
**Minutes of a meeting of the Council to hear submissions to the
Gambling Policy Review**

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic House, Trafalgar Street, Nelson

On Tuesday 23 July 2013, commencing at 10.30am

Present: Councillors A Boswijk (Chairperson), I Barker, G Collingwood, E Davy, J Rackley, R Reese, and D Shaw

In Attendance: Executive Manager Regulatory (R Johnson), Manager Policy and Planning (N McDonald), Manager Strategic Response (C Ward), Manager Administration (P Langley), and Administration Adviser (L Canton)

Apologies: His Worship the Mayor, A Miccio, and Councillors R Copeland, K Fulton, P Matheson, P Rainey, and M Ward

1. Apologies

Resolved

***THAT apologies be received and accepted from
His Workshop the Mayor and Councillors
Copeland, Fulton, Matheson, Rainey and Ward.***

Boswijk/Davy

Carried

2. Interests

Councillor Rackley declared a conflict and sat back from the table, but remained in the room to maintain quorum.

3. Confirmation of Order of Business

The Chairperson explained that an updated hearing schedule had been tabled (1553195).

It was also noted that item 3 on the agenda face should read 'Submissions to the Gambling Policy Review'.

4. Submissions to the Gambling Policy Review

Document numbers 1553195, 1552845, and 1551497 refer.

4.1 Dr Philip Townshend, Problem Gambling Foundation, submission number 17

Dr Townshend commended the proposed sinking lid policy and noted that this was in line with both central government policy and increased community awareness of gambling harm. He spoke against separate policies for class 4 gambling venues and New Zealand Racing Board (TAB) venues as it would add unnecessary complexity. He also spoke against limiting the number of gaming machines for merging Club venues.

In response to questions, Dr Townshend said he believed that the relative safety of Club venues was most likely due to limited Club opening hours, and that the nature of clubs as a community of shared concern resulted in stronger social pressures around harmful gambling.

4.2 Dr Philip Townshend and Glen Beattie, Clubs New Zealand Incorporated, submission number 1

Mr Beattie expressed concerns about potential conflicts of interest amongst councillors. The Chairperson advised that councillors who believed they had an interest would not participate in the policy review process.

Mr Beattie spoke about the relative safety of the Club gambling environment compared to that of taverns. He noted the involvement of the Problem Gambling Foundation in training members of Clubs New Zealand in preventing gambling harm. He urged Council not to limit the number of gaming machines for merged Clubs.

In response to questions, Mr Beattie noted there were only two Clubs with gaming machines in Nelson that could merge, with 25 machines between them. Mr Beattie advised that as Clubs were non-profit, all available returns went back to the Club and the community it was involved with. Dr Townshend added that while there was limited data available, a recent analysis of self-exclusions by problem gamblers in Christchurch suggested that problem gambling was hidden to some extent.

4.3 Frank Saxton, submission number 6

Mr Saxton said he considered the process of the Gambling Policy Review to be restrictive of democracy. He said that Clubs did not have a formal process for returning their revenue stream from gaming machines to the community.

4.4 Jeanette Swift and Tony Crosbie, Hospitality New Zealand, submission number 9

Ms Swift spoke to the submission, highlighting Hospitality New Zealand's opposition to a sinking lid policy. She pointed out that the legislated return to the community from gaming machines in taverns was higher

than the return made by Clubs. In addition, she said that the tightly regulated legal and moral responsibility of tavern owners to problem gamblers meant that taverns offered a similar community of care as Club venues. She urged Council to maintain the status quo and the current cap on gambling machines, and to avoid treading Clubs more favourably than taverns.

In response to questions, Mr Crosbie described the strength of the Problem Gambling Foundation, and the process required of venue owners to ensure that identified problem gamblers received the necessary support.

4.5 Jarrod True, New Zealand Racing Board, submission number 30

Mr True spoke to the New Zealand Racing Board submission and gave a presentation (1560033). He said that the rule preventing a venue operating with 100 metres of an ATM, and the proposed sinking lid policy, would prevent a new TAB board venue being set up in Nelson. Mr True spoke in support of a separate policy for TAB board venues, and highlighted the robust systems in place through the Problem Gambling Foundation and the Ministry for Health to address gambling harms.

In response to questions, Mr True said he was unaware of any other Councils in New Zealand with an ATM rule in their gambling policy. He said that the New Zealand Racing Board was considering its brand image and aiming to establish more modern environments with its TAB board venues, but that the Racing Board had no immediate plans to establish a board venue in Nelson.

4.6 Graeme Ambler, Pub Charity, submission number 44

Mr Ambler tabled additional information (1560044). He spoke against the sinking lid policy, highlighting the economic, social and cultural benefits of the funding provided by gaming machines. Mr Ambler said he believed there was a social license for gambling and that it was an individual's right to determine how to spend their money. He suggested that reducing the number of gaming machines would merely divert problem gamblers to other forms of gambling. Mr Ambler reiterated previous submissions regarding the well-funded clinical support available for problem gamblers. He also suggested that Council consider the relocation provisions included in the Flavell Bill.

4.7 Angela Paul and Sally Hughes, New Zealand Community Trust, submission number 28

Ms Paul gave a presentation (1553174) outlining the work of the Trust. She spoke to the Trust's submission, urging Council to cap gaming machine numbers rather than introducing a sinking lid policy. She summarised that, although there was a necessary focus on reducing harms, gambling revenues were nonetheless an important source of funding for the community. She reiterated earlier points about the lack of correlation between the number of gaming machines and problem

gambling, the strict controls for gambling as a valid and legal form of entertainment, and the robust support available for problem gamblers.

In response to a question, Ms Paul said that if there was no relocation clause included in the policy, if a venue was redeveloped, its gaming machines would be removed if any redevelopment was not completed within 6 months. Ms Hughes said that all of the revenue generated was returned to the local community, less that allocated to national organisations, most of which had memberships in the local community. She said the Trust was able to generate a higher return than some other organisations due to the cost efficiencies of being a national organisation.

Attendance: The meeting adjourned for a break from 11.45am to 11.50am.

4.8 Sue Bateup, Health Action Trust Nelson, submission number 43

Ms Bateup explained that her work as a Health Promoter with the Health Action Trust had a focus on the health and wellbeing of older people, who had greater vulnerability to gambling problems. She spoke in support of a sinking lid policy and 18 machine limit for merging Club venues, but said the proposed separation of the policy for different venue types would provide unnecessary complexity and confusion.

In response to questions, Ms Bateup said that, while Club venues offered many advantages in terms of providing social contact, the problem gambling associated with gaming machines was a disadvantage.

4.9 Vern Mardon, submission number 20

Mr Mardon spoke to his submission, highlighting his points about what he believed to be misinformation provided as background for the gambling policy review. Mr Mardon urged Council to consider the benefits provided to the community by gaming trusts when considering its gambling policy, and explained why he believed problem gambling should not be considered a significant problem.

4.10 Emma Lamont-Messer and Terry Williamson, The Lion Foundation, submission number 38

Mr Williamson gave a presentation (1558762) in support of The Lion Foundation's submission. He spoke against the proposed sinking lid policy, saying that the incidence of problem gambling was relatively low and was not related to the number of gaming machines. He said that reducing the number of machines would reduce revenues and the associated contribution to the community.

In response to questions, Ms Lamont-Messer said that the total funds granted to Nelson organisations for 2012/13 was \$3.6 million, including nationwide grants of which the Nelson district received a benefit. She confirmed that 42% of the revenue generated was returned to the community on a national basis, and that the remainder went to other costs. Mr Williamson said a more sophisticated approach to reducing

gambling harms would be to retain a cap, to add a relocation clause to the policy, and to assist with education around problem gambling.

It was agreed that councillors would provide questions and feedback to officers by email, and for transparency any new information and answers to questions would be included in the report to the deliberations meeting.

There being no further submitters to be heard, the meeting ended at 12.51pm.

Confirmed as a correct record of proceedings:

_____ Chairperson _____ Date