Key Decision	No
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

To report to Cabinet the findings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) from the investigation undertaken on its behalf by the Gambling Task & Finish Group (TFG).

Council Plan priority

- Healthy Barnsley
- Enabling Barnsley

Recommendations

That Cabinet considers and endorses the responses, conclusions, and recommendations set out in the report, following the Task and Finish Group's report on Gambling and Gambling Related Harm in Barnsley.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In September 2021, Public Health England published the Gambling Related Harms review and estimated that 0.5% of the population reached the threshold to be considered problem gamblers, and this proportion has remained relatively consistent since 2012. PHE also estimated that 3.8% of the population are classified as at-risk gamblers. The review also found harmful gambling associated with people who are unemployed and among people living in more deprived areas which suggests harmful gambling is related to health inequalities.

- 1.2 Following on from last year's TFG focusing on Child Poverty, it was recommended that a Gambling TFG be introduced given the impact of the pandemic, as several agencies mentioned concerns regarding gambling in communities and the harm this causes to young people.
- 1.3 The Gambling Task and Finish Group (TFG) was set up to investigate gambling related harm in Barnsley. This included considering what the key challenges are around gambling and gambling related harm; what support services are available in the borough and beyond; and what are the future plans in terms of this agenda.
- 1.4 The TFG met with several representatives from local agencies and organisations, the NHS, national charities, and officers from BMBC.
- 1.5 Due to most of the current work on gambling and gambling related harm taking place regionally and nationally, the TFG met with various national charities and regional providers of services. Local data on gambling is not widely available therefore speaking with both national and regional organisations helped build a picture of what the situation in Barnsley could look like.
- 1.6 As a result of their investigations, the group have highlighted several recommendations in support of further improvement.
- 1.7 The members of the TFG who undertook this investigation included the following: Councillors Jo Newing (TFG Lead Member), John Clarke, Jeff Ennis, John Wilson, Chris Wray, Robert Frost and Kath Mitchell.

2. TFG Recommendations and Responses: -

Recommendation 1- Investigate the placement of Category D Machines located in the boroughs gambling premises so that they are not placed in pairs.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

Licensing supports this recommendation and will prioritise the investigation of any reports of premises that have two or more gaming machines sited together. In addition, and as part of other Licensing visits and inspections, officers will monitor the siting of gaming machines and where found to be sited together, will work with the premises to request the separation of such machines. Where this cannot be facilitated, we will ensure that due diligence is being carried out at the premises to ensure the machines are constantly monitored for the purpose of identifying problem gambling and that staff are trained and can evidence the interrupting/assisting and signposting of customers accordingly.

Recommendation 2- Develop partnership working with health professionals and provide adequate resources to raise awareness of gambling related harm.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

The Public Health team work closely with the Healthy Lives Team based at the hospital, who are keen to work with us and support raising awareness of gambling and gambling related harm within their inpatient population. We would look to emulate the model in development by colleagues who are working on a leaflet and training opportunity that can be used by all partners regarding physical activity.

We will also seek to develop new working relationships with other health services across the borough.

Recommendation 3- Develop a communications plan to encourage greater knowledge of gambling-related harms across the borough.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

We support the need for greater knowledge around gambling, problem/harmful gambling, and gambling-related harm across Barnsley. The best platform(s) and format(s) of communication and engagement for this need to be properly evaluated before we proceed.

Barnsley Public Health colleagues sit on the Yorkshire & Humber Harmful Gambling Working Group. Colleagues from other local authorities across the region are also part of this group, namely colleagues from Leeds City Council who developed the Leeds Beat the Odds campaign. We will consult with these regional colleagues about their campaigns and determine whether there would be added value in us rolling out a similar campaign in Barnsley. We will also determine the feasibility of a regional campaign across the entire Yorkshire & Humber region and whether this would be more coordinated and impactful.

We need to be mindful of the capacity of our Communications and Marketing team who have a significant workload, not only with public health campaigns, but all communications across all directorates of the council. It is therefore possible that an external creative communications agency would need to be commissioned, which would be dependent on available allocated budget.

A behaviour change model campaign would be the most likely approach. Therefore, we also need to consider who the target audience is and whether or not a social media campaign would be the most efficient and effective way to engage with those who are most at risk of problem-gambling and gambling-related harm.

A meeting has been scheduled between Public Health and Communications and Marketing Colleagues to discuss the above and scope out appropriate timelines and level of support.

Recommendation 4- Review the Statement of Gambling Policy so that Public Health is consulted when new gambling premises submit licensing applications.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

At present, colleagues in Public Health are consulted regarding new licensing applications. Our aim would be to make this a consistent and systematic approach, ensuring that the Director of Public Health is consulted on all new gambling license applications.

Having consulted with Licensing, the service supports this recommendation and will change their Responsible Authorities distribution with immediate effect to ensure that the Director of Public Health is consulted on all new gambling applications.

Recommendation 5- Continue to ensure council owned advertising space does not allow gambling advertising and encourage wider partners to not allow gambling advertising.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

As alluded to within the recommendation, the council's current Advertising and Sponsorship Policy Betting, prohibits any form of advertising for betting, gaming, gambling, casinos and lottery companies, distributors, and services. Having reviewed the existing advertising and sponsorship contracts in place, it can be confirmed that there are no such forms of advertising across council-owned advertising space and therefore the policy is being upheld.

Public Health are currently developing a Harmful Gambling Plan to highlight key priorities and outcomes over the coming years, as well as an action plan to achieve them. The recommendations within this OSC report will help to shape the contents of the plan, with partnership work sure to be a key component of its delivery. Consequently, we will commit to encouraging wider partners not to advertise or promote gambling in any form. It should be recognised that for some external partners this is a significant challenge due to the advertising and sponsorship revenue gained through gambling companies. Therefore, it is likely to be a transitional process over several years.

As for discouraging the advertising of games that allow in-game purchases, Public Health will continue to work closely with Communications and Marketing to develop campaigns that raise awareness of this issue. Public Health will also consult with all services to ensure that such games are not being promoted by the council in any way.

Recommendation 6- An All-Member Briefing on Gambling and Gambling Related Harm is held to raise awareness.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

Public Health would be very happy to present an All-Member Briefing on gambling, problem gambling and gambling-related harm as well as the services currently available to residents in Barnsley. We will liaise with the appropriate administrator and arrange a date for this over the coming weeks.

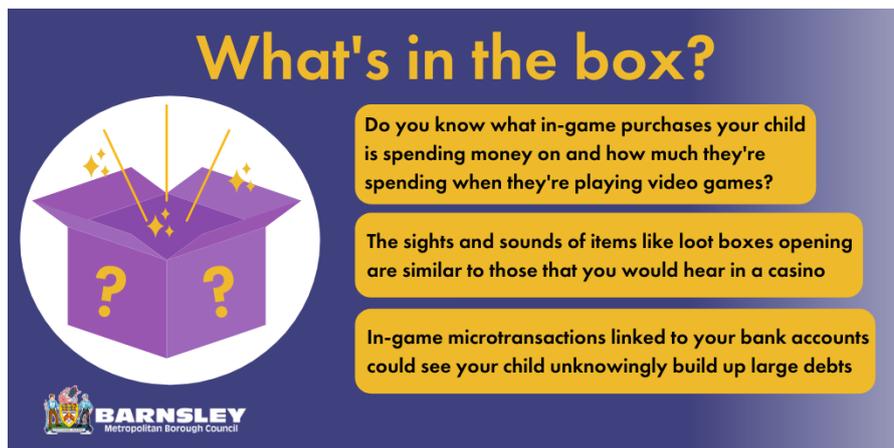
Recommendation 7- Work with wider partners to create resources and training on gambling related harm and young people.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

Education, training and raising awareness of gambling and gambling related harms is a fundamental step to reduce harm.

However, at present, all training and education packages available to organisations are funded by the gambling industry. Both as a council and regionally through the Yorkshire and Humber Harmful Gambling Working Group, we are looking to move away from association with industry and work to develop training and education packages without industry influence.

Towards the end of 2020, Public Health ran an awareness raising campaign around the links between gaming and gambling, targeted at children, young people, and parents. This aimed to educate about loot boxes and other forms of in-app or in-game purchases and included infographics such as this:



Public Health will continue to develop campaigns of this nature. However, in future we will seek to work more closely with wider partners that work with children, young people and parents (e.g., schools and colleges) to improve the reach and engagement of such campaigns.

Any resources will be featured on the [Healthier Futures Barnsley](#) website which has recently been launched to provide education settings with high quality local and national resources and toolkits to support the development and delivery of the relationships education, relationships and sex education and health education curriculum.

Recommendation 8- Create a training module for employees on gambling related harm, available on POD.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

Public Health have met with colleagues from the Learning and Development Team (Organisation and Workforce Development) to discuss this recommendation and scope out the development processes involved to deliver a suitable training module on POD. Having checked on POD, there is not currently a Gambling or Gambling Related-Harm training module.

Public Health will develop the content for an online training module (hosted on POD) to raise awareness of our workforce on gambling, problem gambling, and gambling-related harm. The specific aims and objectives of this course will be carefully considered, along with the content to ensure it is accurate, relevant, and communicated at the appropriate level.

We will then work closely with the Learning and Development team to transform the content into an online module format that is interactive, engaging, and appealing. Upon completion, we will ensure the module is promoted through the council's internal communication channels and will encourage managers to promote the module to their teams.

The timeframe for completion of this work is approximately three months, depending on whether there are existing templates that can be adapted or whether content needs to be created from scratch.

The POD course will be available to all employees and Elected Members, the learning from which can then be applied to friends, families, and residents to improve awareness and understanding of how to support someone who may be suffering from gambling related harm.

Recommendation 9- Implement a 'trigger question' and promote the use of this with wider partners such as in healthcare settings.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

For the upcoming children and young peoples' survey, we have included a question such as this. As a public health team, we support asking this question as widely as possible. However, we acknowledge that routine inclusion of these types of questions, as with alcohol and tobacco, will take training, education, and time. By continuing to raise awareness of gambling and gambling related harms, we hope to increase front-line services engagement with users on this important issue.

As part of the council's work with the Yorkshire and Humber Harmful Gambling Working Group, a funded regional programme is due to be launched. The aim is to look at how to recognise early signs of gambling related harm in priority groups, by working with substance misuse services, financial support teams, mental health teams, the police and social housing services. By working with our regional colleagues, we can share learning on how best these "trigger questions" have been implemented in various settings and apply this to our local services.

Recommendation 10- Ensure gambling support material placed in gambling premises is printed in other languages.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

When the council produces any gambling support material, we will make sure that is made available in other languages, as well as easy read in accordance with the Accessible Information Standard. To ensure this, we will work closely with Communications and Marketing and/or colleagues from Equality and Diversion prior to any publication.

With regards to material published externally, Licensing support the Recommendation and as part of their visits and inspections to gambling premises, officers will ensure to encourage due diligence and request that all advice/posters etc. displayed in/at the premises are available in multiple languages.

Recommendation 11- Evaluate how the council can better capture local data on gambling related harm in Barnsley.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

The local health needs assessment highlighted the need for robust and reliable data about gambling and gambling related harms in Barnsley.

From this, there have been three questions included in the borough-wide children and young people's survey.

A new national Public Health Outcomes Framework dashboard covering gambling and gambling related harms is expected to be published imminently. Our public health team will be working alongside colleagues in business intelligence to utilise the data produced by this to identify trends and areas for improvement.

In addition, we are continuously exploring how we can capture better local data on gambling-harm in Barnsley, and indeed across the region. This is a common challenge across Yorkshire & Humber local authorities, as well as nationally. As the profile of gambling harm continues to increase, it is hoped that rigorous systems are established that allow the collection and publication of accurate, reliable, and valid data at national, regional, and eventually local level. We will continue to work with our colleagues regionally within the Yorkshire and Humber Harmful Gambling Working Group to develop better ways to capture data.

Recommendation 12- Support the recent announcement by NHS England that as from April 1st they will not take any more money from the gambling industry to fund NHS gambling addiction programs.

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

As alluded to in the response to Recommendation 7, removing association with industry allows for fair and transparent provision of services. These changes are now in effect in the NHS and will also be our aim as a local authority. We will also share this message and encourage our relevant partners to adopt the same standpoint.

The rationale for this, as stated by the NHS is that there is a clear conflict of interest with treatment clinics being part-funded by the gambling industry, with patients that have reported feeling uncomfortable about using such services paid for by the industry.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Financial & Risk

Consultation on the financial implications of this report have taken place with colleagues within Financial Services, on behalf of the Service Director and Section 151 Officer. There are no direct financial implications emanating from this report,

In response to the recommendations within the report further work to understand the communication plans will take place with Public Health and Communication colleagues with support from Financial Services. Further approval will be sought to outline any additional cost and how they can be funded if necessary.

3.2 Legal

There are no specific legal implications, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the legal implications of these would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding.

3.3 Equality

The TFG is keen to ensure that all Council services and activities impact equally on all its communities. Throughout the TFG's involvement in this work it has become apparent that the work around gambling and gambling related harm can reduce health inequalities, especially as the TFG found that gambling addiction disproportionately affects those from low-income backgrounds.

3.4 Sustainability

There are no specific sustainability implications or risks associated with the report, although in responding to the report, the sustainability implications of these would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding.

3.5 Employee

There are no specific employee implications, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the employee implications of these would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding.

3.6 **Communications**

It is evident from the investigation that, to drive the agenda forward, stronger communication needs to be developed to raise awareness around this issue. Information should be shared in a variety of ways in clear and accessible formats, so partners are receiving accurate and up to date information, and so residents are aware of the risks and harms caused by gambling.

4. **CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Consultations have taken place with: the Gambling TFG Members; OSC Members; the Council's Cabinet Members; Council Officers from the Public Health and Legal Directorates; and the Council's Senior Management Team.

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 No alternative options have been considered in the writing of this report.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The TFG were reassured by the amount of work that has begun to reduce gambling related harm in the borough.
- 6.2 The investigation undertaken by the TFG as well as the recommendations made are in support of improving health outcomes for people in Barnsley and the TFG recognises the importance of minimising gambling related harm and the negative impacts gambling can have not just on those who are problem gambling but also their family, friends and wider network. The TFG is keen that local communities are aware of relevant services they could access support from.
- 6.3 Whilst recognising that there is evidence of good practice, the TFG have made the recommendations in order to support continual service improvement.

7. **GLOSSARY**

PHE Public Health England
NHS National Health Service
TFG Task & Finish Group
OSC Overview & Scrutiny

8. **LIST OF APPENDICES**

There are no appendices for this report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

PHE Gambling Related Harm Review:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gambling-related-harms-evidence-review/gambling-related-harms-evidence-review-summary>

GamCare:

<https://www.gamcare.org.uk/>

YGAM:

<https://www.ygam.org/>

NHS Northern Gambling Service:

<https://www.leedsandyorkpft.nhs.uk/our-services/northern-gambling-service/>

Krysallis:

<https://www.krysallis.org.uk/gamcare-support/>

GamCare starter question flowchart:

<https://d1ygf46rsya1tb.cloudfront.net/prod/uploads/2020/01/GamCare-Process-Flowchart-updated-April-2021.pdf>

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

10. REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	David Graham – Finance Manager 06.05.22
Legal consultation & sign off	<i>Jason Field 6/5/22</i>

Report Author: Julia Burrows
Post: Director of Public Health
Date: 28 April 2022