

GAMBLING COMMISSION

GCM(14)02

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Commissioners

Victoria Square House, Birmingham (Boardroom)

20 February 2014

Attendees: Mary Chapman
Robin Dahlberg
Robert Foster
Philip Graf (Chair)
Rachel Lampard
Anthony Lilley
Walter Merricks
Graham Sharp
Peter Teague
Jenny Williams

Apologies:

In attendance: Ian Angus (for item 7)
Rebekah Eden (for item 8 & 9)
Sarah Gardner
Ben Haden (for items 1 - 4)
Marc Hannis
Mark Harris
Matthew Hill
Elaine King (Notes)
Simon Knee (for item 5)
Julia Mackisack
Fiona Phillip (for item 8)
Jeanette Pugh
Trevor Robinson (for item 5)

Declarations of Interest

1. There were no declarations of interest.

Item 1: Minutes and action points of the last meeting

2. The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2014 were approved subject to a minor drafting change.
3. Matters arising from the minutes:
 - Review of Regulatory Policies and Processes - a revised draft is due to be circulated for review shortly.

Item 2: Oral report from the National Lottery Committee

4. The Chair of the National Lottery Committee provided the Commissioners with an overview of the discussions from the February meeting.
5. Since the last Board meeting, there has also been a meeting between the Chief Executive of the Gambling Commission and Camelot.
6. A Board to Board meeting is scheduled to take place at the end of March.
7. Current National Lottery issues were noted.

Item 3: Report from the Player Protection Reference Group (PPRG): GCP(14)08

8. The Chair of PPRG introduced the report which outlines the progress made to identify potential differences in approach by the Commission and National Lottery programme to the following issues:
 - Assessment of product risk
 - Complaints and disputes
 - Marketing and advertising further work to be done in this area, notably in relation to the use of cartoon imagery.
 - Gambling prevalence data.
9. The Board was advised that PPRG has assessed the differences in approach for the four areas and concluded that overall there are clear and justified reasons for the different approaches in relation to product risk and marketing and advertising. The Group has concluded that both organisations shared the same intent, but with differing routes to eventual outcomes and recommends that no action is required at present
10. In relation to complaints and disputes PPRG concluded that whilst it is not appropriate to align the two approaches at this stage the National Lottery programme should consider consulting internally and discuss with the Licensee moving to third party dispute resolution.
11. PPRG assessed the procedures for the capture of gambling prevalence data and concluded that the approaches are not incompatible but suggested that they be coalesced.
12. The Board considered and endorsed the recommendations.

Item 4: Report from the Chief Executive: GCP(14)07

13. The Chief Executive introduced the paper which summarised the key workstream activities undertaken by the Commission since the last report.
14. The Commissioners were provided with a further oral summary update on:
 - FOBTs
 - Proposed amendments to The Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Bill
 - The Chairman's planned meetings with operators
 - The Commission's review of LCCP
 - Current litigation issues
 - Freedom of Information requests
 - Complaints and disputes.

Item 5: 2014 – 2015 budget and medium term financial plan: GCP(14)09

15. The Senior Manager – Finance introduced the budget and medium term financial plan. The plan reflects last year's medium term financial plan which covered the period 2013 /14 – 2016/17. The 2014/15 business planning and budgeting process has been undertaken as a single exercise drawing on workstream milestones and plans to establish the financial proposals.
16. The Senior Adviser – Finance advised that the Board that the medium term financial plan contains two key messages. One that the Commission will continue to spend to reduce the accumulated reserves; and secondly that we will continue to recruit, within budget, in order to deal with the work expected to be generated by the enactment of the Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Bill.
17. The Board was asked to note the key risks posed to the budget: the date of the implementation of the Bill; the potential Government increase in civil service pension contributions starting in 2015/16; potential office move and unforeseen events for example a judicial review.
18. The Commissioners asked that the executive review the assumptions within the budget and medium term financial plan with a view to improving the reserves position. The executive were asked to revert to the March Board meeting with a revised income and expenditure profile.
19. The Board was advised that a draft of the management agreement with DCMS has been reviewed and returned to the department.

Item 5: 2014 – 2015 updated business plan: GCP(14)09

20. The Commission has adopted a rolling process of business planning which allows for regular updating of key priorities. The business plan for 2014 – 2015 has for the most part rolled forward from 2013 – 2014 incorporating amendments to the Commission priorities as a result of changes in the gambling environment.
21. The Director advised that work has been undertaken to further identify the linkage between workstream priorities and objectives; this is to facilitate effective monitoring.
22. Commissioners were invited to provide additional comments on the draft text. The final version of the summary business plan is to be presented for approval at the March Board meeting followed by publication on the Commission's website.

Item 6: Annual report and accounts and annual review 2013 – 2014: GCP(14)10

23. The Board Adviser provided the Commissioners with an overview of the proposed content for the 2013 – 2014 annual report and accounts as well as the proposals for the annual review.
24. The Commissioners considered the issues and subject to suggested drafting amendments to the order of content approved the proposals and noted the timetable.

Item 7: Marketing and Advertising workstream: progress update: GCP(14)11

25. The Senior Manager – Projects introduced the paper which summarises the work and progress of the marketing and advertising workstream, outlining the key strategic issues, and how they are being addressed. The workstream’s interdependencies with Remote, Social Responsibility and Social Gaming workstreams was noted.
26. The Commissioners discussed the paper noting the clarity and comprehensive analysis of the key issues which include giving consideration to; the risk of harm to young and vulnerable people from gambling marketing and advertising; how the Commission is working with regulatory partners to resolve issues; and the implications for advertising in relation to the implementation of the Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Bill.
27. The Commissioners approved the approach to the key issues.

Item 8: Health Survey for England – headline results and update on compendium reports: GCP(14)12

28. The Health Survey for England (HSE) was published on 18 December 2013 and for the first time included a chapter on participation and problem gambling. The Manager – Research advised that the key messages have been widely communicated.
29. The next steps in the process to analyse the results were noted. NatCen are on schedule with reports 1a and 1b of the Compendium of reports, whilst reports 2, 3 and 4 have been put out to tender to a number of research bodies.
30. The Commission is looking to employ more innovative ways of tendering and contracting for evidence collection/research-based work. In addition, the Commission is also investigating more creative ways to presents statistical and analytical information. A business case is being prepared on this and will be discussed with the Board in June.

Item 9: RGSB – quarterly update report: GCP(14)14

31. The Programme director Evidence and Analysis introduced the update.
32. The Board discussed the update, noting the letter from the RGSB Chair to the Commission.

Item 10: Commission Board forward look: GCP(14)15

33. The Commission Board forward look was noted. The dates for the 2015 Board meetings will be issued shortly. Although there is no meeting planned for April 2015, Commissioners were asked to hold the date should the need arise

Item 11: Financial report – January 2014: GCP(14)16

34. The report was noted.

Item 12: Quarterly research briefing 01/14: GCP(14)17

35. The report was noted.

Item 13: Audit Committee report: GCP(14)18

36. The report of the issues considered at the January Audit Committee meeting was noted.

Item 14: AOB

37. There was no other business.