

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY PANEL A</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>6 OCTOBER 2022</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY REVIEW: GAMBLING HARM</b>
<b>Executive Lead Member:</b>	<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>NO</b>

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update regarding the ongoing Scrutiny Review: Gambling Harm, specifically regarding the publication of the Gambling Reform White Paper.

### **Recommendation(s)**

Scrutiny Panel A Members are recommended to:

- a. Note the information contained within this report.

### **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

Gambling Harm was added to the scrutiny work programme by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2021.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Members could consider waiting until the full publication of the Gambling Act White Paper before deciding recommendations for the Scrutiny Review: Gambling Harm. Members could also consider not formulating any recommendations for the review.

### **Detailed Information**

#### **PREVIOUS MEETING – JULY 2022**

At the previous meeting of Scrutiny Panel A, Members resolved the following:

- a. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny publication regarding '10 questions to ask if you are scrutinising gambling harm', as attached to the (July 2022) report, be received and noted.
- b. The proposed review terms of reference, as outlined in the (July 2022) report, be approved.

<b>Review Topic</b>	Gambling Harm
<b>Review Group</b>	Scrutiny Panel A
<b>Officer Support</b>	Scrutiny Research Officer, Service Manager – Scrutiny and Democratic Services, Democratic Services Officer
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Key project being undertaken by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and Gambling Commission to raise awareness and increase the involvement of elected members in overview and scrutiny roles in tackling gambling harm.</p> <p>Furthermore, key issue raised at a recent Council meeting.</p>
<b>Purpose/Objectives</b>	Utilise the 10 questions proposed by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to understand Gambling Harm in Ashfield, as well as the national context regarding Gambling Harm.
<b>Indicators of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the scope of gambling harm in Ashfield</li> <li>• Understanding how national legislation and policy impacts Ashfield</li> <li>• Identifying how the Council can play a more prominent role in raising awareness of gambling harm</li> <li>• Identifying how the Council can work with partners to integrate gambling harm prevention</li> </ul>
<b>Methodology/Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task and Finish groups</li> <li>• Centre for Governance and Scrutiny review guidance</li> <li>• Interviewing key witnesses (both internal and external)</li> </ul>
<b>Witnesses/Experts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Officers (Planning, Licensing, Health and Wellbeing)</li> <li>• Representatives from third sector organisations relating to gambling</li> </ul>
<b>Sources of Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Legislation</li> <li>• Local Policy</li> <li>• Interviewing key witnesses</li> </ul>
<b>Site Visits</b>	Not applicable for this review.
<b>Evidence Sources for Views of Stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Public meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Requirements</b>	To be confirmed by Panel Members.

<b>Barriers/Risks</b>	It could be difficult to identify the scale of any issues caused by gambling related harms in Ashfield. It is not something that can be measured easily and could lead to some difficulty making final recommendations.
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- c. The Scrutiny Research Officer be requested to circulate a copy of the Gambling Act White Paper to Panel Members as soon as published.

## **GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER**

At the previous meeting of the Panel, Members discussed the anticipated publication of a Gambling Reform White Paper.

The Paper is set to include restrictions on the gambling industry as part of the review of the 2005 Gambling Act amid concerns that current regulations require changes to accommodate the massive growth of online betting activities.

The White Paper was due to be published in Spring 2022 but has faced four delays including the 7 July 2022 resignation of the then Gambling Minister and a change in Prime Minister.

On 7 July 2022, Chris Philip MP, then Gambling Minister, confirmed in his resignation letter that:

*“The Gambling Review is with No. 10 at the moment for final approval, containing strong measures to protect people from the ravages of gambling addiction. I have met with the families of those who have committed suicide as a result of gambling addiction, and I strongly urge you to deliver the review in full and undiluted”.*

On the 13 July 2022, details of alleged proposals set to be within the first draft of the White Paper were released. These included:

### Affordability

- A requirement for ‘passive’ automatic background affordability assessments
- A net loss of £125 a month or £500 in a year triggering automatic restrictions
- Affordability assessments to be conducted by established credit agencies
- Potential for mandatory deposit limits

### Stake Limits

- ‘Smart stake’ limit of between £2 to £5 for online slots
- Customers who wish to stake more would need to pass further checks

### Free Bets and Bonuses

- A potential ban on VIP schemes ran by betting companies
- This could include schemes such as free bets based on a customer’s spend or losses

On 17 July 2022, the Government announced that loot boxes will not be within the scope of UK gambling regulation.

**The Gambling Reform White Paper has still not been published. Scrutiny Panel A Members may wish to pause the Scrutiny Review: Gambling Harm until the Paper has been made**

available. Full knowledge of the of any new restrictions and obligations within the White Paper may assist Members in formulating a set of recommendations for the review and subsequently presenting a final report to Cabinet.

## **Implications**

### **Corporate Plan:**

'Health and happiness' is a key priority set out within the Council's Corporate Plan.

### **Legal:**

Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 requires the Licensing Authority to prepare and publish a statement of Gambling Licensing Policy every 3 years. The current Statement 2022 – 2025 was published in December 2021.

### **Finance:**

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

<b>Budget Area</b>	<b>Implication</b>
General Fund – Revenue Budget	
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	

### **Risk:**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Gambling Harm was added to the scrutiny work programme following the topic being identified as a key social issue that would benefit from the involvement of scrutiny members by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.	Scrutiny Panel A are undertaking the Scrutiny Review: Gambling Harm in conjunction with the guidance published by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

### **Human Resources:**

There are no direct HR implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

## **Environmental/Sustainability**

There are no direct environmental/sustainability implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

### **Equalities:**

There are no direct equalities implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

### **Other Implications:**

There are no other implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

### **Reason(s) for Urgency**

None.

### **Reason(s) for Exemption**

None.

### **Background Papers**

None.

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