

Leicestershire & Rutland
Safer Communities Strategy
Board



Making Leicestershire & Rutland Safer

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD

25 June 2026

GAMBLING RELATED HARMS

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Leicestershire & Rutland Safer Communities Strategy Board members with an overview of Gambling Related Harms, the Gambling Levy and an update on the efforts being progressed locally by partners.

Gambling and associated harms

2. The Gambling Act 2005 regulates betting, gaming, and lotteries in Great Britain, with licensing objectives focused on:
 - a. Preventing gambling-related crime and disorder;
 - b. Ensuring fairness and transparency;
 - c. Protecting children and vulnerable people.
3. Gambling is an activity where someone risks something of worth. The Gambling Act 2005 defines gambling as gaming (e.g fruit machines or card games), betting (e.g horse races), or participating in a lottery, and includes online gambling.
4. Harmful gambling is defined by the adverse impacts from gambling on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, communities and society. The associated harms are considered a public health concern due to the negative impact on health, relationships, financial and social circumstances. Harmful gambling is often an addictive and secretive behaviour, affects multiple individuals and presentation at services is affected by stigma.
5. At the extreme level, gambling disorder is recognised as a health harming addictive behaviour in the International Classification of Diseases 11th Revision (ICD111) and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th Edition (DSM-5).
6. The gambling landscape has changed significantly since the 2005 Act. Gambling services are available at any time of the day and night, new

technology has been introduced to increase gambling use, and understanding of gambling related harm has developed.

7. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has committed to reviewing the Gambling Act. Various steps are being taken from strengthening restrictions on bonuses, completing financial checks, through to introducing a statutory levy on the gambling industry to fund the prevention, research and treatment of gambling related harm.

Gambling Statutory Levy

8. The Gambling Statutory Levy came into force in April 2025. It mandates licensed gambling operators to contribute financially to a national fund aimed at tackling gambling-related harms
9. The levy raised just under £120 million in the first year across Great Britain and is being distributed across three strategic pillars:
 - a. **RESEARCH:** 20% to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
 - b. **PREVENTION:** 30% to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) and Scottish and Welsh Governments to develop a comprehensive approach to prevention and early intervention
 - c. **TREATMENT:** 50% to NHS England, and Scottish and Welsh Governments to commission treatment and support services.
*Treatment and recovery services are provided through the NHS East Midlands Gambling Harms Clinic and via VCSE organisations.
10. OHID have established a dedicated gambling harms prevention programme to oversee the transition from the previous voluntary, industry-funded system to a new, industry-independent levy model. Over an initial two-year transition period, annual levy funding is being allocated to upper-tier local authorities (£12M) and VCSE organisations (£25.5M), for the sole purpose of delivering gambling harms prevention activity.
11. For 2026/2027, Leicestershire County Council will receive £121,110 and Rutland County Council £6,157. OHID have outlined a staged approach for use of this spend including an initial focus on establishing foundations, capacity building, developing a needs assessment and an emphasis on strategy and planning. Good progress has been made against these objectives across Leicestershire. As a result, plans are being considered for spend including aligning specific roles in public health to progress the harmful gambling portfolio, potential awareness campaigns and supporting access into treatment.
12. Leicestershire and Rutland are closely aligned in their approach to preventing harmful gambling, however, are taking separate steps given local stakeholders and governance.

Leicestershire Harmful Gambling Health Needs Assessment (HNA)

13. Partners across Leicestershire have worked together to develop the Leicestershire Harmful Gambling Health Needs Assessment (HNA) and recommendations, endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board. Preventing

harmful gambling is now a commitment in the Staying Healthy Partnership commitments and action plan, along with being captured as a high-risk group in the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Suicide Prevention Strategy.

14. The HNA considers who is at risk from the harms of gambling, the level of need across Leicestershire, the impact, current services and policy and guidance that shapes the gambling landscape. Key headlines:
 - a. Anyone exposed to gambling products is at risk of experiencing the harms, and our understanding of the importance of language and the harms is continuing to develop. There are populations more vulnerable to the harms associated with gambling, and inequalities in the extent to which populations are affected, with increased risk in vulnerable communities already experiencing inequalities: 16–24-year-olds, males, ethnic minority communities, veterans, unemployed, poor mental health, individuals in deprived neighbourhoods and homeless populations. Children are also considered vulnerable to the harms from gambling, with increasing awareness of the links between young people, gaming and addictive behaviours.
 - b. Gambling harms have a wide impact on the individual, families and communities when considering housing, finances, family breakdowns and the impact of suicide. For every individual gambling at harmful levels, six to ten other people are impacted, which amounts to between 53,412 and 89,020 Leicestershire residents estimated as affected. It is also estimated in Leicestershire that over 9,500 children live in the same household as an adult who might benefit from gambling treatment and support.

Local Progress - Leicestershire

15. Experts by experience continue to drive, shape and influence progress, from ongoing work with local Veteran communities through to focus groups and further planned engagement activities with those impacted by the harms from gambling across Leicestershire. A recommendation from the HNA was for partners to explore introducing screening questions where there are opportunities, now in line with the refreshed NICE guidelines. Screening is part of the Healthy Workplaces needs assessment, Turning Point substance use services and the First Contact + offer, along with being captured as a presenting issue through the Mental Health Neighbourhood Cafes.
16. A further recommendation from the HNA focused on raising awareness of harmful gambling with anyone who works across Leicestershire and Rutland and may have opportunities to have conversations around gambling. Leicestershire County Council Public Health and Rutland County Council Public Health are working with 'Chapter One' to roll out a training programme and educational resources across Leicestershire and Rutland. Chapter One was set up by families bereaved by gambling related suicide and is led by people with lived and professional experience recognised as experts in gambling harms prevention.

Local Progress – Rutland

17. For Rutland, an estimated 43% of adults reported gambling in the previous four weeks (based on a small sample survey), falling to 23% when National Lottery participation is excluded (NIHR Addictions Policy Research Unit). It is estimated that between 2,163 and 3,605 residents are affected by gambling harms. These estimates use the same methodology as the Leicestershire HNA, accounting for six to ten people being affected for every individual gambling at harmful levels.
18. Rutland held a workshop late in 2025, with the aim to bring partners together on the topic of gambling harms. The workshop led to the development of a partnership framework, with themes on training, screening, preventing and treating gambling harms. Quarterly reflection sessions are being held, to monitor progress, including the training offer. Local social prescribing teams now triage with gambling related questions and support information has been added to the Joy platform, alongside Rutland County Council's health and wellbeing page.
19. Developing local understanding is a key priority moving forward, as data is predominantly estimate based and lived experience (outside of the training offer) is limited in discussions.

Recommendations for the Board

20. The Board are asked to:
 - a. Note the contents of the report;
 - b. Support and encourage participation in the Leicestershire and Rutland Gambling Harms training delivered by Chapter One;
 - c. Implement screening for gambling harms when there are opportunities in your organisation, in accordance with NICE guidance, and with the support of learning from the training

Further Information

21. [Leicestershire Gambling Harms HNA](#)
22. Leicestershire and Rutland training: [Gambling Harms booking page](#). Please email hello@chapter-one.org to arrange an in-person session for a team or department.
23. [NICE Guidelines](#) - Gambling-related harms: identification, assessment and management
24. [Gambling-related harms evidence review](#)
25. [High stakes: gambling reform for the digital age](#)

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