



Glasgow City Council

Item 1

26th September 2019

**Wellbeing, Empowerment, Community and Citizen Engagement
City Policy Committee**

Report by Chief Executive

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Development Day Session: Gambling and Public Health

Purpose of Report:

To provide an outline of the format, purpose and associated proposals from the recent Gambling and Public Health development session.

Recommendations:

- Members are asked to consider and comment on the report and the proposals emerging from the development session; and
- Endorse the recommendation for Glasgow to host a Gambling Summit.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Gambling is emerging as a significant public health issue within the city. In order to develop the knowledge and skills of elected members regarding this complex policy area in relation to Council policies and services, a development session was delivered on the 23rd August 2019.
- 1.2 Due to the multifaceted nature of the impact of gambling the development session was attended by members of the General Purposes City Policy Committee, including Convener Baillie Elaine Ballantyne, members from the Wellbeing Empowerment Community and Citizen Engagement City Policy Committee (WECCE), public health representatives, academics, third sector, council officers and a cross party selection of elected members.

2. Development Day Structure

- 2.1 Baillie Annette Christie, Convenor of the WECCE provided a welcome to attendees and set out the strategic and learning objective for the session; to enhance the capacity of members to make informed policy decisions which will help to deliver a Healthier and Well Governed City.
- 2.2 Anne Connolly, Strategic Advisor to the Chief Executive, provided an introduction to the session by outlining the work to date, including the [2014 cross party sounding board on the impact of fixed odds betting terminals](#), the more recent roundtable events in partnership with The Gambling Commission and report on [Gambling and Public Health](#) that went to General Purposes City Policy Committee in August 2018. The challenges faced by the city in respect of gambling were also outlined including the existing significant health and financial inequalities and the limitations on the control of gambling within the existing regulatory framework. ¹ (Licensing Board Briefing Paper)
- 2.3 Dr Michelle Gillies, Public Health Consultant for the Scottish Public Health Network (SPHN) presented findings from her working paper on preventing and reducing gambling harms within the city. The paper sets out the case for adopting a whole systems approach to tackling gambling related harm as a significant public health issue and presents a range of key areas and activities which could be used as the basis for a co-produced framework of action. ² (Gambling Related Harm/Public Health Presentation)
- 2.4 The research completed by Dr Gillies for the SPHN highlighted areas of particular concern, including:
 - The impact of the ripple effect of gambling; **for every gambler that experiences harm, around six other people in their life**, most often close family members **including children are negatively affected.**

¹ [Licensing](#)

² [Gambling related harm/Public Health Glasgow](#)

- Gambling harms **disproportionately affect poorer or more vulnerable groups in ways that can exacerbate existing inequalities.**
- **Over 50 gambling harms are recognised**, broadly themed as those which may affect resources, relationships and health. **Financial difficulties, anxiety and stress, family and relationship breakdown** are amongst the most commonly experienced.
- **Children and young people experience gambling harms differently** from adults; gambling harms **influence their present and future potential.**
- People at **low to moderate risk of gambling harm**, or those affected by the gambling of others' **actually experience four times as much harm** as problem gamblers.
- The total burden of gambling harm at population level is **substantially higher** than that **attributed to problem drug use.**
- There is a growing risk from **increased exposure of children, young people and vulnerable groups** to vast volumes of **gambling advertising and marketing** through a range of media. This is further exacerbated by the **rise of gaming and on-line or remote gambling**, which has become the fastest growing sector of the industry

2.5 A presentation delivered by Laura McDonald, Research Assistant from the University of Glasgow, highlighted evidence of **clustering of so-called “environmental bads”** such as **alcohol, fast food, tobacco and gambling outlets** in more deprived areas of Glasgow. The study utilised mapping analysis to demonstrate a pattern of over-lapping outlets providing health-damaging goods and services within the city’s most deprived areas.³

2.6 Evidence suggests that **increased availability of health damaging goods and services is related to an increase in corresponding unhealthy behaviors** including smoking, alcohol consumption (and related violence), increased consumption of fast food and increased likelihood of problem gambling. Whilst the health consequences of smoking, excess alcohol consumption and an unhealthy diet are well established, for gambling the association with health is under-researched. Problem gambling has however been linked to several negative health outcomes, such as increased alcohol consumption, obesity, smoking, mental health problems, and suicide, as well as intimate partner violence.

2.7 The Scottish Public Health Network advocates that “local authorities and local licensing authorities should use as wide a range of powers in their remit to prevent associated harms from overprovision of health damaging outlets.

³ [Environmental Harms](#)

2.8 A group discussion and mapping exercise on the clustering and concentration of 'environmental bads' within the local area provided a practical demonstration of the high density of health damaging outlets within a specific ward area of the city. ⁴(Mapping Exercise)

3. Next Steps

3.1 Following on from the group discussion the following proposals, that should be explored further in order to develop a public health approach to gambling in the city, were made:

- A Gambling Summit should be arranged, across a range of agencies, to bring together the third sector, professionals, and academics, those with lived experience of gambling harm, communities, elected members, researchers and prevention specialists to examine the issues from a variety of different perspectives.
- Take steps to learn more about what works to limit and prevent harm. Commit to exploring best practise examples from across the UK and Internationally.
- Advocate for a stronger focus on education and review suitability of educational activities and programmes designed to prevent gambling harm.
- Acknowledge the changing face of gambling; the way that people gamble and the demographics of who is gambling have changed fundamentally. Gambling has become more accessible due to the rise in remote gambling, therefore traditional action to limit gambling harm may no longer be sufficient.
- Support a whole systems approach to make treatment and preventative support more accessible and relevant. Work with partners to ensure appropriate care pathways that meet the needs of users.
- Review the support available to council staff to take account of online gambling and ensure that those who are at risk of, or are experiencing gambling harms are able to access help and support.
- Given the recognised absence of statutory enforcement powers, both the Council and Licensing Board should continue to work with the Gambling Commission, Scottish and UK Government to look at what more could be done to counteract the impact of clustering of environmental harms

⁴ Mapping Exercise

- Consider the actions required to facilitate partnership working across a range of agencies to explore the further development of these proposals and in the development of any supporting action plan.

4 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	no new financial implications arising from the report
<i>Legal:</i>	The report makes the case for legislative changes to allow for effective enforcement
<i>Personnel:</i>	No direct personnel implications
<i>Procurement:</i>	No relevant procurement issues

Council Strategic Plan:	Priority 38 – Support Service redesign that will result in Glasgow becoming a healthier empowered city, with early intervention at the heart of what we do. Priority 99 – Work to deliver a fairer, more equal Glasgow through all we do.
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Equality Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22</i>	No specific outcome relevant to this policy area
<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	The report highlights concerns about the potential impact of gambling related harm on more deprived areas of the city

Sustainability Impacts:

<i>Environmental:</i>	The report highlights the adverse impact of gambling related harm on areas of the city.
<i>Social:</i>	
<i>Economic:</i>	The report highlights the potential losses to Glasgow citizens through gambling related harm.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:	No data protection impacts arising from this report
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5 Recommendations

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- Endorse the recommendation for Glasgow to host a Gambling Summit.