

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARY  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2011**

**Question**

Can the Minister outline what progress, if any, has been made on the following issues upon which he gave assurances during the debate on P.28/2010 (Establishment of a regulatory and licensing regime for e-gaming for Jersey) on 21st April 2010, namely

- (a) a report on all aspects of e-gaming, including the likely scope of any potential problems, the measures to be taken to reduce the harm caused and so on;
- (b) the consultation into the Code of Practice for the e-gaming operations which might set up in Jersey?

**Answer**

The debate on P28/2010 (Establishment of a Regulatory and Licensing Regime for E-gaming for Jersey) was an *In Principle* proposition debated Wednesday, 21st April 2010. Having scrutinised the Hansard transcript of the debate I can find no reference to an agreement to the broad undertaking set out under point (a) of this question or the specific requirement of point (b). Understandably, the Assembly have debated various pieces of gambling legislation over the last two years, and I propose the Deputy of St Mary must be alluding to an undertaking made at the conclusion of the debate on the Draft Gambling (Remote Gambling Disaster Recovery) (Amendment) (Jersey) Regulations 201- (P.199/2010), on Thursday, 3rd March 2011.

Here I assented to 2 specific requests from Deputy M.R. Higgins, namely:

- (a) To report on the progress of strategies and programmes to reduce any social harm.
- (b) That e-gaming licences should not be issued until the Codes of Practice have been approved.

As the Deputy for St Mary was active not only in this particular debate, but was also a member of the Scrutiny Panel that examined P.199/2010, I am confident this proposition is the premise for his written question. Each area will be addressed in turn.

**(a) Strategy to reduce and prevent social harm**

The Commission established a Social Responsibility Panel to inform policy and offer advice on how best to meet its key objectives, for example, to:

- protect children and vulnerable persons from addiction and other forms of harm associated with gambling; and
- make assistance available to persons who are or may be affected by problems related to excessive gambling.

The Panel is made up of an independent Chair, a representative of the gambling industry and a specialist from public health. These individuals are experts in their own particular fields and all members give their time free of charge. To date and in line with its remit to investigate and

engage a bespoke counselling service for Jersey, the Panel has agreed to trial an online help provider. This provider is Gambling Therapy and [www.gamblingtherapy.je](http://www.gamblingtherapy.je) has been established as a dedicated website for Jersey residents. Counsellors may also be contacted by e-mail [Jersey@gamblingtherapy.je](mailto:Jersey@gamblingtherapy.je).

Staff and trained counsellors from Gambling Therapy have visited Jersey a number of times; they know the local gambling sector and understand the pressures that a problem gambler and their family may face. The Panel has approved posters and leaflets for this service, which have been distributed to betting offices, Citizens Advice and the library. It should also be noted that CI Lottery terminals already carry responsible play banners but the content will also refer to Gambling Therapy services. Dependent on the data returned from Gambling Therapy and the assessment of individuals seeking help through this service, the Panel will move to arrange either regular or ad hoc face-to-face sessions with a Jersey based counsellor.

The Panel have also been active in the production of the Responsible Gambling Codes of Practice, in particular the area of self-exclusion. Having requested a brief survey of self-exclusion processes across the betting industry in Jersey, it was evident that the majority of operators have in place a mechanism for self-barring from betting. With the pending adoption of the new Gambling Law in 2012 and the overhaul of the 1960s regulations, the Gambling Commission will be enabled to impose licence conditions on the terrestrial industry above those operational requirements prescribed in the 1965 Regulations and for the first time compliance with schemes such as self-exclusion procedures will become mandatory.

The majority of off and on-course bookmakers made voluntary contributions to the Social Responsibility fund at the level recommended by the Commission. These firms and individuals will be acknowledged in the 2012 annual report of the Commission.

#### **(b) Codes of Practice**

The Gambling Commission (Consultation on Codes of Practice) (Jersey) Order 2011 (R&O.136/2011) was made on 18th October 2011 and came into force on 25th October 2011. This Order specifies, as the title suggests, the procedure for consultation on codes of practice about gambling, and for publication and effective dates of approved codes. It should be understood that prior to this Order being made the Jersey Gambling Commission had no vires for the inception and adoption of Codes of Practice. While a licence could have been granted governed solely by licence conditions and not predicate on a Code of Practice, this, in line with my undertaking, has not occurred.

The Commission launched consultations on three different Codes of Practice on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2011:

- Responsible Gambling Code of Practice applicable to E-gaming Operators;
- Responsible Gambling Code of Practice applicable to Land Based Operations;
- Code of Practice in Respect of Technical Standards applicable to Remote Gambling Operators.

The first two Codes of Practice deal directly with responsible gambling measures for the remote and terrestrial industry; the third code details those technical standards required by e-gaming operators to meet licensing criteria and once again this includes the use of tools in respect of age verification, play limits, spend limits and other social responsibility requirements. Copies of these consultations are available on the Commissions website [www.jgc.je](http://www.jgc.je) and have been sent to current (terrestrial) licensees, individuals signed up to the consultation register and other interested parties.