

# Potential Consequences for PMs Admitting To Betting On General Election

During a widening scandal over politicians betting on election outcomes, the leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats has come forward to justify his own wagers on the upcoming general election. Alex Cole-Hamilton, the Scottish Lib Dem chief, revealed that he has placed “low-level bets” on the results in certain constituencies. He likened the activity to gambling on the Grand National, describing it as “just a bit of fun” to show confidence in his party’s candidates.

Ben Horlock from Instant Casinos explains that The UK Gambling Commission (UKGC) is responsible for regulating gambling, including [fast withdrawal casinos in the UK](#). The UKGC ensures that all gambling activities comply with the laws and regulations set out in the Gambling Act 2005. The UKGC got involved in the election betting scandal stating that under Section 42 of this act, it prohibits the use of inside information to gain an unfair advantage when betting, which is a criminal offense punishable by up to two years in prison.

This means that the UKGC has a mandate to investigate any allegations of misuse of inside information in bets, including those related to election dates. Cole-Hamilton was quick to distinguish his actions from the more serious allegations facing some Conservative politicians. The Metropolitan Police and Gambling Commission are currently investigating around [15 Tory candidates and officials](#) accused of using inside information to bet on the election date being announced.



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Some argue that politicians betting on themselves winning is not illegal, however, it is still considered highly unethical and inappropriate. Many politicians have close ties to the gambling industry through lobbying, donations, or other relationships. For some, this creates a clear conflict of interest between public duty and private interests. For others, regardless of politicians being closely affiliated with the gambling sector, they believe the politicians have a clear separation between politics and [gambling](#). The bottom line for many voters is that while inside information is not a crime, politicians betting on themselves winning raises concerns, comparing it to insider trading in financial markets.

The scandal has dominated the Conservatives' election campaign for the past few weeks and contributed to a drop in public support. Craig Hoy, the Scottish Conservative chairman has

suggested a review of gambling laws for politicians, with Work and Pensions Secretary Mel Stride expressing that in the future everyone may come to a consensus that it should not happen at all.

The UK's involvement is also driven by the need to protect the integrity of the electoral process. Betting on election dates with inside information can undermine public trust in the democratic process and create a perception of an unfair advantage. The UKGC's investigation aims to address any concerns, ensuring that the rules will be enforced fairly and transparently.

Politicians have argued that casual betting on the election outcomes, without using inside information, is a way to show confidence in their party's candidates. Scottish Secretary Alister Jack and Scottish Lib Dem Leader Alex Cole-Hamilton, have tried to distinguish their actions from the more serious allegations of using confidential information to gain an unfair advantage. Some have claimed they were unaware of key details like the election date and simply placed general bets, rather than targeting specific inside information.

The Gambling Commission and Metropolitan Police will continue their investigations into the 15 or more Conservative Party candidates and officials accused of using inside information to bet on the election date. More suspensions or expulsions from the party are possible as the probe continues. If the investigations uncover clear evidence of misconduct in public office under the [Gambling Act 2005](#), it is very possible that some politicians could face prosecution or even prison time.