

## Minutes of the Research & Evaluation Committee meeting

<b>DATE</b>	Thursday 26 August 2021
<b>TIME</b>	10.00am – 12.00pm
<b>VENUE</b>	Virtual zoom

PRESENT	INITIALS	NOTES
Anthony Kessel	AK	Trustee / Committee Chair
Kate Lampard	KL	Trustee / GambleAware Chair
IN ATTENDANCE		
Alison Clare	AC	Research, Information & Knowledge Director (interim)
Conn Doherty	CD	Research, Information & Knowledge Officer
Sian Griffiths	SG	Trustee
Yee-Mai Koo-Pandya	YKP	Project Manager
Zoe Osmond	ZO	Chief Executive
Helen Owen	HO	Evaluation & Monitoring Director
Jane Rigbye	JR	Prevention Director
Natalie Simpson	NS	Company Secretary (minutes)
Stacey Storey	SS	Head of Programme & Project Management Office
Amy Sweet	AS	Research Lead
APOLOGIES		
Laura Balla	LB	Gambling Commission observer
Jay St John Levy	JL	Research Lead

## 1. Welcome and apologies

AK welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from LB and JL.

It was noted that Marcantonio Spada left the Board of trustees and the Committee on 15 July.

SG was welcomed to the meeting. It was agreed that when the Committee Chair, AK, steps down from the Board and Committee at the end of September, SG will chair the Committee on an interim basis until new trustees are recruited. AK was thanked for the insight and clarity he has brought to the role in chairing the Committee.

## 2. Declarations of interest

HO declared a potential conflict of interest as an immediate family member works for YouGov. HO will withdraw from any activity in relation to the decision-making aspect of the selection of the organisation within the tender process in which YouGov is involved.

There were no further declarations of interest, beyond those already recorded.

## 3. Minutes of meeting 3 June 2021

The minutes of the Research & Evaluation Committee meeting held on 3 June 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.

## 4. Action log

**It was agreed** that the two outstanding actions are general ongoing items that do not need to remain on the action log.

All other actions from the previous meeting are complete.

## 5. Research & evaluation portfolios

The research and evaluation portfolio update was received as presented and the team was thanked for the progress that has been made.

**Academic Research Hub** - it was noted that a prominent researcher has urged the team to consider distributing the funds via an independent medical research body. There was discussion about how careful consideration has already been given to the most appropriate process for distributing the research funding and considerable interest has already been received from top Universities. **It was agreed** that the team

should continue with the approved approach to establishing the Hub and engage with the researcher if they wish to submit an expression of interest.

It was noted that, with the guidance of an independent Advisory Group, three independent ranking frameworks were used to identify 24 top GB Universities with a track record of delivering robust, internationally recognised research, with a strong public health output, and who rank highly in research areas relevant to gambling behaviour and harms. These institutions (referred to as the 'long list') have been invited to submit an initial expression of interest for this grant award. The team has recently received correspondence from a university which hasn't been targeted through the long list, asking why they haven't been included. There was discussion about the potential risks to the timetable and credibility of the process of now opening up the long list.

**It was agreed** that the approved approach of targeting the 24 top universities should continue, but this should not be seen as exclusive and other universities should be able to apply. The team was directed to find a way of ensuring that any additional universities applying are also ranked alongside the targeted long list using the same independent frameworks and criteria, perhaps by developing a proforma for the university in question to complete.

**General discussion** - it was suggested that if DHSC produce a review of gambling-related harms, a robust response should be prepared to highlight what GambleAware is doing to address any gaps that are identified.

## 6. R&E budget status report

The overview of the current financial status of each project in the 2021/22 Research & Evaluation Portfolios was received as presented.

**Trustees approved re-allocation of the 2021/22 budget as follows:**

- 1. An additional £50,000 to the research programme to build knowledge of the lived experience of gambling harms in minority communities**
- 2. £80,000 for a new piece of work with KCL/Myriad for a longitudinal analysis of treatment effectiveness of NGTS services (CNWL, LYPFT, Gordon Moody) excluding GamCare**
- 3. £100,000 for a new piece of work with the Health Economics Unit for a Demand and Capacity Modelling Study for primary, secondary & tertiary prevention.**

## 7. Organisation redesign update

Trustees welcomed the update on the implementation of the organisation redesign in relation to the Research, Evaluation & Monitoring teams. Further appointments, including the new Research Director, were noted. The recruitment process will continue as planned, and the new Research Director will be engaged with the process.

**It was agreed** that the part-time interim Evaluation support could be extended to April 2022, if required, in order to manage the capacity to deliver the intended evaluation and monitoring programme.

## 8. Randomised Control Trial funding proposal

The proposal to fund a 4-year, Randomised Control Trial (RCT) exploring what works for whom in tertiary level treatment (treatment for people with a gambling disorder) was received as presented.

The pros and cons were considered for the options presented: rejecting the proposal; approving the proposal in principle, subject to internal quality assurance and review; and running a competitive tendering exercise and opening the funding opportunity for a RCT more widely. Although the proposed small sample size would not lead to the ability to generalise to the larger population, the project enables GambleAware to fulfil a key organisational aim: Deliver effective leadership of the commissioning landscape to improve the coherence, accessibility, diversity, and effectiveness of the National Gambling Treatment Service. It is also an opportunity to create an Innovation Model for treatment length and modality.

**It was agreed** that the team should proceed with the second option, to further interrogate the proposal in line with the standard grant award process (including review by a panel and interrogation of the budget). It will also require scrutiny by the incoming Chief Commissioning Officer.

**Action:** A paper to be brought to the next Committee meeting setting out the various RCT/Innovation Model options, with a recommendation for how to proceed.

It was noted that GambleAware has had a policy of not accepting unsolicited proposals for funding, but the changing landscape and lack of regulatory settlements has led to an increase in unsolicited proposals. This will be discussed further by the full Board of trustees.

## 9. Evaluation & monitoring strategy

The Strategic Framework for Evaluation & Monitoring was welcomed by trustees.

**Trustees approved** the direction of travel and support the proposed evidence and evaluation training programmes, and the proposed development of a Theory of Change for GambleAware.

#### **10. Gambling Commission research update**

It was noted that the Gambling Commission was unable to provide a research update due to capacity issues.

#### **11. Any other business**

Trustees welcomed the new format of the cover papers, which provides them with assurance.

AK was thanked again for his role as Chair of the Committee.