



Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling
Oral evidence session five: Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP and Carolyn Harris MP

Supplementary questions:

1. a. What work, if any, has the APPG done on gambling related crime?

The APPG has held numerous meetings on gambling related crime covering topics including where the proceeds of crime have been used for gambling, where individuals have been prosecuted and, in some instances, imprisoned for crimes related to gambling, the wider social impact of gambling related crime and the retention of monies by gambling companies even if it has been gambled via criminal means.

b. What has been the impact of the increase in online gambling on gambling-related crime?

Online gambling has increased exponentially in the last decade and yet regulation has not kept pace with it. There are not stakes and prize limits and there are ineffective affordability checks. Online games are also often highly addictive luring people to gamble more than they can afford. In many instances people has used the proceeds of crime to gamble online and this is often fuelled by a gambling addiction. Without sufficient regulatory checks in place, it is all too easy to use the proceeds of crime to gamble online.

2. a. How frequently do you hear representations from your constituents or people engaged with the APPG who are perpetrators or victims of gambling related crime?

b. What do these representations suggest to you about the key drivers and impacts of gambling related crime?

c. The APPG proposed in its report on Online gambling that a large-scale piece of work is required to understand female problem gamblers and addiction. Please would you explain what work you would like to see done and by whom?

d. Do you have any suggestions about gaps in research on gambling-related crime in particular – for example with the BAME community?

We are regularly engaged with people who are both the victims and perpetrators of gambling related crime. The key drivers are clearly, as above, that the whole regulatory system, particularly of online gambling, needs to be overhauled. It should simply not be possible to gamble without sufficient checks as to whether the sum is affordable to someone or where the funds are therefore derived from. We also need a gambling ombudsman to ensure that there is an appropriate mechanism for consumer redress. Every new policy intended to reduce and prevent gambling-

related harm should be designed and assessed in relation to gender. Policy-making groups should include equal numbers of men and women, including people with experiences of gambling harm. There also needs to be much further work undertaken on the impact on the BAME community.

3. a. What are your thoughts on the government's recent support for the key UK gambling companies recently giving their funding for education, treatment and research to GambleAware?

b. The APPG report on online harms state that an independent body should be responsible for commissioning research. What form of independent body do you propose?

Funding for research, education and treatment should be acquired via a statutory smart levy so that those who cause the greatest harm to contribute the most. It should not be for the gambling industry to decide when, where and how much money it contributes. Much greater transparency is needed in this area. This funding should be given to an independent body to distribute rather than to GambleAware. Further work should be done to define the structure of this independent body.