

Motion - Gambling advertising in Football

Submitted by Councillor Macleod

Preamble:

Football has an unhealthy relationship with gambling and it shows almost daily when a game is on, most teams are sponsored by a betting firm. Leagues up and down the Country are sponsored by betting firms and gambling is constantly in our faces throughout the game. This is through betting shirt sponsorships or advertising around the ground it is impossible to get away from it. 21% of European football teams have a gambling sponsor on the front of their football shirt. Currently, there is just one premier league club without a gambling sponsor or partner.

Gambling is worth £78.5M to the five big leagues in Europe which is not even 3% of the Premier League wage bill annually. So, despite the clear health consequences of gambling advertising, it has little financial benefit to top-flight football. Even when you go to children's sections of a premier league club website, some have clear links to gambling websites; seven premier league clubs do this. Gambling has hijacked the game and it has serious consequences on the people that watch and support it.

There are between 250-650 suicide-related deaths every year due to gambling addiction, gambling addiction is said to cost the England economy alone 1.27 billion pounds a year, and scarily 450,000 11-16 years gamble and at least 45,000 are addicted, gambling is creating health crisis and we have to treat it seriously and decide do we want our children being fed this constant message of gambling, they are essentially being groomed to think gambling is normal.

In the Lewes District, every local club has supported the big step <https://the-bigstep.com/home> which calls for football to drop its unhealthy relationship with gambling. This action is to be supported.

But it is not just our football clubs that have an unhealthy relationship with gambling companies, 28 MPs received £225k in free gambling donations, some of these MPs then warned Parliament that anti-betting laws cannot be driven by anti-gambling ideology. Some MP and gambling lobby industry people argue that gambling advertising does not lead to making people gamble, but if this was the case the gambling industry would not spend £1.8B a year on advertising.

Gambling costs lives and we need to deal with it seriously and to consider the impact on the Lewes District community.

Motion

The Council resolves:

- To express its concern on the influence of gambling in all levels of football;
- To endorse the action being taken by every local football club in the Lewes District in the support of the Big Step Campaign <https://the-bigstep.com/home> which calls for football to drop its unhealthy relationship with gambling;

- To ask the Council Mental Health Champion and Leader of the Council to write to the Director of Public Health for East Sussex noting the Council's concern about the influence on gambling in football, and ask that the Director of Public Health investigates the effects gambling has on our local community and report back to the Council on actions being taken to address these effects; and
- That the Council Mental Health Champion writes to the Department of Culture media and Sport and asks them to publish the 2-year delayed Gambling White Paper as soon as possible.