

MOTION OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Pursuant to Division 2 Regulation 16(5) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015, please arrange for the following motion to be included on the next Council agenda.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

That council staff will conduct an engagement to understand the Kingborough community's stance on poker machines.

Strategic Plan Reference

Key Priority Area	1	Encourage and support a safe, healthy and connected community
Strategic Outcome	1.3 and 1.5	1.3 A resilient community with the capacity to flourish 1.5 An active and healthy community, with vibrant, clean local areas that provide social, recreational and economic opportunities.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To use council's community engagement tools such as the *Our Say* platform to gauge the community's opinion on poker machines (also known as Electronic Gaming Machines or EGMs).

2. BACKGROUND:

- 2.1. In April 2016, Kingborough Council became a member of Community Voice on Pokies Reform.
- 2.2. There are two venues in Kingborough that currently have poker machines:
 - Snug Tavern: 20 machines
 - Kingston Hotel: 30 machines
- 2.3. State gambling laws are likely to change later this year which may affect the number of poker machines in Kingborough.
- 2.4. The Tasmanian Government's *The Future of Gaming in Tasmania* (Future Gaming Market) policy, proposes that the exclusivity arrangements under the Deed with the Federal Group to conduct casino operations and operate electronic gaming machines in Tasmania will end in 2023.
- 2.5. The implementation of the Future Gaming Market policy may result in additional venues in Kingborough seeking to attain a licence to operate poker machines in hotels and clubs.

2.6. A Community Interest Test was introduced in 2016 to be applied to all new applications to operate poker machines in Tasmania¹. Local Councils will be an important participant in any application of the Community Interest Test.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. Is conducting an engagement with the local community seeking to understand residents' opinions on poker machines an issue pertinent to local government?

3.1.1. An understanding of community opinion on poker machines is pertinent to local government because of Council's role in the Community Interest Test process.

3.1.1.1. Any venue seeking approval from the Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission (TLGC) to add poker machines in their venue must go through a 'Community Interest Test' process. This process was introduced *after* Kingborough Council joined the Community Voice on Pokies Reform. This process has never been tested in Kingborough but gambling experts have said that local councils are key stakeholders in the Community Interest Test.

3.1.1.2. If a venue is required to undertake a Community Interest Test, Council would be expected to provide a submission either avowing or disavowing the proposal in the best interests of the community.

3.1.1.3. Without canvassing the opinion of community members on poker machines, Kingborough Council would not be optimally positioned to comment on the community interest with respect to poker machines placed within the municipality.

3.1.1.4. Engaging the community on this issue now would enhance council's ability to make an informed decision about supporting or opposing a given proposal in its submission to any future Community Interest Test process.

3.1.1.5. Whilst the Council has not yet been faced with a Community Interest Test process because no venues in Kingborough have recently applied to add poker machines to their venues, the new state gambling laws may precipitate a situation where this occurs in the medium term.

3.2. What might the community engagement process look like?

3.2.1. The community engagement process could be a survey on Our Say opened to the public soon after the passing of this resolution (e.g. two weeks) and lasting for a period of several weeks.

¹ Parliament of Tasmania, 2017, Joint Select Committee on Future Gaming Markets, page 109 <http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Joint/Reports/FGM/fgm.rep.170927.reportfinalforprinting.sw.pdf> accessed 11/03/2020

3.2.2. The engagement process could include a survey or open commentary or a combination of both.

3.2.3. Direct engagement with those who have poker machines in their venues should be considered to ensure the voices of venue managers, workers and families are heard.

3.2.4. Questions asked in the engagement process could seek people's input on the quantity and location of poker machines in Kingborough.

3.3. List of potential questions (example only)

Question 1:

"Are you a resident of Kingborough?"

- Yes
- No

Question 2:

"The State government is currently deciding on the future of poker machines. Do you think the number of poker machines in Kingborough should be?"

- Increased
- Stay the same
- Decreased
- Phased out altogether
- Don't know/Not sure

Question 3:

"Which venues in Kingborough do you think should be allowed to have poker machines?"

Any venue

- Casinos, hotels, pubs and clubs
- Casinos only
- No venue should be allowed poker machines

Question 4:

Do you think poker machines should be removed from pubs and clubs in Kingborough?"

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Question 5:

There are currently 50 poker machines in Kingborough; 20 machines in the Snug Tavern and 30 machines in the Kingston Hotel. In the future, do you think the number of venues in Kingborough with poker machines should:

- Be increased
- Stay the same
- Be reduced
- Unsure