Minutes of The Gambling Business Group Limited Board Meeting on Monday 16th February 2026 at 1.00 pm at TLT LLP, 20 Gresham Street, London EC21V 7JE

Present	Steve Sharp (Chair) Peter Hannibal (Chief Executive) Charlotte Meller (General Manager) Amanda Fry (Company Secretary)
In attendance:	Paul Terroni (Novomatic) Mark Jepp (Game Nation) Leo Walker (Evoke Plc) Simon Reynolds (Buzz Bingo) Justin Browning-Smith (Boomerang Digital) Brian Jamson (Roadchef)
Via Teams:	Lee Gregory (Inseinc)
By invitation	Nick Arron (Poppleston Allen)

		ACTIONS
1	**Welcome & Introductions & Apologies for absence** SS welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Andrew Ludlow & Nick Jackson, both have substitutes attending. Apologies were also received from Light & Wonder. SS welcomed our guest speaker, Nick Arron (Partner, Poppleston Allen)	
2.	**Guest Speaker** Nick Arron NA focused on how the Regulatory Environment is changing and the Gambling Act, particularly in regard to licensing. NA took questions.: • GBG to consider setting up a meeting with Dawn Butler MP. • Many current MPs were until recently Labour Councillors with little understanding of our Industry, our Operations or our products. NA left the meeting at 1340	

3.	**<u>Minutes of Meeting held on 13th October 2025</u>** The meeting is being recorded to help with the production of the minutes (then deleted). There were no declarations of interest. The only matters arising from the last meeting will be picked up through the Agenda	
4.	**<u>Finance & Membership Update</u>** (a) GBG <u>Finances</u> [redacted] • PH asked the Board for any suggestions for a suitable bank to deposit and hold the surplus. MJ suggested Barclays and will send his contact through to PH. • PH reported that the 2024/2025 year-end accounts are being signed off, copies available from Amanda on request. (b) <u>Membership Update</u> • PH shared a presentation on the screen. • Actual invoice subscriptions for 2025/26 are slightly below budget due to member losses, but costs remain well within budget. The team is focused on addressing the shortfall and pursuing new membership opportunities to meet targets. [redacted]	**Action MJ** [redacted]
5.	**<u>Legislation and Regulation Update</u>** **Gambling Commission Fee Consultation:** o PH & CM summarised the Gambling Commission's consultation on increasing licence fees, outlining three options ranging from 20% to 30% increases, with the Gambling Commission's preferred option being a 30% rise. The rationale includes inflation, increased regulatory (black market) costs, and the need to address a projected deficit. The consultation also proposes moving future fee changes from a legislative to a regulatory process. o **Impact on Operators and Industry Concerns:** The Board discussed the disproportionate and unfair burden on compliant operators, who are being asked to fund enforcement against the black market. Concerns were raised about the fairness of this approach and the	

	lack of operator input into the Commission's overheads and efficiency. o **Regulatory Settlements and Funding Changes:** CM explained that future regulatory settlements are proposed to be directed into the consolidated fund, potentially impacting support services that currently rely on these funds. The group noted the short consultation period and the need to respond collectively. o **Illegal Market Task Force:** The Board discussed the recent announcement of an illegal gambling market task force, noting limited information about its structure and funding, and uncertainty about its relationship to existing Gambling Commission workstreams. **Gaming Machine Technical Standards and Consultations:** o **Technical Standards Ratification Delays:** PH reported that the Gambling Commission has not ratified the outcome of the machine technical standards consultation as expected, with further questions outstanding. A meeting with the Commission is scheduled to address trade association responses and unresolved issues o **Seizure Powers and Legislative Changes:** The only agreed change so far is the introduction of a clause allowing the Commission to seize illegal machines on site, closing a legislative loophole. The Commission clarified that this is not intended for widespread enforcement but to address specific gaps. **Bingo and Category D Consultation Responses:** PH summarised the group's pushback on the bingo and Category D consultations, highlighting widespread industry and local authority concerns about increased administrative burdens and technical flaws in the proposals. **Leadership Changes and Industry Representation:** Andrew Rhodes is stepping down as CEO of the GC, with the deputy CEO, Sarah Gardner, taking over in an interim capacity. The Board discussed the implications and concerns about the interim leadership for the Commission's Chair, the Commission's CEO and the Industry Forum. Kirsty Caldwell has been appointed interim chair of the Industry Forum, with plans to advertise for a permanent appointment. **Engagement with DCMS and Policymakers:** PH proposed inviting senior DCMS officials, such as Ben Dean, to future meetings to discuss industry concerns directly, aiming to hold policymakers accountable and improve dialogue on regulatory and strategic issues. It was agreed that inviting them on site visits will have more impact.	**Action PH/CM**
6.	**<u>GBG Strategy Update (paper circulated)</u>** PH presented updates on GBG's Strategic Aims, which was circulated with the agenda and sought feedback from the Board on the 2026 Strategy – suggestions were: -	

	• Add a strategic aim to enhance collaboration with other trade associations and industry bodies to strengthen collective representation. • Engage with BGC on land-based. • Look again at the cost/benefit of engaging a PR firm/expert	**Action PH/CM**
7.	**<u>Emerging Issues</u>** MJ raised concerns about a growing trend of customer complaints and legal actions, particularly related to self-exclusion [redacted], with input from the Board on industry responses and the need for coordinated action. GBG Exec to review and decide whether this requires a new work-stream.	**Action PH/CM**
8.	**<u>Update on GBG Documents</u>** (a) <u>Player Safety Code Update</u> PH & CM provided updates on the development of the Player Safety Code in particular the standardisation of customer interaction protocols, and the drafting of a Facial Recognition Standard. (b) <u>Responsible Gambling Charter</u> CM reported that a monitoring exercise was conducted among members to assess compliance with the Responsible Gambling Charter. Most members responded positively, with a few requiring a follow-up to address gaps in staff training and policy support for gambling-related issues.	
9.	**<u>AREE 2026</u>** CM shared the plans for the upcoming ARE Expo, seeking member input on seminar topics and machine demonstrations, and requesting participation and equipment contributions from various members. CM specifically requested assistance in sourcing gaming machines for demonstration, including a bingo-only cabinet and an SSBT, to educate local authorities and showcase technological advancements. Members volunteered to provide equipment and support. • LW will help with an SSBT machine • LG will help with a B3 and Cat D machine • **<u>JBS will help with the Bingo Variant Terminal</u>**	
9.	**<u>Any Other Business</u>** • The meeting concluded with operational updates, including a discussion on new machine signage requirements and the status of the 80-20 machine mix initiative. • LG announced his upcoming departure from Inspired in May 2026, with Mark Stebbings set to join as Chief Commercial Officer. LG will advise who will represent Inspired on the Board after the April meeting	**Action LG**

10.	**<u>Date of next meeting</u>** The next meeting is **<u>on Monday, 13th April 2026, at 1:00 pm at TLT</u>** The Board Meeting on Monday 12th October was discussed as ACOS is on 13th & 14th October. The Board agreed to keep the date of 12th October.	

The meeting finished at 3.18 pm