

“Modernising the Horserace Betting Levy” A consultation on reform or replacement

The Department for Culture Media and Sport (“DCMS”) has just announced the above-mentioned Consultation, that seeks views on two options:

1. reforming the existing Horserace Betting Levy (currently collected by the Horserace Betting Levy Board from the gross profits of betting on British horseracing) and
2. replacing the Levy with a bespoke statutory framework.

The Consultation runs for 10 weeks from 27 August to 5 November 2014 and DCMS says that it is particularly seeking views from those within the horseracing and betting industries, including offshore remote betting operators taking bets on British horseracing who are now required to obtain operating licences from the Gambling Commission pursuant to the Gambling Act 2014.

It proceeds on the assumption that there is a continuing need for a statutory framework to underpin arrangements enabling a flow of funding from betting on British horseracing back into the sport for the mutual benefit of both racing and betting. DCMS says that this is because a statutory framework can ensure that all those who benefit from betting on the horseracing “product” contribute and that there are no “free-riders”.

According to the consultation document, the Government currently has no preference of one option over the other and the Consultation is to play a key part in determining what will be the best statutory funding mechanism:

- to support the common interests of the betting industry and the sport of horseracing
- that is fair, sustainable, enforceable and legally sound and
- will remove the Government as far as possible from involvement in the affairs of betting and racing.

The consultation document can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/modernising-the-horserace-betting-levy-a-consultation-on-reform-or-replacement>

and responses should be sent to levy.consultations@culture.gsi.gov.uk

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