



## **Gambling Reform APPG Inaugural Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**Time:** 10:45am-11:15am

**Location:** Room O, Portcullis House

**Chair:** Iain Duncan Smith MP

**Minutes taken by:** Max Strangleman-Sykes, DGA Group

### **Members Present:**

- Iain Duncan Smith MP (Chair)
- Carolyn Harris MP Parliamentary Assistant
- Polly Billington MP
- Sarah Coombes MP
- Dr Beccy Cooper MP
- Deirdre Costigan MP
- John Slinger MP
- John Grady MP Parliamentary Assistant
- The Rt Rev. the Lord Bishop of St Albans.

### **External Guests**

- Katherine Morgan, DGA Group
- Lewis Klein, DGA Group
- Ffion Price, DGA Group
- Max Strangleman-Sykes, DGA Group

### **Inaugural Gambling Reform APPG Minutes:**

- Iain Duncan Smith MP introduced himself and the APPG's work, including its background.

### **Election of Secretariat:**

- The group moves onto electing the secretariat- DGA Group.
- DGA outlined their role in bringing about the former APPG on Gambling Related Harm and the related work they have done over the past 8 years on the issue of Gambling Reform.
- DGA Group were unanimously voted as secretariat for the APPG.

### **The Chair & Officers**

- The group then moves to elect the Chair and officers as follows:
  - Iain Duncan Smith MP was elected as chair of the APPG unanimously
  - Carolyn Harris MP- Vice Chair
  - Lord Foster of Bath- Officer
  - Dr Beccy Cooper

Funding of the Group:

- The group moves to outline funding of the APPG. The Secretariat outlined Derek Webb's role as a funder of the APPG.
- There is no dissent from any members present to the Secretariat undertaking these duties.

Discussion of proposed workplan of the Group:

- The group moves on to discuss the work programme and future agenda of the APPG.
- The secretariat calls for the agenda to proactively call on government to implement harm prevention measures from the 2023 White Paper.
- The secretariat mentions how new research on harms from the Gambling Survey for Great Britain has since shown that liberalising measures, such as those proposed for adult gaming centres in the White Paper- have become outdated.
- Discussing the need to address new and emerging technologies as outlined in the workplan, Iain Duncan Smith notes how gambling companies and operators are at the forefront of technological change.
- John Slinger MP notes how constituents have raised concerns over gambling several times to him, referencing one particular example provided by a constituent in relation to online gambling.
- Beccy Cooper MP notes the failure of legislation to keep pace, with 2005 being the last major change to the space. Polly Billington MP agrees, and suggests that the Group consider the benefits of a new Gambling Act which can reform the space to deal with new technologies
- Iain Duncan Smith MP notes the work of the Group will have to involve using Parliamentary mechanisms such as such as written questions and debates to generate traction for reform.
- Lord Bishop Allen cautions that future Gambling Acts may also present the industry a chance to influence, with ways of getting around legislation and regulation. He raises the idea of a duty of care as a potential solution.
- Polling Billington MP highlights the success of a Social Market Foundation event at Labour Party Conference, which struck a good balance between data and stories.
- Deirdre Costigan MP mentions how the industry target those who "need a hope". Sarah Coombes MP and John Slinger MP further add to this, highlighting the need for constituents to write to MPs across the country to raise the profile of the issues at play. Mr Slinger notes he is eager to bring to light the stories of gambling harm.
- The group discussed the need to make colleagues in Parliament aware of the White Paper and implementing it as legislation imminently. Polly Billington MP and Lord Bishop Allen further note the extractive nature of gambling, with the industry harming high streets and growth across the country.



APPG on  
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Reform

- Members present agree to pursue the proposed workplan presented to the Group.
- Iain Duncan Smith thanks everyone for their attendance and concludes the meeting