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Football Association and Bet365

09 January 2020

L 10.30 am

Carolyn Harris (Swansea East) (Lab)

(Urgent Question): To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport if he will make a statement on the deal between the Football Association and Bet365.

The Minister for Sport, Media and Creative Industries (Nigel Adams)

I will respond on behalf of the Secretary of State to this urgent question.

Recent reports on the streaming of FA cup matches by online bookmakers have rightly caused concern across the House. They relate to a media rights deal agreed by the FA with IMG in early 2017, within which IMG could sell on live footage or clips of certain FA cup matches to commercial partners. Bet365 and six other betting operators acquired those rights from IMG to use from the start of 2018-19 season.

It is right that sporting organisations have the freedom to benefit commercially from their products and negotiate their own broadcasting deals, but football authorities also have an important responsibility to ensure that fans are protected from the risks of problem gambling. Since the deal was agreed, the FA has rightly reviewed its position on commercial relationships with gambling firms. It has ended a commercial partnership with Ladbrokes and announced that it will be reviewing its processes for tendering rights from the 2024-25 season onwards, and it is absolutely correct that it does so.

The Secretary of State and I made our views quite clear yesterday and have done so previously on the wider responsibilities of sport and gambling sectors to their fans, their customers and our wider communities. We therefore welcome the fact that the industry has responded to public concern by introducing a whistle-to-whistle ban on TV advertising during daytime sport, and that the FA introduced a rule last year that prevents players, managers and members of staff in any capacity from deliberately taking part in audio or audio-visual advertising to actively encourage betting.

While many people enjoy gambling as a leisure pursuit, we cannot forget that it carries a high risk of harm and can have a serious impact on individuals, families and communities. All of us—Governments, gambling companies and sporting authorities—need to keep the momentum going so that we can protect vulnerable people from the risk of gambling-related harm.

Carolyn Harris

Problem gambling in the UK is now so endemic that it should be treated as a public health crisis. It causes untold misery to those affected and their families. Too many times, I have sat with men and women who are cursed with an addiction and who are battling mental health issues.

Too many times, I have listened to the heart-wrenching grief of a partner, sibling or parent whose loved one has taken their life because the demon became too big to fight. Again and again, I have stood in this Chamber and vocalised my shock, my anger and my utter disgust at the greed and immoral behaviour of the gambling companies. It saddens me that I am having to do it yet again, yet here we are—the first urgent question of the new year.

Three years ago, it appeared that the FA had turned a corner when it ended a £4 million-a-year sponsorship deal with Ladbrokes, distancing itself from the gambling industry—or so we assumed. However, what has come to light in recent days paints a very different picture.

In 2017, the Football Association agreed a streaming deal through sporting rights agency IMG, which will run until 2024. That deal, thought to be worth in the region of £750 million, allows IMG to sell on live footage from cup matches to bookmakers and betting firms around the globe. Gambling companies can then stream matches on their websites and mobile apps, forcing fans to “bet to view” if they want to watch their team.

We already know of some of the UK-based gambling companies who took part in the deal, but there are likely to be many more, both at home and across the world. I dread to think how many people will take the bait and place their first bet as a result of this deal, and how many could spiral into a dark addiction off the back of it. Just last weekend, Bet365 broadcast 32 FA cup matches online, in comparison with only two on terrestrial free-to-air television. To watch the matches on Bet365's site, fans had to either place a bet before kick-off or open an account with a £5 deposit. Bet365 heavily promoted the matches on social media beforehand, offering tips to lure potential gamblers. Betting odds then accompanied the live footage, tempting viewers to gamble more.

Everything about the deal is shameful, everything about it needs to be dealt with and everything about the Gambling Act 2005 needs reform. The Gambling Commission certainly needs reform. I thank the Prime Minister for his comments, but I urge the Government to do more to protect vulnerable people.

Nigel Adams

I congratulate the hon. Member, who I know is passionate about this issue and has campaigned very effectively in the House. The Government are also very angry about this arrangement, especially after a weekend when the FA worthily highlighted its Heads Together mental health campaign.

I have spoken at some length to the FA since this broke. The arrangement has been in place for some time; the 2017 contract was a rollover of a deal. The Government have asked the Football Association to look at all avenues to review this element of its broadcasting agreement. This element of the broadcast arrangement is for matches that are not chosen for the FA cup online broadcast or do not kick off at 3 pm on a Saturday, and it does open up the opportunity for plenty of other games to be watched, but we have asked the FA in no uncertain terms to look at the deal and to see what opportunities there are to rescind this particular element. I will be meeting face to face with the FA next week.

Richard Graham (Gloucester) (Con)

I congratulate the hon. Member for Swansea East (Carolyn Harris) on securing this urgent question. I welcome the Minister's comments following the Prime Minister's earlier call for this unacceptable deal to be scrapped. It is unacceptable because it goes in completely the wrong direction; it is the gamblification of sport. It seriously damages the reputation of both the Football Association and IMG. Does the Minister agree that the FA should return, as soon as possible, to working to reduce the links between football and gambling, and that it should do away with this deal and avoid the proven risks of relentless online marketing, particularly on young men?

Nigel Adams

My hon. Friend is right. I have spoken with him about his constituency concerns about this issue. It is absolutely right that the Football Association and all sporting bodies who, rightly, have links with sponsors across all sectors need to be very mindful of the impacts that such deals have on vulnerable people. We have made that very clear to the FA. As I said earlier to the hon. Member for Swansea East, the FA is looking into how it can alter the arrangements under that deal in the shortest order.

Tracy Brabin (Batley and Spen) (Lab/Co-op)

Thank you for granting this important urgent question, Mr Speaker. I am grateful to my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea East (Carolyn Harris) for asking it. Many people are outraged that gambling firm Bet365 has won the rights to broadcast FA cup matches exclusively through its website and applications, because we are all too aware of the devastating impact that gambling can have on lives. At the heart of this issue is the cynical way Bet365 hook people into placing bets and gambling during matches, almost grooming people into becoming gamblers.

We know the link between gambling, mental health and suicide is real. My constituent Kay Wadsworth's only daughter Kimberly took her own life when she was in the grip of gambling addiction. Her death destroyed her family and brought unimaginable heartache. Think of the hundreds like Kimberly out there who might enjoy football, but find their lives ruined by addiction.

Yesterday the Secretary of State made strong statements, and even Gary Lineker and the Prime Minister agreed that the FA should reconsider. Has the Prime Minister spoken to the FA in the last 24 hours? Will the FA listen to the wishes of the Prime Minister?

Bet365 has stated that those who wished to watch matches did not need to gamble, but they did need to deposit money into an account, which meant that viewers were bombarded with live odds throughout the match. What protections have been put in place for gambling addicts? Is the Minister aware of any assessment that the FA made on the potential impact the deal could have on vulnerable people and the health of viewers? When was the Department first made aware of the deal by the FA, and what was the Department's response? Was it deemed acceptable or not? Will the Minister commit to write to all our sporting governing bodies and those who sell the rights to sport so that we do not end up in this situation with another sport?

It feels as though most of the House is united on this issue. The Queen's Speech made a commitment to review the Gambling Act 2005. Will the Minister update us on when that review will begin?

Nigel Adams

I welcome the shadow Secretary of State to her place. The arrangement through IMG is not solely with Bet365, as six other gambling companies have rights to the broadcasts. I have spoken to the Football Association and the Prime Minister has made his views clear. The hon. Lady will be

pleased to hear that I have received several commitments from the Football Association: it will not renew the deal when it comes up and it is also looking at all options to see if the current deal can be restricted.

I urge all other sporting bodies to look at their broadcast agreements. My understanding is that similar agreements are in place across all sports, not just football in this country. It is a global arrangement. The Olympics, FIFA and the Premier League do not have such broadcasting arrangements, but just about every other sporting body does. I urge all those bodies to ensure that they review their broadcast deals urgently.

Tracey Crouch (Chatham and Aylesford) (Con)

I congratulate the hon. Member for Swansea East (Carolyn Harris) on securing the urgent question, and I know that my hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Richard Graham) tabled a similar urgent question, showing the cross-party concern on the issue.

The deal with Bet365 is distasteful, naive and a long way short of what good governance of sport, especially football, should look like. But it also contradicts previous FA decisions dissociating itself, as the sport's regulator, from betting companies. Those decisions recognised public concern about gambling in football and dovetailed nicely with the FA's mental health work. I encourage the Minister not to listen too closely to the FA's defence on the issue and claims that any renegotiation of the deal will have an impact on grassroots sport. That is something that the FA has regularly claimed in the past, but it is important that it

reviews the deal now, to protect people involved in football. Does the Minister agree that that needs to be done urgently if the FA is to regain respect for its previous moral position on the issue of gambling?

Nigel Adams

As the House knows, my hon. Friend has done an incredible amount over the years and she is passionate about this subject. It is fair to say that the arrangements for cutting the stakes on fixed odds betting terminals and tightening the requirements on age and identity verification to protect customers have a lot to do with her work in the House.

It is absolutely right that the FA act urgently on the matter. From our conversation this morning, it is fair to say that the FA is more than embarrassed by the situation. We will make it very clear when we have a face-to-face meeting early next week what steps we expect it to take next.

Gavin Newlands (Paisley and Renfrewshire North) (SNP)

The deal between the English FA and IMG/Bet365—and, indeed, six other bookmakers—is, as the Minister has outlined, to be regretted. It shows the danger of selling media rights to third parties without correct oversight of the process. Gambling addiction is on the rise in the UK, so every gateway to gambling and the problems it creates needs to be scrutinised intensely. Online gambling in particular has

experienced a huge increase in activity, with more than one third of the EU's online betting taking place in the UK. There has been progress through measures to address fixed odds betting terminals in the past year—with the hon. Member for Chatham and Aylesford (Tracey Crouch), who asked the previous question, at the heart of that move. Do the Government intend to pursue similar proactive measures before the FA's next media rights review?

A tiny percentage of live football is now available on terrestrial TV. Does the Minister agree that ensuring that more football, and more sport generally, is broadcast on free-to-access television would remove potentially dangerous gambling gateways such as this one?

Nigel Adams

Yes, I do. The hon. Gentleman is correct: we would like to see far more live sport on terrestrial television. However, it is worth pointing out that the games we are discussing are one of three tranches of games. They are not FA cup games that kick off at 3 o'clock on a Saturday. They are not games that are chosen by the broadcasters for live broadcast. As the competition goes on, there will be fewer games. However, that is largely irrelevant. Let me deal with the issue at hand. It is worth pointing out that, as I have mentioned previously, it is an issue across all sports. We want to do all we can to ensure that there is more sport on terrestrial TV, but we have to be mindful of the fact that the rights holders can conduct their commercial deals themselves. However, they have to be responsible. The hon. Gentleman will know that our

manifesto said that we would review the Gambling Act 2005. I am glad that the Under-Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, my hon. Friend the Member for Faversham and Mid Kent (Helen Whately), who is responsible for gambling, is in her place and I am sure that we will come to the House in future to clarify when that review will take place.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford and Woodford Green) (Con)

I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea East (Carolyn Harris) on obtaining the urgent question. In a sense, it does not really matter what the FA says to explain. The evidence is clear. The all-party parliamentary group on gambling-related harm conducted a series of inquiries with the chief executives of several gambling companies. The biggest area of risk is their drive to get more and more people into VIP rooms, where they give them incentives, such as tickets for football matches. What we are discussing is all part of that. The biggest abuse takes place in that process, whereby companies drive people who gamble a lot into higher levels of gambling because that is where their profits lie. It is not good enough for the FA to say, “Well, we didn’t really mean this and we’ll review it.” The Government give the FA financial assistance. I urge my hon. Friend, as Minister for Sport, to tell the FA that unless it moves on the matter pretty damn quickly, we will review its financial support.

Nigel Adams

My right hon. Friend has a long history of campaigning on this issue, and he is absolutely correct. On his first point, the Gambling Commission is looking into the matter. As for the financial assistance the Government give the Football Association, I understand the Football Foundation receives about £18 million, and my right hon. Friend will be aware of our manifesto commitment to £500 million for grassroots football. I assure him that that will be on my agenda when I meet the FA next week.

Christian Matheson (City of Chester) (Lab)

The betting companies know there is a problem already, because they have undertaken not to advertise during live football matches, but of course that has not yet been implemented. Does the Minister share my concern that if this development is not nipped in the bud we might reach a position where people can watch sport only if they have placed a bet?

Nigel Adams

I am confident that that will not happen. The hon. Gentleman is correct about the commitment to the ban on in-game advertising, and it is important that we look at the data on that. It has only just kicked in, but we should welcome the fact that the industry has stepped up and introduced that measure. I assure him that we will monitor it extremely carefully.

Jo Gideon (Stoke-on-Trent Central) (Con)

Does my hon. Friend agree that we should work with banks as well as betting companies to ensure that the sort of behaviour that suggests that someone is developing a gambling addiction is spotted? I raise that because Bet365 is a major, well respected and responsible employer in my constituency, employing 7,000 people. We need to get the balance right in how we tackle this issue and who we talk to, and recognise that there are other issues at stake.

Nigel Adams

My hon. Friend and new colleague is correct. Bet365 is a significant employer in her area and it is right that it takes its responsibilities very seriously. I urge her to seek a meeting with the Under-Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, my hon. Friend the Member for Faversham and Mid Kent (Helen Whately), who is responsible for gambling and who I know will be interested in furthering that discussion.

Ronnie Cowan (Inverclyde) (SNP)

This is not about sport any more—we have gone way beyond that. This is entirely about gambling. It is not about the love of the game; it is about the unrestricted greed of Bet365. Right now, it is streaming 21 live events, covering eight different sports. Its design is to get people who have self-excluded from gambling to race to a gambling company and lay themselves open to lobbying once again. People who have

identified themselves as suffering from gambling-related harm are being asked to put themselves back in a vulnerable position simply to watch their chosen sports. The Government should stop asking the gambling industry to act; they have to tell the industry what to do. We have to legislate; we cannot kowtow to the industry and let it have authority in this. This place makes the law. The gambling industry has to be brought into line with a completely new gambling Act, and during that process we should consult people who have suffered from gambling-related harm.

Nigel Adams

The hon. Gentleman is spot-on. That is another reason why we are going to review the Gambling Act—and the sooner we do so the better as far as I am concerned.

Damian Collins (Folkestone and Hythe) (Con)

I believe the deal cheapens the FA cup, and I do not believe we should wait four years for a review. If the FA will not change its mind and act soon, will the Minister consider amending the Gambling Act to ban the type of sponsorship deal that requires sports fans to set up gambling accounts simply to watch sports?

Nigel Adams

My hon. Friend is right. Nothing is off the table in the review. I can tell the House that this morning the FA confirmed that from next year, 2021, it will show those particular games on its website, so that they are not available exclusively via gambling sites. That is progress, but we have asked the FA to consider all the options for restricting the deal sooner.

Jo Stevens (Cardiff Central) (Lab)

The Minister has several times mentioned the review he is going to undertake, which was in the Queen's Speech. Will he tell us when that is going to happen, as he did not answer the question from my Front-Bench colleague?

Nigel Adams

Work has started on the review, but I am not in a position to give the hon. Lady a date. This will be done in due course and Ministers will make the announcement when that is ready.

Julian Knight (Solihull) (Con)

I sense the frustration of the Minister and the whole House that he has had to come to the Dispatch Box again to explain the actions of these clowns at the Football Association. Does he agree that this is more than goes on in other sports, because the national game permeates right through our society and we must therefore take it absolutely seriously? Will he widen his discussions to look at areas of poor governance in the

national game, such as bullying, safeguarding and the poor deal for football fans? There is a canker at the heart of our national game and we need to sort it out.

Nigel Adams

My hon. Friend is correct; we are regularly in conversation with the FA on these issues. I know he is an active member of the Select Committee—at least he was, and he may very well continue to be—and we will ensure that he is updated on the conversations that we have.

Mr Clive Betts (Sheffield South East) (Lab)

Does the Minister accept that this is just another example, but a serious one, of the FA's dumbing down of the wonderful competition that is the FA cup? I do not know whether the Minister is old enough to remember, but I am sure you are, Mr Speaker, when most games kicked off at 3 o'clock on a Saturday afternoon in the third round of the FA cup—to suit fans, not to suit the media companies and the betting companies.

When he has that conversation with the FA, will he raise that general issue and say that this competition must be about the fans? It is their competition, and the interests of the media and betting companies should not be taken as the first priority.

Nigel Adams

I agree 100% with the hon. Gentleman. I do have fond memories of racing home from playing football to watch the FA cup final and various other matches. There could be an argument for saying that the competition has been watered down in some regards, as we see when we look at what players the teams put out on the pitch. He is absolutely right with his remarks.

Jackie Doyle-Price (Thurrock) (Con)

I have met far too many families who have been bereaved by suicide as a result of a gambling addiction. I am extremely disappointed that the FA has made lots of nods about looking after mental health and mental wellbeing but embarked on such a partnership. We should give a clear message from both sides of the House that we find this abhorrent.

We have done a lot to make the physical gambling environment safer for users, but the online environment remains like the wild west. I encourage him to use not only his relationships with sporting organisations but digital regulation and those powers to take action to make it safer.

Nigel Adams

My hon. Friend is correct to raise this issue. The history of the broadcasting of these games goes back to the 1980s, when they were shown in betting shops; they were games that people would not see broadcast, so they would go in to get updated on the score, and the

pictures would be fairly low resolution. That market has now changed and the pictures—the streams—are now online. That is exactly why we are going to have the review we have announced.

Layla Moran (Oxford West and Abingdon) (LD)

This has undoubtedly damaged the FA's reputation. Is the Minister going to meet Bet365. I do not believe that a renegotiation is enough; we need redress. The new accounts set up in the past week were not just about people making bets this week; the company will have harvested the data of those vulnerable users so that it can keep advertising to them for the future. Will it shut down those accounts and give that data back, too?

Nigel Adams

It is worth pointing out again that seven gambling companies are involved in this arrangement with IMG. I know that the FA is in constant contact with IMG, and they have been put in no doubt about our views on the current arrangement.

Jeremy Wright (Kenilworth and Southam) (Con)

I, too, congratulate the hon. Member for Swansea East (Carolyn Harris) on securing this urgent question, and I thank the Minister for what he has said. He is right to highlight the progress that the FA has made on football and betting, but does he agree that bad decisions such as this one are in danger of making that perception of progress disappear in a

puff of smoke? Given that there will be an increase in gambling as a result of this deal—after all, that is why Bet365 has engaged in it—there will also be an increase in problem gambling. That needs to be properly monitored, that monitoring will have a cost and that cost should be paid by Bet365 and the FA. If it can be demonstrated that there has been an increase in problem gambling, that should bring forward the review of the deal.

Nigel Adams

The former Secretary of State makes an incredibly good point. As I said to the Chairman of the Select Committee, my hon. Friend the Member for Folkestone and Hythe (Damian Collins), nothing is off the table in respect of the conversations that we will have with the FA.

Stephanie Peacock (Barnsley East) (Lab)

Child gambling addiction has doubled since 2017 and, shockingly, around 70,000 children are said to be at risk. Is the Minister concerned that this deal will make the situation worse?

Nigel Adams

The hon. Member is correct to raise that point. Gambling sponsorship and advertising must be responsible and must not be targeted at children, so we expect all sports bodies to consider the effect on their fans when they engage in any commercial relationship. I thank the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, who was present a

second ago but is no longer in his place, because yesterday the NHS and GambleAware opened a clinic in Sunderland to assist those who have gambling issues. I understand that another dozen or so gambling clinics are to be opened throughout the country, which is good progress and will give people the right advice.

Holly Mumby-Croft (Scunthorpe) (Con)

The football community has done some excellent work on mental health, including the Take A Minute campaign. Everyone in this place cares passionately about the mental health of all those we seek to serve in our constituencies. Does my hon. Friend agree that this deal puts that work at risk, and will he join me in calling on the FA to reconsider?

While he is on his feet, will he remember the fans in Scunthorpe and wish Scunthorpe United the best of luck on Saturday?

Nigel Adams

May I welcome my hon. Friend to her place? I certainly will wish Scunthorpe United the best of luck—

Kevin Brennan (Cardiff West) (Lab)

Who are they playing?

Nigel Adams

The hon. Member asks who they are playing; I can tell him that as a youngster I used to be dragged along to Scunthorpe to watch Scunthorpe United. That was some years ago. I was a very lucky child.

The irony of this story having blown up this weekend is that the FA was launching its Heads Together mental health campaign. It could not have been any more badly timed. As I have said, we have given clear instructions to the FA to look into every avenue possible to have this deal changed.

David Linden (Glasgow East) (SNP)

Let us be honest: betting companies disproportionately target low-income demographics and working-class communities. I see that in my own constituency, with three betting shops lined up next to each other in Baillieston Main Street. The Minister continually says that all sports are involved; can he really put his hand on his heart and say that cricket, for example, would have the same disproportionate targeting and investment as we see with football?

Nigel Adams

I understand that similar arrangements have been made in cricket. I cannot tell the hon. Gentleman, hand on heart, whether those arrangements have the same extent and the same number of matches. It may be that more FA cup matches than cricket games are covered under these broadcasting deals.

Philip Davies (Shipley) (Con)

What is important are measures that actually tackle problem gambling, rather than virtue signalling in this House. People do not have to place a bet to watch these matches. Is it not typical of the metropolitan, privileged outlook of people in this House that there is no urgent question on people having to pay £100 a month for a Sky subscription to watch football matches? There is no urgent question on people paying £35 a month to BT to watch football matches, but there is one on something that allows working-class people to watch these matches free of charge, because some people in this House do not like gambling. Will the Minister look at all this in the round?

Nigel Adams

I think everybody in this House can agree that problem gambling causes mental health problems. Indeed, this House has heard about—and I have spoken to colleagues about—situations when some of these cases have led to suicide. There is a clear link; mental health problems can lead to problem gambling, and can also be triggered by or made worse by it. The Government and the Gambling Commission have tightened protections, and we have committed to a further review of the Gambling Act, as I said in my response to the urgent question.

Justin Madders (Ellesmere Port and Neston) (Lab)

This issue is perhaps the most egregious example of how money is ruining football. It is clear that, with one or two exceptions, there is very little support in this place for this arrangement.

I want to follow up on the wider issue of football broadcasting. Last month, three different subscription channels were showing premier league football. How many times do we expect people to pay to watch football? Are we in danger of pricing people out of the game?

Nigel Adams

The hon. Gentleman makes a very good point. We do want to see more live football on television, which makes it more accessible, but it is worth pointing out that the broader FA cup rights are worth around \$169 million to the Football Association, much of which—if not most—is ploughed back into grassroots football.

Vicky Ford (Chelmsford) (Con)

Does my hon. Friend agree that all our legislation needs to be fit for purpose for the digital age, especially when it relates to online activities and their impact on health and mental health? Does he also agree that the review of the Gambling Act is not only needed, but urgently needed?

Nigel Adams

I could not agree more.

Chris Bryant (Rhondda) (Lab)

Can I pull the Minister up on the point that he just made, when he said that a large proportion of the money from broadcasting rights is going into grassroots football? If only! It is a tiny amount of money. In other countries in Europe, much more significant amounts of money go into paying for local coaches, local facilities and ensuring that there is homegrown talent. Should not we be ensuring—notwithstanding today's urgent question—that far more of this money goes directly to the small local clubs that are sustained by families, with mums, dads, grandpas and grandmas turning up every weekend?

Nigel Adams

I totally agree with the hon. Gentleman's latter point, but I was referring to the broadcasting rights and the amount of money secured under the FA cup broadcasting deal, not the premier league broadcasting deal, which is an enormous amount of money.

Gary Sambrook (Birmingham, Northfield) (Con)

There is an obvious link between gambling and health, so what are the Minister's Department and the Department of Health doing to improve medical treatment for those affected by gambling?

Nigel Adams

I welcome my hon. Friend to his place. He makes a very good point. As I said previously, I am encouraged that the national health service and the Health Secretary have begun to open clinics to provide advice and assistance to those who are affected, in particular targeting younger people who might be having issues with loot boxes or other types of behaviour that could prove addictive.

Seema Malhotra (Feltham and Heston) (Lab/Co-op)

This issue raises fundamental public policy questions about ethics, fair rules and controls, and the responsibility of the Government to protect the most vulnerable from exploitation. It also fundamentally calls into question the judgment of the FA. The chief executive officer of Bet365, Denise Coates, was paid £277 million in basic salary in the last financial year. Does that not suggest that something is fundamentally wrong with our gambling system and industry, and again highlight the need for fundamental root-and-branch reform?

Nigel Adams

The hon. Lady will not have missed the point that I have made on several occasions: we are going to be reviewing the Act. Bet365 does an awful lot of good work in the region that my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-on-Trent Central (Jo Gideon) mentioned. It is a private company. The salaries of its executives are a matter for that business. My understanding is that the chief executive is resident in the UK and so

pays her full share of tax on those moneys. But it is absolutely right that we hold the sporting bodies' feet to the fire with regard to these broadcasting rights and make sure that they are dealt with responsibly. In this case, that has not happened.

Jason McCartney (Colne Valley) (Con)

There is a mental health crisis for young men in our country, and it is clear that gambling addiction is a major factor in that. Time and again we hear that the gambling companies are investing more funds in tackling problem gambling, but will the Minister update the House on whether this investment has actually had any impact in tackling this issue?

Nigel Adams

I do not have the figures that my hon. Friend refers to, but this is an absolutely crucial issue in the sector of society that he mentions, which appears to be the target for this type of advertising. There is indeed a huge crisis in gambling addiction within that age group, and it can lead to some pretty horrific stories that we have heard in this House.

