



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th August 2021

Jean Contrevent

RE: FOOTBALL INDEX.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the collapse of the Football Index; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I share your concern regarding this incident, and I would like to offer my deepest sympathies for those who have been affected. As you might be aware, the Government has announced that an independent expert review of the regulation of the Football Index gambling product will take place, which follows the Gambling Commission's decision to suspend the operator's licence while it carries out an investigation. The Gambling Commission has also made clear that it expects the operator to focus on treating customers fairly.

It is my understanding that when the Gambling Commission licenses an operator, they take into account suitability, including their financial circumstances. They do not oversee their businesses on a day-to-day basis, or monitor the financial health of operators directly in real time. I do, however, recognise the distress caused by the financial affairs of Football Index, and I am pleased that the Minister for Media & Data, the Rt. Hon John Whittingdale MP, and the Secretary of State, the Rt. Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, have met with the Gambling Commission on multiple occasions to receive urgent reports. I will be closely following this matter and it is my hope that an appropriate resolution can be found.

In addition, I warmly welcome the fact that the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport has appointed Malcolm Sheehan QC to lead an independent expert review of the regulation of the Football Index gambling product. I understand that he will provide an independent expert account of the actions taken by the Gambling Commission and other relevant regulatory bodies, and consider the lessons to be learnt for the future. He will have access to all the necessary information held by government and the regulatory bodies to conduct the review. For further information on the review and guidance on the 'Terms of Reference', please search:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-the-regulation-of-betindex-limited-terms-of-reference/terms-of-reference-independent-review-of-the-regulation-of-betindex-ltd>

This independent review is separate to the investigation being carried out by the Gambling Commission and will be carried out and reported in a way which will not compromise it. Its findings will also form part of the evidence informing the Government's review of the *Gambling Act 2005*.



In December 2020, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport announced a major and wide-ranging review of gambling laws to ensure they are fit for purpose. This review will look in detail at how gambling has changed in the last fifteen years, examining gambling advertising as well as the Gambling Commission's role and powers. The findings will then be used to inform any changes to the *Gambling Act 2005* to ensure customer protection is at the heart of the regulations, while giving those that gamble safely the freedom to do so.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Pursglove'.

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**