

# MINUTES

**TITLE:** Environment and Planning Committee (Hearing of Gambling Venues Policy Review Submissions)  
**DATE:** Tuesday 17 August and Thursday, 2 September 2010  
**TIME:** 9.30 am  
**VENUE:** Council Chamber, 189 Queen Street, Richmond.

**PRESENT:** Crs M J Higgins (Chair), S J Borlase, S G Bryant, R G Currie, B F Dowler, J L Edgar, B W Ensor, G A Glover, J L Inglis, T B King, T E Norriss, E J Wilkins

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Regulatory Services Co-ordinator (G Caradus), Senior Customer Services Officer (L Quartly) (part meeting), Executive Assistant (V Gribble) (part meeting)

## APOLOGIES

**Moved Crs Bryant/Edgar  
EP10-08-30**

**THAT apologies from Mayor R G Kempthorne and Cr N Riley for absence be received.**

**CARRIED**

## 1 HEARING OF VERBAL SUBMISSIONS

### 264 Mr G Davidson, Nelson Cricket Association

Mr Davidson advised that if funding was unavailable fees would need to rise.

In reply to a question Mr Davidson said cricket had relied on cigarette funding and looked at other sources when it was pulled. People rely on funding from gaming machines as opposed to fundraising as they lack time with busy lives. He agreed there would still be funding if the pokies went but the pool would be smaller. He said didn't have much understanding of the downside of gambling and the effects it has, but said pokies do put money back into problem gambling.

### 266 Mr J Bell, Golden Bay Community Board

J Bell, L Gamby and K Brookes were in attendance to present the submission on behalf of the Golden Bay Community Board.

Mr Bell said the Board is aware of how much money is put back into the community as they have seen it in Environment and Planning reports. They agree sport does need funding but maybe not from gaming. They are aware of people with gambling problems who have been barred from the pokies.

Mr Gamby felt that if gambling disappeared they would be able to find alternative funding.

Ms Brookes noted that some money goes to help gamblers but sees it as the ambulance waiting at the bottom of the cliff.

**285 L Butler, Nelson Marlborough District Health Board**

Mr Butler tabled a supplementary submission and spoke to it.

There is a trend in lower socio economic groups towards addictive gambling and NMHB's job is to minimise risks. He said Internal Affairs are reporting on the problems but he can't speak for them on what they will do in the future.

**286 M McMillan, Te Kahui Hauora o Ngati Koata Trust**

Mr McMillan pointed at changes needing to be made at National level, rather than local. Referrals to his agency came from agencies in community, self referrals, corrects, and some through the helpline. The majority of people are confused about how they have become hooked on pokies. There is a mixture of lower and higher money backgrounds. If there is a crisis in their life, they start playing pokies which become addictive. Tasman area new clients was 41 in 2009.

**289 Ms J Wood, The Lion Foundation**

Ms Wood tabled and spoke to a summary of the submission.

Lion Foundation contributed funding of 90% to St John, Plunket, NZ Ballet, national programmes and 10% local, with \$1.3 million into Tasman in last year. Less gaming does not mean less problem gamblers, they just move around. Some applications were declined as they did not meet criteria for funding and there was not enough money for that being asked for. Gambling and drugs are two different things. Problem gambling can be fixed, drug addiction can't necessarily. Emotive stories do stir people's thoughts but with pokie machines, the money comes back to the community. People need to start being responsible for their own actions. There is \$6 million spent, with the government taking one-third and then the breakdown is as per the submission. It depends on the policy of the trust how much is put back into the community.

**267 Mr J True, New Zealand Racing Board**

Mr True spoke to the submission via conference call.

The Racing Board has no immediate plans to increase venues. Council has the opportunity to draft two clear policies which have been included in the submission. It might be fine now to have one document but the risk is future changes may have detrimental affects on the TAB unknowingly.

**300 Ms J Cowley, Nelson Budget Service Inc**

Ms Cowley said this was an emotional plea from people with gambling problems telling how their clients have just gradually become addicted. They lose everything and often take out loans to help them with the additions. Poke machines are harmless to a lot of people but not to all people. Clients are referred to problem gambling. She is not an expert but

her experience is they know the machines are easily accessed initially and then all around the district.

### **303 Ms S-A Hughes, NZ Community Trust**

P Matheson and B Whiteman were in attendance to present the submission. Saxton Field is getting main funding at present with over \$2 million , including \$200,000 to cricket and hockey and \$600,000 for the new pavilion. Cancer Society received \$10,000 for a new car and the surf life saving rescue boat is to be funded soon. There is \$1.9 million going to gambling problems out of \$20 million to government. They support the present policy and consider it works well. NZ Community Trust is pleased to be doing what they do. The Tapawera venue does not generate a lot of money so money has been found to help. Those who have gone to a sinking lid policy from capped policy have returned to a capped policy. Exemptions were given to clubs and RSAs years ago so they aren't governed by legislation. Venue managers are not policing gamblers. An example was given of one client who chooses to be banned from two or three venues, but not all venues. Department of Internal Affairs is looking at distribution of money at present. Council can do nothing other than manage projects in the community.

The hearing adjourned at 1.15 pm.

The hearing resumed at 1.55 pm.

## **2 CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS**

**Moved Crs Norriss/Edgar  
EP10-08-31**

**THAT all the written submissions to the Review of Tasman District Council  
Gambling Venues Policy be received.  
CARRIED**

## **3 REPORT ON FORMAL CONSULTATION: REVIEW OF TASMAN DISTRICT COUNCIL GAMBLING VENUES POLICY- REPORT REP10-08-14**

Mr Caradus spoke to the report contained in the agenda.

The report summarised and commented on the submissions received by Council during the formal period of consultation on the "Draft Gambling Venues Policy 2010". The previous report to the Environment and Planning Committee on the matter, "*Statement of proposal: Review of the Gambling Venues Policy- Report REP10-05-15 – Report prepared for meeting of 20 May 2010*" is relevant as the intended consultation has triggered this report.

The previous report set out some of the options available to Council, and in general, suggested a "sinking lid" policy on non-casino gaming machines but left the policy relating to New Zealand Racing Board venues unchanged. At the meeting of 20 May 2010, the Environment and Planning Committee of Tasman District Council adopted the Draft Gambling Venues Policy for consultation pursuant to the processes defined in the Local Government Act 2002, the Gambling Act 2003 and the Racing Act 2003.

TAB Venues Policy that Mr True spoke of is the stand-alone venues, and there is no intention to have one in the Tasman District. If Council had two policies it should be dealt with separately which would double the cost. Council meets its legal obligations by specifying at the front of the policy that it deals with both Gambling and Racing Act and there is no confusion.

Clause 4.1 was amended to start with "In accordance with the requirements of the Racing Act 2003 ..."

There hasn't been an increase as it is market-driven, but if the market wanted more, then Council would need to allow them. If a capped policy was adopted machines would be redistributed.

Cr King supported a capped policy which would be a more balanced approach to both benefits and negatives.

Cr Norriss supported a capped policy. If at any time in the next three years it looks like getting out of hand it can be reviewed.

Cr Glover supported the sinking lid policy. A lot of councils throughout New Zealand are also tending to implement a sinking lid policy. The money will still come through the foundations and trusts. Statistics show that more money comes back into the community even with less machines.

Cr Borlase said Council should be taking the money from the community for sports and cultural activities that come from the trusts. He supported a capped policy.

Cr Edgar said it is a regulated industry and there are controls on age limits and removing pokies from alcohol areas. She supported a capped policy.

Crs Currie, Inglis, Bryant and Ensor supported a capped policy.

Mr Caradus was asked to make the amendments to the draft policy and report back to a reconvened meeting of the Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 2.49 pm to be reconvened on Thursday 2 September 2010 at 9.15 am.