

GambleAware

6th Annual Harm-minimisation Conference

Wednesday 5 December 2018

Opening remarks by Kate Lampard, CBE, Chair, GambleAware

Thank you Liz.

Good morning and welcome all of you to what is our sixth annual conference.

I am especially pleased to have Mims Davies, Minister for Sport and Civil Society, join us. We enjoy an excellent working relationship with your Department and I thank you for your personal interest in GambleAware's work. We look forward to hearing from you.

Welcome too to Neil McArthur, Chief Executive of the Gambling Commission. We are grateful to you for being here today. I think it is right and important to say that we continue to enjoy a good working relationship with the Gambling Commission, as we do with Sir Chris Kelly and his colleagues on the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board.

It is really good to see so many people here, and to know that among you there will be wide-ranging interests, views and opinions regarding gambling and gambling-related harms. I hope that you will take every opportunity to share and express your points-of-view during the course of the day. There may be much to agree upon but equally we ought not to avoid discussing whatever we might disagree upon. As some of you will now be well aware, I and GambleAware say what we see and we expect no less in return.

The overall theme for this year's conference will be focused on the role of diversity in reducing gambling-related harms. Diversity is about valuing peoples' differences and addressing their different needs. Valuing this diversity allows differing perspectives and ideas to be expressed and allows them to become part of the way we think and to be taken into account in the way we react.

The purpose of today is to explore the importance of diversity and inclusion in tackling gambling-related harms through the prism of four key areas: treatment; research; consumers; and, business. And I am grateful to all those who have agreed to deliver presentations and participate on the panel-sessions; thank you.

In July we published a two-year strategic delivery plan, and we are getting on with it.

Perhaps the most significant announcement has been the funding of the Northern Gambling Clinic in Leeds. This will become the second NHS-hosted clinic funded by GambleAware, and represents a significant step in our aim to better integrate the NHS with charities providing preventative education and treatment. We are actively seeking similar arrangements in Scotland, Wales and elsewhere in England. The purpose is to establish a robust, evidence-based integrated system of prevention, treatment and support for gambling addiction, free-at-the-point-of-delivery.

Also, we are delighted to be directly involved in cross-government initiatives involving Department for Culture Media Sport, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Public Health England, seeking to develop a more joined-up approach to reducing gambling-related harms via research, education and treatment.

GambleAware now has a Board of trustees who are expert and experienced in all areas of our funding and grant-making activity, and who are wholly independent of the gambling industry. We publish details of our funding on a quarterly basis, and speak out about issues on the basis of the evidence or, where the evidence is absent, on a

precautionary basis - we believe the need to exercise caution in relation to gambling matters is especially important in relation to children.

Last week we launched a film-led awareness initiative to encourage football fans to discuss what they think about the relationship between football and gambling. Next month and into 2019, we will be launching a national multi-media 'Safer Gambling Campaign'.

These are the activities and actions of an independent charity committed to reducing gambling-related harms. We are respectful of the current voluntary donation-based system, and understand that businesses may sometimes be uncomfortable about what we do and say. Please be assured that donations are not taken for granted and that our focus is on delivering our strategic plans effectively and efficiently for the benefit of those who need help. We thank the industry for supporting us with their donations.

Last year, I called for a cultural shift in the industry in terms of attitudes to promoting safer gambling and reducing gambling-related harms. I suggested that this may require some change in personnel, and that it definitely needs shareholders and non-executives to raise the game in the Boardroom.

Provocatively, I suggested the testosterone needs to make way for more enlightened women and men who take a long term view, caring not for short-term profits but instead for sustainable businesses in which socially responsible behaviour, is culturally embedded, and seen as a necessary foundation for success not a decoration to be flaunted on special occasions.

Over the last 12 months, I have met senior executives in the gambling industry who agree with me and some of them are with us today. I welcome their support.

The annual GambleAware conferences are intended to help shape the direction of

research and policy development, as well as informing industry practice in relation to promoting player protection and safer gambling behaviour. So we hope this year's programme helps to do just that, albeit from a slightly different perspective.

So, once again, thank you all for coming along and supporting this event. I hope you enjoy the discussion and debate. Thank you.