# Former Conservative lawmaker faces gambling charges over election betting



A significant development has emerged within the UK's political landscape, as a former lawmaker from the opposition Conservative Party faces charges alongside 14 others for gambling offences related to wagers made on the timing of the national election that took place last year. The charges were announced by the Gambling Commission on Monday.

The timing of UK elections is often a topic of intense speculation, as their dates are not fixed and ultimately determined by the Prime Minister. This unpredictability has led bookmakers to accept bets on various possible election outcomes, turning political uncertainty into betting opportunities.

The situation poses a challenging start for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's re-election campaign. Among those charged is Craig Williams, a close aide to Sunak, who did not retain his seat in the recent election. Other individuals implicated include Russell George, 50, a Conservative member of the Welsh Parliament, and Laura Saunders, 37, who was a losing candidate in the election.

In light of these developments, the Conservative Party has reiterated its commitment to integrity within politics. A spokesperson stated that the party had suspended current members of staff who have been charged, emphasising a new leadership aiming for transparency. "Our party is now under new leadership and we are cooperating fully with the Gambling Commission to ensure that their investigation can conclude swiftly and transparently," the spokesperson noted.

The Gambling Commission has indicated that the individuals investigated are suspected of leveraging confidential information concerning the election date to secure an unfair advantage in betting markets, which constitutes a violation of the Gambling Act 2005. The Commission reaffirmed its dedication to enforcing the law. "The Commission is committed to upholding the law and will continue to take robust action against illegal betting practices, including investigating and prosecuting offences," it stated.

The 15 individuals charged are scheduled to appear at Westminster Magistrates Court on June 13, marking a critical juncture in this unfolding situation as legal proceedings commence.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2025-04-14/ex-uk-lawmaker-charged-with-cheating-in-election-betting-scandal> - This article corroborates the charges against the former Conservative lawmakers and others for alleged cheating in election betting. It highlights the investigation related to insider knowledge on the timing of the UK's general election.
* <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/04/14/former-uk-conservative-mp-charged-with-cheating-in-election-betting-scandal> - This piece confirms the involvement of Craig Williams and other officials in the betting scandal. It emphasizes the legal aspect of politicians placing bets but the potential use of inside information.
* <https://news.sky.com/story/rishi-sunaks-former-aide-among-15-people-charged-with-election-betting-offences-13348698> - This report provides details on Craig Williams' specific role as Rishi Sunak's aide and his involvement in the betting scandal. It also mentions other Conservative figures who are facing charges.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/general-election-betting-craig-williams-conservative-mp-charged-b2732863.html> - This article verifies the charges against the 15 individuals, including a former police officer, and their scheduled court appearance. It highlights the Conservative Party's response and commitment to integrity.
* <https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/ex-conservative-mp-among-15-charged-over-2024-uk-election-timing-bets> - This story supports the account of senior Conservative figures being accused of placing bets on the election timing. It emphasizes the context of former PM Rishi Sunak's surprise election date announcement.