



BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee

Support for Vulnerable Gamblers

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1. Background

This paper is to determine support available currently, and in the future, for vulnerable gamblers in Milton Keynes, from both Council and services in the community.

2. Current Position

MKC receives a minimum of £0.675m (index linked from 2014) from Aspers Casino for the use of the Council to the 'greatest benefit'.

The "minimum" amount is budgeted for as General Fund income; historically this has been attributed to supporting Housing Regeneration, Neighbourhood Employment Programme work and counselling services although there is no legal restriction on how the money can be applied. Amounts received in excess of the minimum payment are treated as one-off corporate receipts, since the variability would make it imprudent to incorporate them into the base budget.

From 2014 to the current year, £0.175m of the income received has been used to commission Mind (a mental health charity) to deliver a counselling service which includes support for vulnerable gamblers who may need counselling support.

Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group (MKCCG) also contributes towards the cost of this provision. The contract, although due to end in December 2018 has, through a continuation of funding from MKC and MKCCG, been maintained until April 2019. This is whilst MIND develop additional funding opportunities for their services. After April the council will no longer directly commission counselling services, focusing investment into our frontline mental health social care services.

There is a dedicated section on the Milton Keynes Council website, providing support and signposting to a range of community services such as GamCare, Milton Keynes Gamblers Anonymous and Gordon Moody Association.

Additionally support is provided to vulnerable people through front line services delivered by social care within Milton Keynes. These services include both Children's and Adults social care. This support is delivered through family centres as part of the whole family approach and through front line information and advice services in adult social care. For those with more complex needs support is provided by MKC mental health services.

The NHS are continuing to provide counselling services in Milton Keynes. MKCCG have continued their commitment to the provision of psychological therapies in Milton Keynes through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service provision. The local NHS mental health service provider, Central and North West London Foundation Trust (CNWL), is currently meeting all national access, and waiting time requirements for these services. MIND is working with the IAPT service delivering the triage service. In addition, working in partnership with MKC and CNWL, MKCCG have invested in a Primary Care Plus service, working with general practice to provide access to specialist support for people with mental illness in primary care. This service will be developed to meet the needs of all of the registered population in 2019.

3. What Next / Future Developments

In order to continue to support vulnerable gamblers, the Council are looking to invest in further training for staff to support gamblers, which would then be added to the wider Adult Social Care training programme for all new staff, as part of their core induction.

For those who need additional support and access to specialist Mental Health Services, a referral can be made to the Mental Health Assessment Team. A budget pressure of £0.520m was awarded for the year 2018-19 for our core Mental Health services, recognising the demand pressures in the service and ensuring that the service can continue to meet the need.

4. Conclusion

Funding received from the Casino continues to fund vital services in Milton Keynes across a number of service areas.

We remain committed to supporting vulnerable gamblers through utilising community support services and continuing to develop our social care workforce.