# APBGG: THERE IS NO 'ONE SIZE FITS ALL' SOLUTION TO TACKLING PROBLEM GAMBLING

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Industry figureheads and wider health and education stakeholders addressed the issue of whether 'the gambling  industry is giving players enough control?' **–** at the latest meeting of the **Parliamentary All Party Betting and Gaming Group  –APBGG –** (7 May 2019).

The subject matter was discussed by **Sarah Hanratty**, Chief Executive Officer at the **Senet Group; Damon De Ionno,** Managing Director & Head of Strategy at **Revealing Reality; Wes Himes,** Chief Executive Officer at the **Remote Gambling Association** (RGA); and **John White,** Chief Executive Officer of **BACTA**.

The four panellists overwhelmingly agreed that there needs to be more measures in place for players to ensure that they do have enough control, with every stakeholder offering advice on the matter. However, the ways in which a solution could be found differed, somewhat, with some offering a more research-led approach while others suggested a policy-first way of achieving a solution.

Nevertheless, a multifaceted approach was needed was unanimously agreed upon by the panellists.

Wes Himes set out a four-storey approach to ensuring that players have sufficient control when gambling online: LCCP requirements; What operator's 'willingly provide'; what the RGA is working on; and external banking tools.

When analysing the LCCP requirements, operators **–** according to Himes **–** should be ensuring that access to control measures is clearly signposted and accessible. By giving punters access to their account history, self-exclusion tools, or even the ability to have their accounts closed, it is hoped that players will feel much more in control of gambling habits.

What Himes did point out, however, is that there are a number of control tools that operators 'willingly provide', but it was suggested that more operators need to implement these measures. Options such as including day-of-the-week betting limits, time out features, referrals to **GamStop** as well as loss-limits should all be included.

There are a number of challenges that can make this much more difficult. Statistics have shown that 41 per cent of customers are unaware of the tools available to them. Alongside this, technology still needs to be tweaked to encompass ID verification and advertisement limitations.

John White pointed out the challenges of the industry, adding that we cannot create a "one size fits all" solution. What the industry needs to do is to minimise the risk of harm created to players, and to steer

punters away from the irrational behaviours that can lead to problem gambling behaviours.

It was agreed that the industry cannot afford to 'move at the pace of its slowest member', as it has the potential to go "further and faster" than it currently does. Hanratty emphasised that players **want** additional controls, and the driving force behind this is bold leadership.

While it has been suggested that the industry is not doing enough to tackle the matter, it is significant progress to note that the industry *is* in fact meeting with stakeholders and providing funding to research groups in order to source effective solutions for everyone.

With the focus now shifting away from the FOBTs debate, more can be done to ensure that players are equipped with sufficient controls to limit further gambling-related harm.