

Meeting of the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board: 21 January 2014

Venue: London Mathematical Society, De Morgan House, 57-58 Russell Square, London, WC1B 4HS

Time: 10.15 – 14.00

Attendees: Kate Anthony (KA), Chris Bell (CB), Paul Bellringer (PB), Sanju George (SG), Richard Ives (RI), Chris Kelly (CK) (Chair), David Miers (DM), Henrietta Bowden-Jones (HBJ), Gerda Reith (GR), Russell Hoyle (RH)

In attendance: Ruth Callaghan (RC), Rebekah Eden (RE), Marc Etches (ME), Katherine Jackson (KJ) (minutes), Jonathan Parke (JP)

Apologies: Simon Tanner (ST)

Ref	Action:	Status	Minute number / Page
224	CK and RC to finalise the letter to the Commission on progress with the strategy.	Done	4.1/ p2
225	RH to circulate recent articles in the Spectator about FOBTs to Board Members.	Done	5.5/ p2
226	RI/KJ to produce a further iteration of the position paper on young people and gambling- related harm.	Done	6.1/ p2
227	All to reflect on the young people position paper and let KJ/RI have any further comments within the next week.	Done	6.5/ p3
228	RC to bring an update paper to Board on social gaming.	Done	6.6/ p3
229	RC to consider how RGSB can communicate better what it does to external audiences. For example, there could be scope for using the RGSB Advisory Group to help to achieve this.	Ongoing	9.1/ p4
230	RH to liaise with RC re: presentations on harm minimisation measures taken by the industry at future Board meetings.	Ongoing	10.2/ p4

1: Apologies

1.2 Apologies received from Simon Tanner (ST).

2: Declarations of interest

2.1 None.

3: Minutes and matters arising from meeting on 27 November 2013: RGSB 14 01 (01)

- 3.1 The minutes were agreed.
- 3.2 Action 216, has been progressed with the Trust with discussions taking place with ABB about the evaluation of its code.
- 3.3 All other actions were in progress or on the agenda for this meeting.

4: Delivering the Strategy: RGSB 14 01 (02)

- 4.1 The Board endorsed the content of the plans. CK and RC will finalise the letter to the Commission.

Action: CK and RC to finalise the letter to the Commission on progress with the strategy.

5: Machines Research Update: RGSB 14 01 (03)

- 5.1 The Board noted the paper and the exchange of correspondence between CK and Neil Goulden on 15 and 20 January 2014, which CK and ME expanded upon verbally during the meeting.
- 5.2 The revised programme includes work to identify whether data can be used to identify patterns of harm and whether these can then be linked to real players.
- 5.3 The Board decided that it couldn't take a view on whether the revised programme met the policy requirements until a further meeting had taken place on 23 January and RC had advised the Board on next steps. It was noted that the Trust required a view from RGSB during week beginning 27 January.
- 5.4 HBJ emphasised, as the lead for key priority 3, that the machines research should not lose sight of individual profiles (and those who are vulnerable). She referred to the concept of 'telescoping'. Some individuals can gamble for many years in one type of activity with no problems, but can later go on to develop problem gambling through another type of gambling activity.
- 5.5 RH referred to recent articles in the Spectator on Fixed Odd Betting Terminals (FOBTs).

Action: RH to circulate recent Spectator articles on FOBTs.

- 5.6 HBJ referred to a Westminster Council meeting taking place that evening, which she would be attending. The meeting is about the clustering of betting shops on high streets.

6: Draft position paper on young people: RGSB 14 01 (04)

- 6.1 KJ and RI to produce a further iteration of the paper. This is to reflect CK's comments about what should happen next and what we hope to achieve by the production of this paper.

Action: RI/KJ to produce a further iteration of the position paper on young people and gambling-related harm.

- 6.2 The footnotes should be removed from the main body of the paper and listed at the end of the document. The paper could have an executive summary or a shorter version.

6.3 The important topics document is to be re-worked so that it sets out what we know about each topic, what we do not know and that which we would like to know, and whether this should lead to further research, treatment, or education.

6.4 With regard to engagement with the Board and/or the Trust on reading the position paper, readers should be advised that if they wish to engage then they should initially contact RGSB via its generic email address. The secretariat can then review the query and filter and direct it as appropriate.

6.5 CK asked everyone to reflect on the paper and let KJ/RI have any further comments.

Action: All to reflect on the young people position paper and let KJ/RI have any further comments within the next week.

6.6 RH queried what is happening with social gaming. RC confirmed she would bring this subject back to the Board.

Action: RC to bring an update paper to Board on social gaming.

7: Health Survey Update: RGSB 14 01 (05)

7.1 The Board agreed to the consideration at paragraph 17 of the paper – to explore the feasibility of a close focus on measuring the types and severity of harm experienced by individuals.

8: Gaming Machines Research Discussion: RGSB 14 01 (06)

8.1 Helena Chambers (HS) (Quaker Action on Drugs and Alcohol), Daniel Webster (Evangelical Alliance) and Jim Orford (JO) (Gambling Watch UK and University of Birmingham) attended this part of the Board meeting to discuss the evidence around gaming machines.

8.2 HC explained that the faith groups are concerned about problem gambling within disadvantaged communities, and whether gambling machines are concentrated more in these localities.

8.3 She referred to Australian research which shows that problem gamblers do not always use the highest stakes, therefore a reduction in stakes may not help problem gamblers. If they are on a low income, players could still have an extreme problem with gambling if they are spending a small amount, such as £15 a week. HC feels that the Australian research would help to better inform the debate. While the focus is on B2 machines, she is concerned about all forms of gambling machines.

8.4 HC suggested a framework for evidence and strategic thinking – what levels are sufficient to inform policy? She also feels that current evidence is not anecdotal, such as evidence available about those problem gamblers presenting for treatment.

8.5 JO agreed with much of what HC had to say. He is concerned that the approach taken to the machines research is too narrow. He suggests that it should include:

- Well-focussed qualitative research
- Gamblers' comparative perception on different forms of gambling; ask them which gambling activity is most likely to lead to problems
- History reconstructions

- Experimental studies
- Research which involves family and friends of problem gamblers

8.6 CK confirmed that the Board takes an evidence-based approach to policy.

8.7 HC believes that accessibility and availability both influence problem gambling rates, and higher risk activities should be more highly regulated. She cited evidence about this from Australia and New Zealand. The more local the decision, the more likely it is to be effective. She referred to the collection of evidence on this, such as the Harvard Business Model. It is the responsibility of the community to look at resilience indicators before granting licences. She suggested following the Australian approach.

8.8 HC said the question for her is, if a player is using a high stake gambling machine or is doing internet gambling where a lot can be spent, what level of harm increases within a short space of time, and what other impacts are there such as on the family, lost home etc.?

8.9 JO suggested using a psychophysical method of research. He would like to see a DCMS recommendation on a national effort to get information to family members of problem gamblers.

9: Machines Discussion Debrief

9.1 It was useful to have the above individuals attend. Many of the topics raised by them are already under consideration. It was noted that more could be done to share with stakeholders the discussions and plans around gaming machines.

Action: RC to consider how RGSB can better communicate what it does to external audiences. For example, there could be scope for using the RGSB Advisory Group to help achieve this.

10: Update on industry codes of practice: RGSB 14 01 (07)

10.1 The Board agreed to the consideration at paragraph 15 of the paper, i.e. that the secretariat is to begin mapping relevant international activity/best practice, although JP noted that this will be covered only in part by the work of Professor Alex Blaszczanski.

10.2 With regard to the consideration at paragraph 16 of the paper, it was noted that P3 is undertaking a mapping exercise of harm minimisation measures taken by different organisations. RH will organise a paper and/or presentation on this for the Board.

Action: RH to liaise with RC re: presentations on harm minimisation measures taken by the industry at future Board meetings.

10.3 RH confirmed that the National Casino Forum is trialling facial recognition technology. However, facial recognition will only be one tool to implement self-exclusion. P3 is working on a mobile phone app. The industry is starting to build up a genuine cross sector mechanism for self exclusion (including online). Self exclusion is not a blunt instrument, for example it is possible to self-exclude from betting shops for one month in order to help save up for Christmas. The NCF has produced a good model for self-exclusion, together with machine data and age verification. The RGA is focussed on self-exclusion but only online. The ABB also has self-exclusion measures, focussing on machines activities, for example automated pop ups on spend and time. The ABB has

formed the Responsible Gambling Committee, which includes representatives from large and small operators, together with independent representation from Professor Mark Griffiths and Jonathan Parke. The Committee sits once every six weeks. The ABB code is mandatory, if members do not comply then they will be removed from the association.

11: Update from the Responsible Gambling Trust on delivery progress: RGSB 13 06 (08)

11.1 ME ran through the update paper for the Trust.

11.2 The Board thanked the Trust for the Harm Minimisation Conference. ME confirmed that it was likely that there will be further conferences in the future.

12: Any other business

12.1 None.

Next meeting: 11 March 2014, 10.15am – 2.00pm, Government Art Collection