

New Plymouth District Council
Gambling Policy Review
Environmental Health
NPDC
Private Bag 2025
New Plymouth 4342

I support a “sinking lid” on pokie machines in New Plymouth.

Gambling is in oversupply

- Over \$16 billion was gambled in New Zealand in 2008 - \$38 million a day
- \$938 million was lost on pokies outside casinos in 2008 (this was the same amount spent on the entire NZ Police Force).
- In 2009, **over \$16.6 million was lost in New Plymouth through pokie machines**

How do pokie machines affect our communities?

- Machines are most likely to be sited in vulnerable communities.
- 10,000 people in New Zealand committed illegal activities due to their gambling in the last year.
- The latest New Zealand research indicates that pokies result in net loss of economic output, employment, and household income.
- Problem gamblers suffer from increased rates of bankruptcy, arrest, imprisonment, unemployment, divorce and poor physical and mental health.
- One in five regular pokie players has a gambling problem. Approximately 70% of problem gambling is attributed to pokies (outside of casinos).
- Before 1988 there were no pokie machines in New Zealand. By 30 September 2008 there were 20,025 machines.

Community funding

- There is no good evidence of decline in community funding as a result of sinking lid policies. Record amounts of money were distributed in recent years. The Department of Internal Affairs report that fewer operators should mean that overall costs go down, there are economies of scale and a good return to the community.
- Currently pokie trusts give over \$20 million a year to horse racing prize money and each year use around \$150 million (in admin costs) to distribute around \$350 million. A fairer and more efficient system could mean greater returns to the community.
- A “**sinking lid**” does not affect existing class four venues. They can continue to operate with their existing numbers of machines. There is no evidence from the 14 other towns and cities that have “sinking lid” policies, that those policies result in a reduction in community grants.

By introducing a moratorium on pokie machines, Council can limit some of the harm caused by gambling, and in doing so help to protect the health of some of its most vulnerable citizens.

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Address.....

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Signature.....