

Minutes of the meeting of the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board held on 18 May 2012

Venue: Room 45, DCMS, Cockspur Street, London

Time: 10.30am

Present:

Chris Bell	CB
Paul Bellringer	PB
Henrietta Bowden-Jones	HBJ
Richard Ives	RI
Alan Jamieson	AJ
David Miers	DM
Brian Pomeroy (Chair)	BP
Gerda Reith	GR
Eleanor Roaf	ER

In attendance:

Marc Etches (items 1 to 5)	ME
Ruth Callaghan	RC
Jon Watkin (minutes)	JW

Apologies:

Russell Hoyle	RH
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Actions:	Status	Minute number / Page
RC to send proposed terms of references changes back to the Gambling Commission.	In hand	3.2 / p.3
RC and BP to discuss new standing agenda items, and will develop a checklist to make sure no issues get lost in the transition.	To be done	5.2 / p.5
Board members to review proposed list of areas/topics (requiring further consideration as part of strategy development process) and provide secretariat with details of perceived omissions.	To be done	6.4 / p.6
RC to schedule a series of meetings for the strategy working group.	In hand	6.7 / p.6
RC to ask the Gambling Commission for an interim list of questions in respect of the triennial review (in advance of the definitive list which is likely to be finalised in early summer).	In hand	7.1 / p.7
RC to work with the Gambling Commission to identify direct audiences, and key messages/lines to take for incorporation in the communications plan.	In hand	8.3 / p.7
RC to confirm the arrangements surrounding remuneration for Board members' attendance at external events.	In hand	8.4 / p.7

1 Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Russell Hoyle.

2 Declarations of interest

- 2.1 No new conflicts of interest were declared.

3 Minutes and action points from the meeting held on 13 March 2012

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March were approved as true record.

Terms of reference for the Strategy Board

- 3.2 The Board agreed that the Terms of reference should be updated to remove the specified minimum and maximum number of Board members. It was also agreed that references to Responsible Gambling Trust (RGT) should be added in where appropriate.

Action: RC to send proposed terms of references changes back to the Gambling Commission.

Gambling Commissioners' awayday feedback

- 3.3 Covered under other agenda items.

4 Update from Responsible Gambling Trust on delivery progress

Trustees

- 4.1 ME updated the Board on the changes to the composition of the Responsible Gambling Trust's (the Trust's) trustees. The Board was informed that there are now five industry trustees, and three independent trustees. The Trust are in the process of identifying a further two independent trustees, and hope to have this resolved by autumn 2012.

Staffing

- 4.2 The Board was informed that the Director of Commissioning post remains vacant, and that it is hoped to be filled during autumn 2012. The role will be undertaken by ME until then.

Funded activity

- 4.3 ME informed the group that reviews of the National Problem Gambling Clinic, the General Practitioners training project and Gordon Moody Association are to be

undertaken in Quarter 1 of 2012/13. The National Problem Gambling Clinic and Gordon Moody Association have already been informed that, subject to a satisfactory review, the Trust are minded to continue their funding until March 2013 (current arrangements run until September 2012).

Fundraising

- 4.4 ME advised the group that fundraising efforts have got off to a good start. The Chair of the Responsible Gambling Trust has written to the Trust's top fifty donors to request an upfront 'lump sum' payment, or regular (quarterly) direct debit payments to improve the Trust's cash flow.
- 4.5 The Board was informed that there is an improving spread of donors, including better representation from the pub and online sectors. It is hoped that the appointment of Jonathan Paveley (Admiral Taverns) as a Trustee will increase the 'reach' into other sectors.

5 Experts mechanism

- 5.1 RC introduced her paper (RGSB 12 02 (3)) and asked the Board to consider the proposals to engage with experts in a more flexible way. RC invited the Board to further consider whether standing panels on a quarterly basis are the most suitable mechanism, or whether there should be a shift in emphasis to a more project-based approach. Input was first invited on this topic from the three panel chairs:

David Miers (Research Expert Panel)

- Generally supportive of the approach suggested.
- The key question is whether the Board are satisfied that a project-based approach provides a clear view on what ought to be done, and is an appropriate mechanism for tracking and collating what is outside our knowledge.
- If a change in approach is adopted, it is important that continuity is maintained as much as possible.
- There is clearly value in time-limited task groups.
- It is important each group has specified jurisdiction, a clear timetable and a defined output.
- It is important the Research Expert Panel is retained in some form, and continues to meet at least every six months in person.
- In moving to the suggested approach it is important that work is 'driven', and the secretariat will play a key role under the proposed system.

Eleanor Roaf (Education and Harm Prevention Panel)

- Adopting the suggestions in the paper will move things forward.
- The Education and Harm Prevention Panel's agenda is often extremely broad and comprises exclusively of members of RGSB.
- This means that most issues could be covered in the Board meeting, giving the opportunity to discuss issues in greater depth, and to solicit appropriate expert advice.

- Some work has already been undertaken to identify the range of topics which the main Board will need to pick up on the panel's behalf going forward.

Alan Jamieson (Treatment Expert Panel)

- The panels have an important 'import/export' function; gathering, collating and assessing the quality and applicability of information, and passing to the Board where appropriate.
- The panel-approach allows the invitation and questioning of experts on particular topics.
- Retaining continuity and the current quality of thinking is important.

Other comments (originating member in brackets)

- Education and Harm Prevention Panel discussions often result in research-related questions. This element of 'crossover' is another reason to move to the proposed approach. (ER)
- In moving to a new approach, there needs to be an in-built mechanism which allows the identification of trends and the assessment of priorities. (PB)
- There remain questions over how best to ensure adequate 'horizon scanning' so that emerging issues are properly identified. (RC)
- While a project-based approach has clear advantages, some face-to-face meetings must be retained so that Board members have a dedicated, allocated time to focus on particular issues. (HBJ)
- It is important that prevention and evaluation do not fall off the agenda. (RI)
- Appropriate experts should be invited to give presentations and demonstrations to the RGSB where relevant (DM).

5.2 It was agreed that future RGSB meetings should have standing agenda items covering the work areas of the existing panels. RC and BP will discuss the agenda implications of these new standing items, and will develop a checklist to make sure nothing gets lost in the transition.

Action: RC and BP to discuss new standing agenda items, and will develop a checklist to make sure no issues get lost in the transition.

6 Strategy timetable

6.1 The following process, outlined by BP, for the production of the strategy document was agreed:

- Discussion at this meeting to initially review proposed strategy content, identify any obvious omissions and decide whether the topics are broadly correct.
- Convene a smaller strategy working group to synthesize list and draw up proposals for discussion at next Board meeting.
- Agree substance of strategy document at Board meeting in July.
- Draft strategy sign-off before Board meeting in September.

- 6.2 The 'Strategy document: issues to discuss' paper was tabled, which draws together various sources (including media interest, Gambling Commission's research monitoring) to identify emerging issues.
- 6.3 It was agreed that the identification of issues must not be arbitrary, and needs to be achieved by using a fair mechanism, and underpinned by a supporting rationale. It was suggested that a systematic and extensive review of existing research evidence is required at the strategy 'scoping' stage.
- 6.4 The following topics/areas were suggested as requiring further discussion as part of the strategy development process:
- Gambling and comorbidities (e.g. sleep deprivation, obesity)
 - Gambling and problem gambling among the homeless
 - Establishing a view on fundamental questions – i.e. machines
 - Risk matrix for assessing the relative harm posed by different products
 - The association between video game playing and problem gambling
 - Individuals' resilience to problem gambling (including community and neighbourhood protective factors).
 - The role of Local Authority Health and Wellbeing Boards
 - Public health approaches and agencies
 - Education and prevention: campaigns, schools, parents.
 - Development of a gambling app (to track time and money spent)
 - Large scale, NHS randomised control trial to assess treatment efficacy
 - PhD work to assess the outcomes data (recorded using the Data Reporting Framework) of existing treatment provision
 - What is the effectiveness of current treatment approaches?
 - Measurement models/evaluation tools (e.g. CORE/Logic Modelling)
 - Co-therapy/combination treatment approaches.
- Action:** Board members to review proposed list of areas/topics (requiring further consideration as part of strategy development process) and provide secretariat with details of perceived omissions.
- 6.5 It was agreed that consultation with the Research Expert Panel and the Responsible Gambling Trust would be beneficial, but at a later date when more progress has been made.
- 6.6 The Board was advised that this strategy will have a slightly different normative structure, in that it will more explicitly outline the RGSB's target 'end state' and will represent a more refined way of tracking progress.
- 6.7 The panel chairs agreed to form the strategy working group and assume responsibility for the document's drafting.

Action: RC to schedule a series of meetings for the strategy working group.

7 Triennial review of stakes and prizes

7.1 The Board discussed the provisional list of questions that the Gambling Commission are likely to submit to the RGSB in respect of the triennial review of stakes and prizes.

Action: RC to ask the Gambling Commission for an interim list of questions (in advance of the definitive list which is likely to be finalised in early summer).

7.2 It was agreed that given the time constraints, it needs to be considered what we can do and usefully say without commissioning further research. It was agreed that a limited amount of desk based research could be undertaken, but that the proposed Machines Expert Group should be used as a resource.

8 Communications plan

8.1 RC introduced the proposed new communications plan, and emphasized that this is a more 'light touch' approach than that previously adopted. RC, ME and the Gambling Commission adviser on communications will meet on a monthly basis to discuss communications-related issues.

8.2 The communications plan specifies that members of RGSB should inform the secretariat when they are approached by journalists. It was recommended that the wording should be changed to say that RGSB members should not speak to the press without first seeking express permission from the secretariat.

8.3 It was acknowledged that RGSB members are clearly permitted to speak to the press in their professional/personal (i.e. non-RGSB) capacity. In these circumstances, informing the secretariat of the details of any approaches or interviews would be helpful.

Action: RC to work with the Gambling Commission to identify direct audiences, and key messages/lines to take for incorporation in the communications plan.

8.4 It was queried whether Board members will be remunerated for attendance at external events. Board members were advised to check with BP/DM or the Board secretariat when invited to attend.

Action: RC to confirm the arrangements surrounding remuneration for Board members' attendance at external events.

9 Minutes of expert panel meetings

9.1 The Board noted the minutes from recent Research, Education and Harm Prevention, and Treatment Panel meetings.

9.2 The group were advised that Alan Emond has submitted a bid for further funding for the ALSPAC study.

10 Gambling Commission quarterly research briefing

- 10.1 The Board noted the Gambling Commission research briefing.
- 10.2 It was suggested that a more systematic approach to the identification of published research (i.e. by signing up for keyword alerts) would be beneficial. It was also suggested that there could be increased focus on medical journals.

11 AOB

- 11.1 RC advised the Board that they can continue to use the existing invoice format to submit their expenses claims, however the Gambling Commission's new supplier forms need to be completed by Board members before any payments can be made.
- 11.2 AJ submitted his apologies for the next Board meeting on 17 July 2012.
- 11.3 GR advised the group that Heather Wardle has started work on her PhD at Glasgow University (which GR is supervising) which will look at gamblers' risk and resilience and the effect of environmental and personal factors on gambling behaviour.