

Slough Borough Council

Report To: Slough Health and Well-being Board

Date: Tuesday 17 June 2025

Subject: Gambling Related Harm Partnership

Chief Officer: Tessa Lindfield, Director of Public Health

Contact Officer: Alisha Withem, Public Health Programme Officer – Wider Determinants

Ward(s): ALL

Exempt: NO

Appendices: None

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report sets out to inform the Board of the of the impact gambling is having on Slough communities and the actions that are being recommended and proposed by the Slough partnership that has been established since March 2025.

Please indicate which priority in the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, [Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025](#), your report links to:

Priority 1 – Starting Well	Priority 2 - Integration	Priority 3 – Strong, Health and Attractive Neighbourhoods	Priority 4 – Workplace Health
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives by providing harm reduction education on gambling and being aware of the impact of the amount of gambling venues there are in Slough• Work with local communities to enable them to deliver mutual support at neighbourhood level.	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local communities to understand the issues facing them. • Increase levels of resident satisfaction with local place and improve levels of happiness. • Improve life chances of residents, by focusing on areas such as housing, poverty, education and employment. • Reduce health inequalities between wards 	
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1.2 Consideration:

- x Information
- ☐ Discussion
- ☐ Decision
- x Endorsement

Recommendations:

The Health and Well-being Board is recommended to:

- a) Support completing a risk assessment for the sub-group of the population that suffer from multi-disadvantage through the joint strategic needs assessment process and local partnerships.
- b) Develop or amend policy/strategy around licensing, health education and promotion, and training to improve the environment regarding gambling. Develop a licensing forum.
- c) Endorse the Slough partnership and hosting of GamCare to provide free counselling, support, and signposting. Provide a room for GamCare's use.
- d) Promote via comms pathways and across partnerships organisations where people of multiple disadvantaged are served

2. Report

Introductory paragraph

- 2.1 The Slough Partnership for Gambling Related Harm consists of colleagues from GamCare, GamStop, local councillors, residents with lived experience and SBC

public health colleagues. This partnership is necessary to discuss the need and current public health concern in Slough and organise to take the steps to mitigate harm. This can be done through licensing regulation for gambling venues, offering counselling support services and signposting and raising awareness. A partnership approach is crucial for co-production, meeting the needs locally, and for evidence-based practice.

- 2.2 The impact of gambling on Slough is multifaceted, and its effects are felt across different aspects of the community, from economic implications to public health concerns. Gambling can contribute to addiction, crime, and financial hardship, particularly in vulnerable groups. Partnering with a wider group of stakeholders is critical to address these concerns develop the public health approach to addressing gambling related harm.

Background

- 2.3 Local authorities are tasked with monitoring the situation, regulating the number and location of gambling venues, and working with community organizations to mitigate the harmful effects of gambling on the population. As with many towns, addressing gambling-related harm in Slough involves a combination of local policy, community engagement, and support for individuals struggling with addiction.
- 2.4 Since attending the Health and Wellbeing Board, we have established the Slough Gambling Harms Partnership, bringing together key local and national stakeholders to address gambling-related harm in the borough. As part of this initiative, we hosted a successful multi-agency workshop that enabled shared learning, collaboration, and strategic planning. Through the partnership, we are actively enhancing promotion, engagement, and sharing evidence-based advice and data on this issue locally, particularly in relation to licensing policies to ensure they reflect public health considerations
- 2.5 While Slough Borough Council (SBC) doesn't directly license online gambling operators, we play a crucial role in regulating the physical presence of gambling venues in their areas. Public Health and Public Protection can inspect venues, enforce gambling regulation and advertising, and help mitigate gambling-related harm.
- 2.6 We are also supporting the provision of free counselling and support services for those affected by gambling harm and public education on the risks of gambling. This coordinated approach is strengthening prevention, early intervention, and support across Slough.
- 2.7 This report supports SBC corporate priority to achieve 'A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives.
- 2.8 The Problem Gambling Severity Index measures levels of gambling behaviour which may cause harm to an individual, ranging from low-risk gambling: score 1-2, moderate risk gambling: 3-7, and problem gambling or gambling disorder: 8+.
- 2.9 Below are estimated levels of gambling harm in Slough and the use of treatment, support and advice based on the annual GB treatment and support survey 2022.

It is estimated:

- 1 in 7 people in slough have a PGSI score of 1 or more(15.1%) This compares to 13.4 % across GB.
- 1 in 13 (7.5%) have a PGSI score 3+, compares to 5.9% across GB.
- 1 in 25 (3.9%) have a score of PGSI 8+, compared to 2.9% across GB.
- 19.1 % of those who have a score of PGSI 1+ would like treatment, support, or advice to deal with their problem gambling. Some people in Slough are accessing support but we can continue to support further in this.

Slough Registration Statistics

GAM STOP

Summary

GAMSTOP is an online self-exclusion scheme operated by the National Online Self Exclusion Scheme Limited, an independent not-for-profit organisation.

GAMSTOP is a **free** service available to all consumers resident within the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. Users choose to exclude themselves from all online gambling sites for a specified period: 6 months, 1 year or 5 years.

Since March 2020, it has been a condition of licence for all online operators to integrate with GAMSTOP, allowing anyone who registers with the scheme to exclude themselves from all online gambling sites licensed in Great Britain.

Since GAMSTOP launched in 2018, over 500,000 UK residents have registered with the scheme.



Slough Registrations

Total **Active** Exclusions

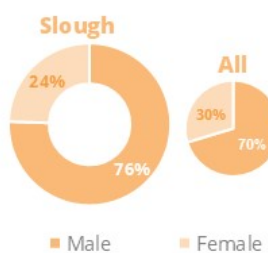
1,792

All people excluded as of 31st December 2024

Term at Registration



Gender Split of Registrants

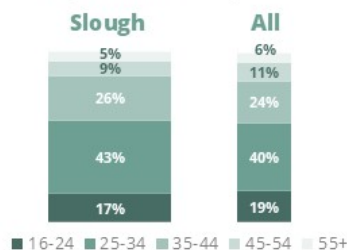


Total **Registrations**

2,020

All people who have ever registered with GAMSTOP as of 31st December 2024

Age Profile of Registrants



Average **Monthly** Registrations

28

Average monthly registrations in 2024

- 2.10 The Public Health team is consulting on the Statement of Gambling principles and Local Area Profile for Slough Borough Council to include proper guidance on reducing harm due to gambling.
- 2.11 Local authorities in the UK have a role in regulating and overseeing gambling activities within their local areas. LA's don't license gambling operators (that's the responsibility of the UK Gambling Commission), but they approve licensing of premises.
- 2.12 The Licensing Department ensures premises meet local requirements, such as:
- Building regulations
 - Health and safety standards
 - Planning permission
- 2.13 Consulting these policies and strategies from a public health perspective will set out how we will approach gambling regulation via licensing in the future and will aim to:
- To prevent crime, ensure fair and open gambling, protecting children and vulnerable people
 - Prevent a high concentration and frequent attendance of gambling premises and the harm to the community it may cause.
 - Potential to impose specific conditions, such as limiting the hours of operation or restricting the type of gambling offered.
 - Work with licensing colleagues to conduct inspections of licensed gambling premises to ensure compliance with the Gambling Act and local licensing policies.
 - Promote enforcement of licensing regulations to take action if an operator is violating the rules, such as operating without a license, allowing underage gambling, or not following responsible gambling practices.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Health and Well-being Board and Partners Implications

3.1.1 The Public Health team will need to ensure the health and social care services are designed to meet the complex, intersecting needs (e.g., mental health, housing, substance misuse) of the most vulnerable. Collaboration across directorates, with external partners such as Mind and Turning Point, Gam Care and GamStop will be necessary.

3.1.2 The Public Health team will be incorporating this data into the JSNA and strategies will be informed by current and localised evidence, improving service delivery, outcomes, and data for residents of multiple disadvantaged communities. This approach encourages closer inter-agency data sharing and cooperation to better identify and support this population.

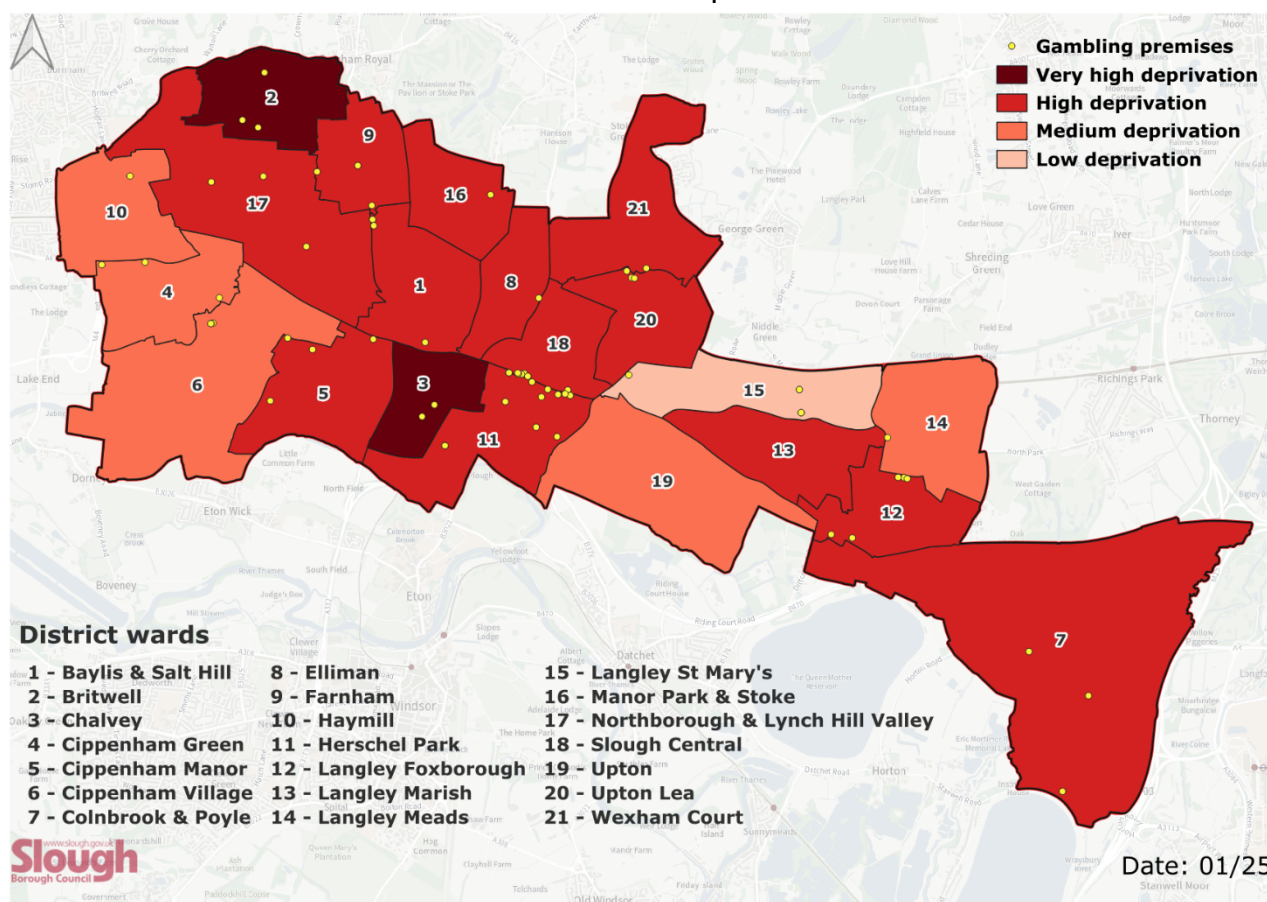
3.2 Equality implications

3.2.1 This approach promotes health equity and Proportionate Universalism by recognising that some groups face compounded disadvantages and need more tailored support.

3.3 Environmental implications

3.3.1 Limiting further gambling outlet density could help reduce harm, especially in areas of high deprivation. It can also improve community cohesion and encourage varying uses and businesses within Slough central. Including gambling harm in health promotion, and advertising for gambling support can help normalise conversations around it and improve early identification of at-risk individuals. This will change the culture and frequency of gambling, with a long-term aim to shift the physical environment.

3.3.2 Forums related to licensing policies may lead to new reform pathways and social responsibility requirements on gambling operators. It will also reduce the stigma and build trust with residents if led by Slough Borough Council. Finally, this partnership and approach could stimulate broader debate on the socio-economic effects of gambling outlets in communities, particularly in areas with high unemployment or poverty. By addressing these issues and having these conversations with community members and local organisations we can raise awareness and improve financial education and employment opportunities. Currently there are clustering of gambling venues in specific neighbourhoods, especially in areas of deprivation, this approach could restrict further gambling venues in these areas and shift the landscape to reduce venues in these areas.



3.4 Financial implications

3.4.1 The development and implementation of the partnership approach will have minimal financial impact. Coordination will be done in partnership with a Public Health Officer to record and carry out actions and track progress. In the longer term, reduced rates of gambling related harm could lead to reduced demand on adult social care services, offering potential cost savings.

3.5 Legal implications:

None

3.6 Risk management implications

3.7.1 Completion of an area risk assessment on the areas where clusters of gambling outlets currently exist in Slough will be conducted and show where we can target with promotion and regulation and address concerns of people with multiple disadvantages. Completing an assessment will ensure that new and existing gambling outlets do not cause harm to local communities including deprived areas and areas near to schools. Monitoring trends in local crime rates or social issues that may be linked to gambling, especially around areas with a high density of gambling venues.

3.7 Procurement implications:

None

3.8 Workforce implications

3.8.1 Training and raising awareness of gambling related harm amongst gambling outlets provided by Slough Gambling Related Harm partnership.

3.9 Property implications:

None

4. Background Papers

None