**TERMS OF REFERENCE: GAMBLING HEALTH ALLIANCE**

**Background**

The evidence is clear: gambling can cause physical and mental harms. It affects individual gamblers as well as their families, friends and communities and contributes to health inequalities. The rapid expansion of online gambling, the marketing of gambling via sport and the impact of gambling on young people are among the issues of particular current concern. A concerted response from the health policy world is required and the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) has therefore established the Gambling Health Alliance (GHA) to catalyse and co-ordinate this.

The GHA will be developed using a successful coalition-building model that has been used in relation to other public health priorities, including the End High Cost Credit Alliance, Alcohol Health Alliance, Obesity Health Alliance and Smokefree Action Coalition. RSPH is a member of all four of these Alliances.

**Objectives**

The GHA will work to ensure that the harms caused by gambling are placed on an equal footing with other major public health challenges, focussing on prevention, early intervention and treatment, and increased community engagement.

The specific objectives of this Alliance are to:

* Bring together the widest possible range of organisations and individuals with an interest in policy who have a shared interest in reducing the damage caused to health and wellbeing from gambling.
* Highlight the harms caused by gambling and the social, economic and cultural factors that contribute to gambling harm and health inequalities.
* Engage and inform policy makers, Government, NGOs and public health community in order to encourage a coherent, coordinated and effective response that reduces gambling harms.
* Promote evidence and undertake research that can be translated into practical steps.

**Organisation**

The GHA is formally part of RSPH. RSPH is ultimately responsible for its management and outputs. RSPH also acts as the GHA secretariat. The Chair of GHA will be appointed by RSPH in consultation with GHA members.

It is RSPH’s aim that, as far as is practicable, GHA acts as a freestanding entity in respect of its decision-making.

The GHA’s work will be directed by a Steering Group. Members are able to nominate themselves to join the Steering Group. To ensure that the Group properly reflects the membership and other relevant issues, RSPH may also invite other organisations or individuals to join. The Steering Group, which will have between 5 and 10 members, will meet face-to-face or remotely at least twice a year and be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the GHA’s strategy.

The GHA will also establish working groups on a case-by-case basis to support the development of its programme of work. Working groups will be made up of specialist representatives from member organisations and will support the delivery of tactical activity on behalf of the Alliance. Sub-groups are open to all member organisations.

All GHA members will be invited to attend all-member meetings which will be held at least twice a year. These meetings will be responsible for determining the overall strategy of the Alliance with decisions as far as possible made on a consensual basis.

**Membership**

The GHA will comprise the following groups:

1. Full members: Membership is open to any organisation or individual that shares the GHA’s objectives, has a commitment to collaborative working and has valuable expertise to bring to the Alliance. Full members must be able to demonstrate that they meet the eligibility criteria. Membership is subject to approval by RSPH and the Steering Group.
2. Observers: The GHA strives to be open and inclusive. This level of membership is aimed at organisations who meet the full eligibility criteria, support most or all of the objectives of GHA but who do not wish to, or are not deemed able to, contribute to or be associated with its policy outputs or public statements. This type of membership includes Government departments, political groups, and otherwise eligible members who receive funds directly or indirectly from the gambling industry and are unable to demonstrate clear policies that ensure the complete separation of these relationships from policy position development. Observers can attend the GHA’s all-member meetings on an observer basis and the secretariat will keep them up-to-date on GHA activity, but they cannot feed into policy outputs or public statements. This means that at GHA meetings, observers will be muted, except when specifically invited by the Chair to speak and at the end of the meeting when they will be given an opportunity to comment. Observers will not be included in member correspondence seeking input and feedback on GHA policy or public outputs. Classification of Observer membership is at the discretion of RSPH and the Steering Group following membership approval.

Members may join by application or invitation. To be eligible, organisations or individuals must:

* Support the GHA’s overall objectives (as stated above).
* Be committed to working in respectful and constructive partnership with other organisations within the GHA and respect any parameters put in place regarding the sharing of confidential information (e.g. not breaking embargos or passing on information to non-GHA members).
* Not speak publicly on behalf of the GHA, or seek to represent it externally, without the express permission of the Chair or Steering Group.
* Be an individual, a public sector agency, professional organisation, a registered charity, a social enterprise or a similar non-commercial, not-for-profit organisation.
* Have an independent voice from the gambling industry and can declare to the GHA Steering Group any direct or indirect funds received from the gambling industry, and demonstrate clear policies that ensure the complete separation of these relationships from policy position development. An inability to demonstrate this qualifies the organisation or individual to hold Observer status only.
* Can demonstrate their commitment to working within the parameters of evidence-based public health research, theory and practice.
* Support human rights and equality with respect to age, disability, sex and gender, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation.

Interested organisations who meet the conditions above will be asked to complete a prospective membership form to be used by the Steering Group as due diligence to consider membership requests. Prospective members may be asked to provide additional information if the Steering Group have additional questions or concerns about their ability to meet the above conditions.

Members may have their membership of, or association with, the GHA revoked by the Steering Group if they act ways contradictory to the objectives and values of the Alliance and/or if their continued membership risks bringing the Alliance into disrepute.

**Benefits of Membership**

All members will receive:

* Regular information updates on policy development and other news relating to gambling.
* Detailed, evidence-based policy briefings on priority areas.
* Member logos included on letters to policymakers, press releases (where

appropriate) and the GHA’s web page.

* Opportunities to attend meetings with policymakers (as appropriate, where the agenda is focused on a member organisation’s particular area of expertise).
* Template consultation responses.
* Support and amplification of member organisation activity.
* Collaboration opportunities between member organisations.

**Operating costs**

Member organisations will not be required to make financial contributions to fund the running costs of the GHA but any donations or in-kind contributions would be very welcome and gratefully received and acknowledged.

RSPH is funding the secretariat and running costs of the GHA using a grant from the charity GambleAware. The GHA’s work will be determined independently of GambleAware and the charity has not and will not seek to influence the work of the GHA in any way and will not attend its meetings.

The current funding arrangement is scheduled to end in March 2022. RSPH plans to seek additional funding from other organisations which have no links with the gambling industry.