

# Meeting of the Advisory Board for Safer Gambling: 17 March 2020

**Venue:** Remote meeting

**Time:** 10.15 – 14.00

**Attendees:** Louise Baxter (LB), Shane Carmichael (SC), Cath Cooney (CC), David Forrest (DF), Anna van der Gaag (AVDG) (Chair), Ian Gilmore (IG), Hermine Graham (HE), Rachel Lampard (RL), Simon Tanner (ST), and Heather Wardle (HW), Jane West (JW)

**In attendance:** Ben Haden (BH)

**[Staff names other than the Leadership Team have been redacted]**

Ref	Action	Status
122	Subject to consideration of suggested minor revisions, publish the updated terms of reference and communicate the key changes with stakeholders.	In progress
123	<p><b>Action</b> – Develop paper for Gambling Commission Executive Group to agree the final workplan for ABSG.</p> <p><b>NB:</b> Since the meeting, this action has been put on hold. ABSG, via AVDG, will be asked for input on key actions as the Gambling Commission responds to safer gambling issues in response to the coronavirus lockdown. The longer-term plan for the remainder of the year will be revisited to reflect any changes in priorities resulting from the present situation.</p>	In progress
124	<p><b>Action</b> – Complete drafting of the progress report.</p> <p><b>NB:</b> Since the meeting, it has been agreed that the publication date for the National Strategy Progress Report will need to be delayed. This will allow it to be co-ordinated with the Gambling Commission' update on the National Strategy – which requires input from a range of public health partners who are prioritising the handling of the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown.</p>	In progress

## 1. Apologies and declarations of interest

- 1.1 AVDG welcomed Board Members to the meeting. AVDG explained how she would be approaching the chairing of the meeting which was being held remotely for the first time. There were no apologies or declarations of interest.

## **2. Minutes and matters arising from January 2020**

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting had been approved and published prior to the meeting. There were no further comments on the minutes.

## **3. Introductions, Chairs' Update and Horizon Scanning**

- 3.1 AVDG noted that this was the last Board Meeting for ST and HW and that we would return to hear their reflections before the end of the meeting.
- 3.3 AVDG explained that we are planning to issue ABSG members with iPads to help improve digital communications and data security. Some practical challenges were highlighted. A commitment was made to consider these.
- 3.4 The group discussed the recent Implementation Group meetings in Wales and Scotland and welcomed the engagement that has been achieved through these meetings.

## **4. Terms of Reference**

- 4.1 The group discussed a revised draft of its terms of reference. The changes reflect those that have taken place in terms of ownership of the National Strategy and provides clarity on ABSG's role.

**Action** – Subject to consideration of suggested minor revisions, publish the updated terms of reference and communicate the key changes with stakeholders.

## **5. Workplan**

- 5.1 The draft work plan for 2020/21 was discussed. This covered a range of topics related to safer gambling to be covered in the Gambling Commission's Business Plan over the same period. The group acknowledged the need for flexibility if priorities change or new issues emerge.

**Action** – Develop paper for Gambling Commission Executive Group to agree the final workplan for ABSG.

**NB:** Since the meeting, this action has been put on hold. ABSG, primarily via AVDG, will be asked for input on key actions as the Gambling Commission responds to safer gambling issues in response to the coronavirus lockdown. The longer-term plan for the remainder of the year will be revisited to reflect any changes in priorities resulting from the present situation.

## **6. Progress report**

- 6.1 The draft progress report was discussed. Particular attention was given to the issue of performance / progress metrics. This included the need to balance the use of existing available data and the need to ensure the report focuses

attention on the most important issues, even if these cannot yet be directly measured.

- 6.2 The group also discussed the need for metrics to reflect different outcomes for different groups of consumers and members of the public. A public health approach requires inequalities to be considered – and therefore metrics should ideally also reflect this.
- 6.3 The group also talked about different sources of data. Many important issues are currently lacking data and these gaps need to be filled. Data that could be supplied by the industry as also identified as an under-utilised opportunity. Data from surveys was still seen as useful, but as it is all self-reported, it should not be the only source of information used to populate metrics.
- 6.4 Discussion also focused on the strengths and weakness of delivery arrangements and progress on prevention and treatment.

**Action** – Complete drafting of the progress report.

**NB:** Since the meeting, it has been agreed that the publication date for the National Strategy Progress Report will need to be delayed. This will allow it to be co-ordinated with the Gambling Commission' update on the National Strategy – which requires input from a range of public health partners who are prioritising the handling of the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown.

## **7. Reflections from departing ABSG members**

- 7.1 Time was allocated for ST and HW to offer their reflections from their time on the Board. Both highlighted the progress which has been made in some areas and discussed the progress which is still needed to reduce gambling harms.
- 7.2 ST highlighted the positive changes which have happened by engaging public health bodies in the work to reduce gambling harms, but also flagged the need for a range of prevention and treatment actions to be progressed further and faster.
- 7.3 HW also welcomed the way that gambling harms is now taken seriously by public health bodies but noted the changes that are still needed in funding mechanisms and implementation arrangements as reasons why progress is slower than needed.

## **8. Any other business**

- 8.1 The group agreed that the future meetings will start at 10am.
- 8.1 Everyone thanked ST and HW for their significant contributions. AVDG highlighted the valuable contribution made by ST to promote the need for gambling harms to be addressed as a public health issue. HW's hard work was also highlighted towards developing understanding of gambling harms and how they can be measured. Both HW and ST were praised for their commitment to the aims of ABSG and for the energy and commitment they have shown whilst serving on the Board.

## **9. Safer Gambling Team: Update Report: ABSG 19 05 (09)**

9.1 This paper was provided for information.