

“The government has been listening,” says GBG, but the industry still needs a review of stakes and prizes

Gambling Business Group

Peter Hannibal, CEO of the Gambling Business Group, has been a major contributor to the White Paper debate, challenging many of the issues that seem to slip by without question. And it's these issues that were hiding from plain sight ... until now that is. The White Paper is published, and it's time to tackle the detail. Stakes and prizes and the rampant authority of the regulator and local authorities must be addressed in the consultation process he warns.

“Overall, I'm pleased to see that many of our asks for the land-based sector have been addressed. Reflecting on the 15 key changes that Gambling Business Group Members asked for from the Government's review of the Gambling Act 2005, no fewer than 12 of these appear within the White Paper.

This demonstrates that the Government has been listening and that our arguments have landed.

Key areas for us are cashless payments, changes to the 80/20 rule, a two-staged approach to legislation changes, linked jackpots and casino levelling-up.

What's missing is an explicit reference to the reintroduction of a review of stakes and prizes. The Triennial was introduced as a method for the industry to address inflation and we need that more now than at any time in the past.

I think that we should also be



concerned about the enhanced powers for Local Authorities and the absence of any moves to address the lack of transparency regarding the activities of the

Gambling Commission.

I think it's true to say that no-one really understands how the Commission works or the criteria it uses for spending Licensee's money.

There was a clear and repeated acknowledgement by the Minister and MPs in the House that the land-based sector is different from online and requires a more nuanced approach if it is to remain sustainable and able to continue supporting the beleaguered high street economy.

One of our biggest concerns surrounds the use of the phrase 'when parliamentary time allows'.

There's an awful lot of consultation to be completed and whether the legislative machine is able to cope remains to be seen. Stuart Andrew has stated that he expects the White Paper changes to be 'in place' by summer 2024 - which might prove to be a little optimistic."

Looking for transparency

Peter Hannibal says...
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