

Dear Sir/Madam

I write on behalf of our faith-based organisation Sikh Community and Youth Services to express our views on this consultation.

We start with providing clarity that the Sikh faith is opposed to all forms of gambling, it is strongly condemned within Sikh scriptures. In part it defies the Sikh principle of earning a honest living through hard work (kirat karni).

However; we appreciate the current consultation does not speak of eradicating gambling altogether but limiting prospects of gambling. We are indeed deeply concerned about the social and individual impacts of FOBTs: enabling hardcore gambling on the high street; exposing vulnerable people to heavy losses; encouraging addictive behaviour; and leading to violence in and around the places where they are used. Our members and volunteers see and have to deal with the real and very damaging effects of these impacts on a daily basis. Families are impoverished, individuals lose jobs and their social support systems, and town centres feel more threatening. This is usually coupled with the individuals using such service being intoxicated and more often than not, aggressive in the manner on the streets etc, putting families and young children at further risk.

One of the worst features of FOTBs that brings about these social evils is the very high maximum stake, which enables losses to build up very quickly and is associated with addictive gambling. We therefore urge the government to apply restrictions by cutting the maximum stake to £2, being the lowest possible choice offered by the consultation.

I look forward to your acknowledgement of this email, and to seeing an improvement in society as a result of this important consultation.

Kind Regards

*Project Manager*