



Northern Beaches Council

Gambling and Poker Machine (EGMs)

Harm Management Plan

2018-2023

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1. Executive Summary

Gambling is an enjoyable and legal pastime for many Australians, and while the majority participate with minimal problems a proportion of individuals, and their community, experience significant harms associated with their gambling. The most pervasive of these gambling methods is Electronic Gambling Machines (EGMs, Poker Machines, Pokies).

There are ample studies and data available outlining the prevalence of EGMs, their associated harms and proposed solutions, much of it instigated by the Federal or NSW Government, in particular the 2010 Australian Government Productivity Commission Report on Gambling and the NSW Government 2014 Upper House Select Committee Inquiry on the Impact of Gambling.

Section 209(3) of the NSW Gaming Machines Act 2001 limits Council's ability to directly affect the numbers of EGMs in an area as it effectively prevents gambling from being considered in social and economic assessments when carrying out approvals. Restriction or reference to gambling cannot be included in local environment plans, planning proposals or planning schemes. Most importantly, Council cannot place conditions of consent on developments that prohibit or restrict electronic gambling machines. An exception to this may be on Council controlled land where lease condition may be applied, but this may possibly be contested in the courts.

A range of strategies are presented which go some way to educate and regulate, within Council's powers, EGMs harms. However, the most effective way to have a longer term, ongoing impact on EGMs harms is to lobby State Government to place further restrictions and controls in place. Recommended actions for Council implementation are:

1. That Council continues to lobby State and Federal Ministers to minimise EGM and other gambling harms.
2. That Council approaches Local Government NSW to lead lobbying efforts to State and Federal Ministers to minimise EGMs and other gambling harms on behalf of local councils in NSW.
3. Council considers each request for increased EGMs coming via Liquor and Gaming NSW through a Local Impact Assessment on its merits, including the potential individual and community harms it may cause.



4. Council provides community information on the harms of gambling and services available on Council website, in collaboration with local clubs, hotels and other relevant bodies/stakeholders.
5. That Council staff continue as a key member of the Northern Beaches ClubGrants Committee, working with local Clubs to ensure fair and equitable distribution of funds to a range of community organisations.
6. Council explore the option to ban the future advertising of gambling on its buildings and properties and in any form of sponsorship. This does not include general promotions for clubs, ClubGrants and hotels, or their other services and activities.
7. That Council continues to monitor legislative change to ensure the Policy and the Plan remain up to date and relevant.

2. Background

Gambling is an enjoyable pursuit for many Australians as an individual freedom, with the vast majority of people participating with minimal harm. However, it is also apparent that a small proportion of the community have significant problems with gambling and that the impact of these problems can extend beyond the individual to their family and community. Recent research has also shown that a percentage of people who problem gamble are at increased risk of self-harm.

In NSW Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs, Poker Machines, Pokies) are controlled by the State Government through the Department of Liquor and Gaming NSW, not by local government. This limits the direct influence local Councils have on the number of EGMs and their associated harms in the community. Councils have become increasingly aware of community concern about the detrimental impact on some members of the community from EGMs. Even though it is predominantly an issue for Federal and State Governments, local councils play an important role in reporting, planning, advocacy, education and research regarding the impact of poker machine gambling and other types of gambling. There are strategies and actions Council can employ to assist in minimising the negative impact of EGM in the community.

These strategies should aim to preserve the benefits and individual rights to use poker machines, whilst at the same time employing measures to reduce the impact of harm experienced by gambling, especially problem gamblers.

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to enact the principles of the Gambling and Poker Machine Policy on how to minimise the harms associated with poker machine gambling in the Northern Beaches. For the purposes of clarity, consistency and brevity, poker machines will be referred to as EGMs.

2.2. Scope

This plan recognises that there are a range of legal gambling opportunities available to the community including EGMs, Club Keno, casino table games, lotteries, wagering (racing or sports betting) and online gambling. This plan is focused on EGM gambling as current research suggests this causes the greatest harm in our communities. This plan also recognises the limited role local councils can play in the regulation of EGMs, and acknowledges the powers of the state and federal governments to create the most effective policy frameworks to address this complex issue.

The scope of the plan is influenced by the Gaming Machines Act 2001 (with Gaming Machines Amendment Act 2008). The Gaming Machines Act provides for the regulation, control and management of gaming machines in hotels and clubs and for related purposes. The Act amends the Liquor Act 1982, the Registered Clubs Act 1976, the Casino Control Act 1992 and certain other Acts with respect to gaming machines and other matters; and for other purposes.

Section 209(3) of the NSW Gaming Machines Act 2001 provides:

A consent authority (within the meaning of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979) cannot:

- (a) as a condition of any development consent under that Act, prohibit or otherwise regulate or restrict the installation, keeping or operation of approved gaming machines in a hotel or on the premises of a club or any other premises, or
- (b) refuse to grant any such development consent to a hotel or club for any reason that relates to the installation, keeping or operation of approved gaming machines in a hotel or on the premises of a club.

This effectively prevents gambling from being considered in social and economic assessments undertaken according to the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 as part of the determination of applications for development. Restriction or reference to gambling cannot be included in local environment plans, planning proposals or planning schemes. Most importantly, Council cannot place conditions of consent on developments that prohibit or restrict electronic gambling machines. While Local Government assesses the social and economic impacts of most development, Council is prevented from refusing or limiting development on the basis of EGMs. Local Government, therefore, does not have any jurisdiction in relation to gambling and is therefore restricted in its capacity to limit any local harm to the community.

2.3. Gambling Minimisation Programs

The Department of Liquor and Gaming NSW employs a range of programs to minimise gambling harms through the Office of Responsible Gambling. This department develops and implements programs and initiatives, funded by the Responsible Gambling Fund (RGF), as part of a strategic approach that supports responsible gambling and prevents and minimises the risk of gambling related harm in the community. The RGF is funded by a levy on the Star Casino, and allocates around \$18 million a year for these initiatives.

The Office supports the Responsible Gambling Fund Trust to ensure funding recommendations to the Minister are consistent with the objectives of the fund and associated governance documents. Broad areas for funding include:

- A comprehensive research agenda to provide thought leadership and better inform the development of responsible gambling policy
- Community education to support well informed gambling choices, responsible gambling behaviours and resilient communities as well as de-stigmatising help seeking behaviour
- Intervention through provision of support and counselling services, including early access through increased online and self-help tools
- Supporting Liquor & Gaming NSW policy development and regulatory oversight and enforcement of responsible gambling obligations and practices.

The Department of Liquor and Gaming also oversee and enforce onsite minimisation strategies and regulations, such as;

- Gambling-related signage
- Player information brochures
- Self-exclusion schemes
- Displaying clocks
- Gaming machine advertising
- Locating gaming machines and jackpot displays
- Cheques and cash-dispensing facilities
- Player reward schemes and promotional prizes
- Gambling inducements
- Responsible Conduct of Gambling Training (RCG)
- Investigate any possible misconduct, mismanagement of funds and assets
- Investigating complaints and breaches.

The NSW Government funds initiatives to promote greater awareness of problem gambling and available services for problem gamblers. These include the Responsible Gambling Fund, gambling treatment programs, Gambling Helpline, and gambling research. All Clubs and hotels in NSW must have an arrangement with a service provider that offers problem-gambling counselling for their members or patrons. On the Northern Beaches these are mainly provided through the Northern Sydney Local Health District. Recently, the Clubs on

the Northern Beaches have developed a Responsible Gaming Strategy outlining their commitment to the responsible conduct of gambling and harm minimisation. Furthermore, all 39 clubs on the Northern Beaches are members of ClubSAFE or equivalent programs. ClubSAFE is the club industry's Responsible Conduct of Gambling Program which provides guidance for club management and staff in the responsible provision of gambling services, with harm minimisation as one of the five main principles. Additional to this, Clubs NSW has recently committed \$1 million towards a harm minimisation research project with the University of Sydney.

There are also a range of other gambling help services on the northern beaches, such as Lifeline, Gamblers Anonymous, Uniting Recovery Counselling, Relationships Australia and various private counselling and treatment services.

The Department of Liquor and Gaming can provide a range of advertising material promoting EGM harm minimisation information, such as posters and pamphlets (in several languages), at a small cost.

An emerging trend in gambling, which may come to rival EGMs in the future, particularly amongst younger people, is the rise of online gambling. This is problematic to regulate and is available to anyone, anytime, anywhere with a mobile device. It is also extensively promoted and advertised and covers a wide range of sports, not just traditional horse racing, greyhounds etc. all of which makes it particularly appealing to younger people.

3. Research and Data

Australia is unique with respects to EGM gambling. Since the proliferation of poker machines in the early 1990s, councils have become increasingly aware of community concern about the detrimental impact on some members of the community. Even though it is predominantly an issue for Federal and State Governments, local councils play an important role in reporting, planning, advocacy, education and research regarding the impact of poker machine gambling and other types of gambling, on their community.

Australia has more poker machines per person than any country in the world, excluding casino-tourism destinations like Macau and Monaco. It has nearly 200,000 machines – one for every 114 people. All States and Territories in Australia have EGMs available at licensed venues with the exception of Western Australia (casino only) and the ACT.

Current annual losses on EGMs in pubs and clubs for Australia amount to \$633 per adult. Losses in NSW are highest at \$978 per adult. As of 30 June 2017, NSW has 92,803 of the 198,150 EGMs in Australia (with a cap of 99,000 and 1,500 for casinos). In 2015-16, the total gambling expenditure in NSW was \$9.42 billion.

The following table shows the total gambling expenditure (in the millions) amongst the states and territories of Australia from 1975-2016:

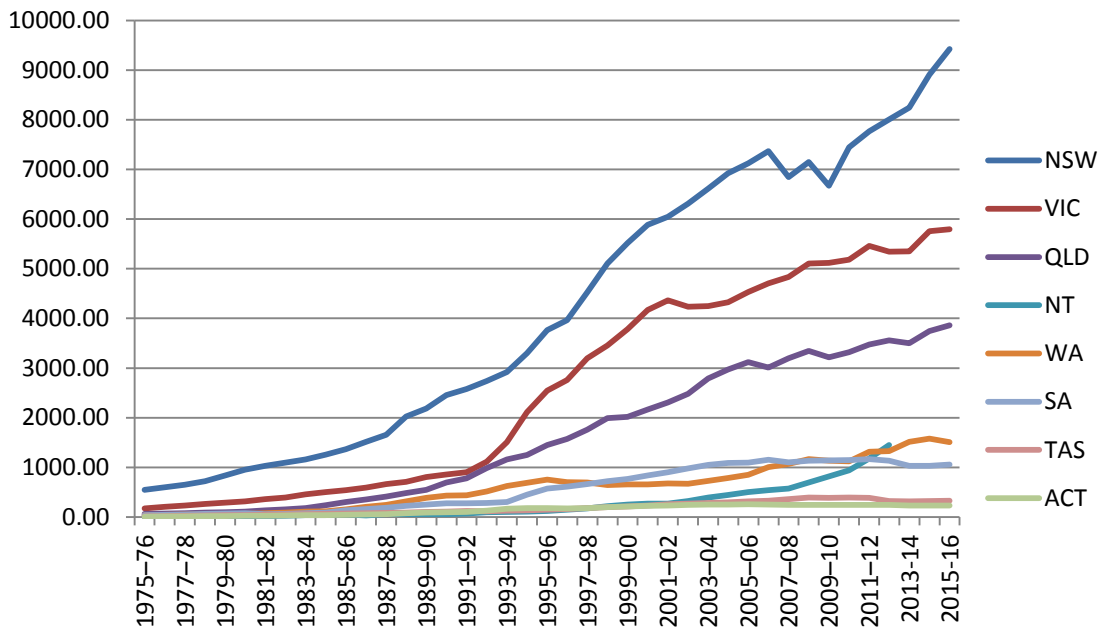


Table 1: Total gambling expenditure (in the millions) amongst the states and territories of Australia from 1975-2016

3.1. Electronic Gaming Machines in the Northern Beaches

There are 2,228 EGMs in the Northern Beaches. Northern Beaches LGA is ranked 11 of 130 local councils in NSW for total number of EGMs, however is also one of the biggest LGA's. These machines are located across 46 licensed venues with 1,816 machines in local clubs, from 2,190 entitlements, and 412 machines in local hotels, from 412 entitlements.

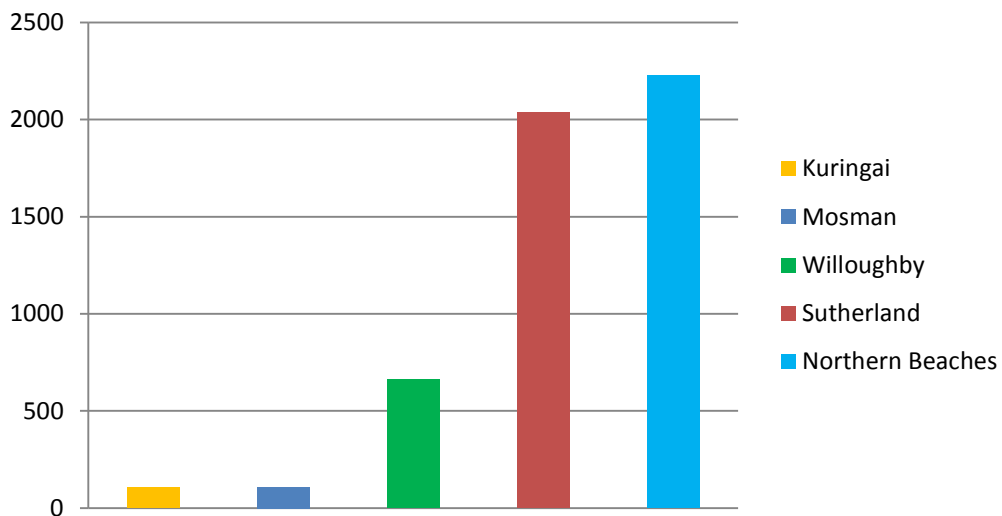


Table 2: Comparison of total EGMs in surrounding and comparable LGAs

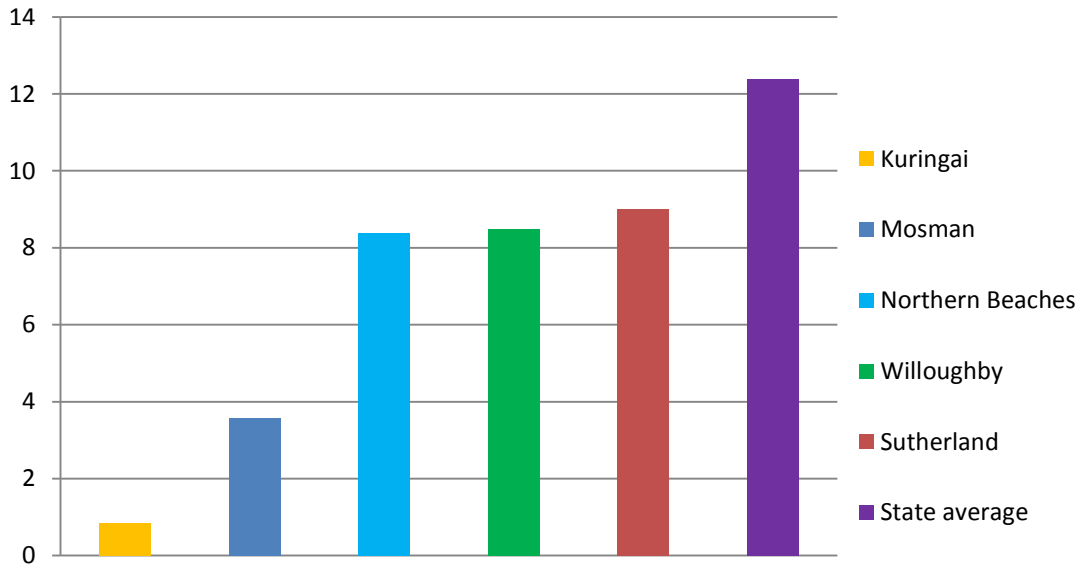


Table 3: Comparison of EGMs per 1000 persons in surrounding and comparable LGAs

Northern Beaches LGA has approximately 8.37 EGMs per 1000 people, which is below the State average of 12.4 EGMs per 1000 people. Taking population into account the Northern Beaches is ranked 104 of 130 for the total amount of EGM entitlements.

In 2016-17, the total net profit of EGMs in the Northern Beaches was \$135,553,600.16. Northern Beaches Council ranked 15 of the 130 NSW councils for EGM daily losses of \$370,365.03. The following table shows the daily losses for each of these local councils.

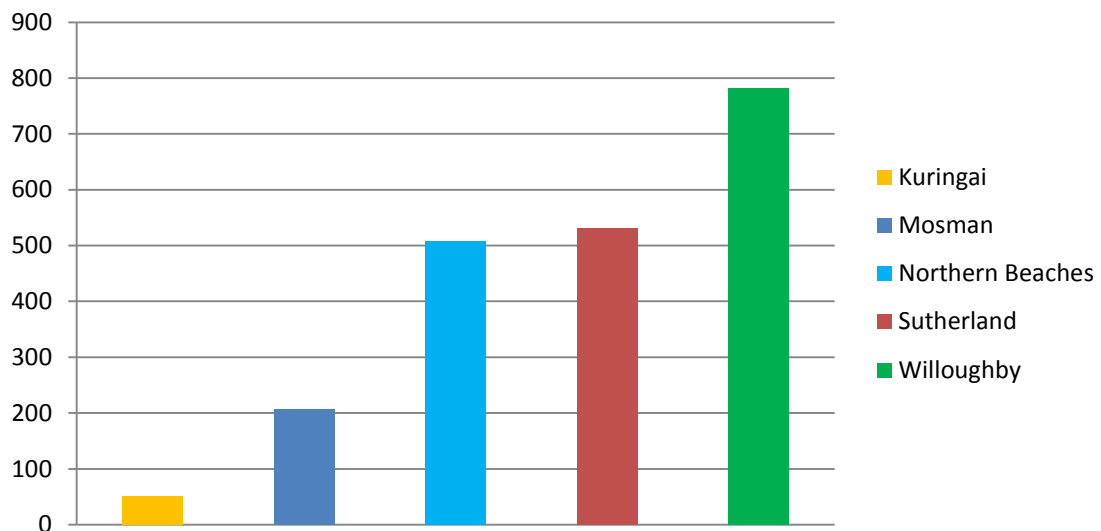


Table 4: Comparison of EGM losses per persons in surrounding and comparable LGAs

Taking population into account the Northern Beaches ranked 67 of 130 councils for EGM annual profit to population with annual losses of \$511.47 per person. For the purposes of requesting community comment through a Local Impact Statement when introducing new EGMs into an area, LGA's are classified into Bands using criteria such as existing gaming machine density, gaming machine expenditure and SEIFA Score (Social Economic Indexes for Area). Northern Beaches Council is classified as a Band 1 LGA, which is the lowest risk criterion. Recently (April 2018) new regulations were enacted which did not classify the whole LGA, but assessed Statistical Area Level 2 (per Australian Bureau of Statistics areas). Each of these 15 Statistical Areas on the NB is still classified as Band 1.

Band 1 LGA	Band 2 LGA	Band 3 LGA
- low gaming machine density	- moderate gaming machine density	- high gaming machine density
- low gaming machine expenditure	- moderate gaming machine expenditure	- high gaming machine expenditure
- high SEIFA score	- moderate SEIFA score	- low SEIFA score

Table 5: Ranking Scale of LGAs for Local Impact Statement purposes

3.2. Gambling Harms

There are ample studies and data available outlining the prevalence of EGMs, their associated harms and proposed solutions, much of it instigated by the Federal or NSW Government. In particular, the 2010 Australian Government Productivity Commission Report on Gambling and the NSW Government 2014 Upper House Select Committee Inquiry on the Impact of Gambling.

Australian Government Productivity Commission Report 2010

In 2010, the Australian Government Productivity Commission produced a report on Australia's gambling industries finding that EGM gambling poses significant risks compared to other types of gambling. Some of the key findings from this landmark report are:

- EGM gambling accounts for 62% of overall gambling expenditure in Australia even though 70-75% of Australian adults do not play EGMs at all.
- Risks of problem gambling increase significantly with the frequency of playing EGMs.
- Approximately 600,000 Australians (4% of the adult population) play EGMs weekly.

- Around 80,000 to 160,000 (or 0.5-1.0%) of Australian adults experiencing significant problems from gambling and a further 250,000 to 350,000 (or 1.4 - 2.1% of adults) experiencing moderate risks that may make them vulnerable to problem gambling.
- While 15% of regular EGM players have gambling problems, their share of total spending on machines is estimated to range around 40%.
- Around 75 to 80% of people with gambling problems play EGMs.
- Total recorded expenditure (losses) in Australia reached just over \$19 billion in 2008-09, or an average of \$1500 per adult who gambled.
- The risks of problem gambling are low for people who only play lotteries and 'scratchies', but rise steeply with the frequency of gambling on table games, wagering and, especially, gaming machines.
- Recreational gamblers typically play at low intensity. But if machines are played at high intensity, it is easy to lose \$1500 or more in an hour.
- The price of playing EGMs is poorly disclosed with gamblers underestimating their losses.

The report noted that if governments reduced the social costs to problem gamblers through effective harm minimisation and prevention policies, the net benefits could be much larger. It also recommended a range of strategies to reduce the harms associated with EGM gambling. (See Appendix 1)

NSW Select Committee on the Impact of Gambling 2014

A 2014 Upper House inquiry undertaken by the Select Committee, Chaired by Revd The Hon Fred Nile MLC, on the Impact of Gambling has urged the New South Wales Government to do more to protect the community from the negative impacts of problem gambling. The report noted:

'The state's problem gambling prevalence rate has trended slightly downward from 0.95 per cent of the adult population in 2006 to a current figure of 0.8 per cent. The seriousness of problem gambling should not be underestimated given there are approximately 47,000 people that meet the problem gambling classification. Problem gambling is a serious social issue given its negative impacts can include depression and anxiety, relationship breakdown, job loss, homelessness and substance abuse.' The Inquiry came up with a further 18 recommendations for the NSW Government. (See Appendix 2)

In the 'NSW Government response to the Select Committee on the Impact of Gambling' (February 2015) the majority of recommendations are 'Supported', 'Supported (in part)' or 'Supported in Principal'. The notable exceptions are reviewing the maximum jackpot prize, reviewing the maximum betting limit and imposing daily withdrawal limits on ATMs in premises with EGMs.

It is worth noting that in January 2018 the Minister for Racing, Paul Toole, announced the reconstituted Responsible Gaming Fund Trust to play a key role for Government to develop evidence based approaches to prevent and reduce gambling harms.

At the same time they made public two research reports, carried out by Schottler Consulting for the NSW Government in March 2017, on 'Placement of ATM's' and 'Third Party Exclusion of Problem Gamblers'. These were recommendations contained in previous reports, so hopefully these moves are an indication that the State Government is willing to act on previous reports and take action on this subject. Effective lobbying may expedite the speed at which many of these recommendations are implemented and encourage a review of the Recommendations previously 'Not Supported', especially relating to jackpot size, betting limits and limits to ATM withdrawals.

Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Act 2018 No 9

In March 2018 a range of amendments to EGM management were passed through NSW Parliament under the *Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Act 2018 No 9*. Due to the timing of this report further investigation of these changes may be warranted, but on initial investigation they mainly apply to:

Schedule 1 Amendment of Gaming Machines Act 2001 No 127 relating to Local Impact Assessment -

- Caps on gaming machine entitlements in Band 3 High Risk areas, specifically in western Sydney areas, such as Fairfield.
- Exceptions for transfers of country hotel gaming machine entitlements.
- Classification of local statistical areas. Replacing the previous reference to Local Government Area (LGA) with Local Statistical Area (LSA). LSA refers to Statistical Area Level 2 under the Australian Statistical Geography Standard published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. For the Northern Beaches this means that when assessing transfers of EGMs the NBC area won't be viewed as a single entity but as numerous grouped suburbs, e.g. Narrabeen/Collaroy, Freshwater/Brookvale. In some circumstances this may have allowed Council to comment through a Local Impact Assessment, as previously a LIA usually did not apply if EGMs were moved within the same LGA, although this still does not apply if the LSA's are adjacent to each other and have a similar Band Ranking. New information on the Liquor & Gaming NSW website indicates that all LSAs on the Northern Beaches are rated as Band 1 Low Risk, and as such a LIA is still unlikely to be required for internal transfers.
- Community benefit requirement—payment of money to Responsible Gambling Fund – sets out how funds are to be collected and distributed for community benefit by the Clubs and Responsible Gambling Fund.
- Guidelines for threshold increase applications. Sets out conditions on how the Authority will assess positive contribution when assessing a threshold increase application.
- Limited period for acquiring gaming machine entitlements. Sets out time periods for threshold increase approvals to be enacted.
- Special provision relating to de-amalgamated clubs. Set out conditions for de-amalgamating clubs.

Schedule 2 - Amendment of Gaming Machines Act 2001 No 127 relating to leasing of gaming machine entitlements.

- Sets out conditions for EGMs to be leased between clubs and hotels.

Schedule 3 - Amendment of Gaming Machines Act 2010

- Threshold increase applications—consultation requirements. Substitute LSA for LGA, and sets terms and conditions for community consultation, and the timeframes to deal with these applications.

Schedule 4 - Amendment of Casino Control Act 1992 No 15

- Responsible gambling levy and fund. Sets out conditions for the payment and expenditure from this fund.

The impact of these amendments remains unclear and requires close monitoring of any future ramifications.

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2018/9/sec2>

4. Gambling and Poker Machine (EGMs) Harm Management Plan

Taking into account the role and impact of local government on EGMs a number of strategies for the minimisation of harms from gambling on the Northern Beaches are recommended.

4.1. Advocacy and Lobbying

Discussion

Council can lobby local MP's, the Minister for Racing and other politicians as a single entity, or more effectively, through Local Government NSW (LGNSW), the peak industry association representing the interests of NSW councils. Several local councils in Victoria have been developing EGM strategies, which has been supported by their peak body, the Victorian Local Governance Association.

There is sufficient data and reports on the harms of EGMs and possible solutions or minimisation strategies, e.g. Australian Government Productivity Commission Report on Gambling 2010 and the NSW Select Committee on the Impact of Gambling 2014. It would be effective to lobby government to act on those reports, or to expedite the rate at which these recommendations are being introduced.

Section 209 of the Gaming Machines Act 2001 (with Gaming Machines Amendment Act 2008) prevents gambling from being considered in social and economic assessments undertaken according to the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 as part of the determination of applications for development. Restriction or reference to gambling cannot be included in local environment plans, planning proposals or planning schemes. Most importantly, Council cannot place conditions of consent on developments that prohibit or restrict electronic gambling machines. This severely limits the power of council's to limit the number and associated harms to the local community from EGMs.

Additionally, in NSW, to obtain comprehensive data on EGMs from Liquor and Gaming NSW involves the submission of a Gaming Machine Data Request with a payment ranging from \$100 to \$1,900. Data of a similar kind in Victoria is provided free of charge on a month-to-month basis and listing the amounts lost at each venue. Improving transparency on reporting is a public health issue and efforts should be taken to increase transparency of the gambling industry to require regular venue-by-venue reporting of community losses to poker machines and making this freely available to the public.

Actions –

1. That Council continue to lobby State and Federal Ministers to minimise EGM and other gambling harms.
2. That Council approaches Local Government NSW to lead lobbying efforts to State and Federal Ministers to minimise EGMs and other gambling harms on behalf of local councils in NSW.

4.2. Local Impact Assessments

Discussion

The Local Impact Assessment (LIA) considers the impact to communities of an increase in gaming machines. The LIA process is overseen by Liquor and Gaming NSW and ensures local councils, police and residents have a say in what happens in their community when an organisation wants to introduce more EGMs into an area or when a hotel or club changes location.

However, a LIA is not required when organisations apply for transfer of gaming machine entitlements or permits:

- a) within the same Local Government Area (LGA); or
- b) if the venue is located in a Band 1 LGA and, if the application is approved, the total threshold increase for the venue in the past 12 months would not exceed 20.

Therefore, if a venue wants to move EGMs from one venue to another within the Northern Beaches LGA, or transfer in additional ones by less than 20 machines per annum, there would be no opportunity for Council to comment, as NBC is a Band 1 LGA.

Council should consider each Local Impact Assessment for additional EGMs on its merits, including the potential individual and community harms it may cause. Note that a document search of Council's records has not revealed any LIA request to Council, or previous Councils, for at least the past 4 years, so they are not very common in this region.

Action –

3. Council considers each request for increased EGMs coming via Liquor and Gaming NSW through a Local Impact Assessment on its merits, including the potential individual and community harms it may cause.

4.3. Community Education

Discussion

Council can play a role in promotion and advertising around the harms caused by gambling and services available to people who are experiencing problems with their gambling. This can be through provision of brochures and flyers at libraries, community centres and customer service outlets, web content, as well as active promotion through presentations and seminars etc.

Action –

4. Council provides community information on the harms of gambling and services available on Council website, in collaboration with local clubs, hotels and other relevant bodies/stakeholders.

4.4. ClubGrants

Discussion

ClubGRANTS is designed to ensure that larger registered clubs in NSW contribute to the provision of front-line services to their local communities; and to ensure that the disadvantaged in the community are better positioned to benefit from the substantial contributions made by those clubs. ClubGRANTS also facilitates contributions by larger clubs towards infrastructure to support sporting, health and community activities.

This is achieved through the Gaming Machine Tax Act 2001, which is a tax rebate made available to registered clubs of up to 1.85% of a club's gaming machine profits over \$1 million during a tax year.

Under the Act, a further 0.4% of a club's gaming machine profits over \$1 million during a tax year is paid into the ClubGrants Fund on behalf of the club to be used for large scale projects or services associated with sport, health or community infrastructure across the State. Funding preference is not given to projects or services that can be readily assisted by an existing Government funding program.

Northern Beaches Council staff currently assist in the facilitation of the Northern Beaches ClubGrants Program, in partnership with the local clubs.

Action –

5. That Council staff continue as a key member of the Northern Beaches ClubGrants Committee, working with local Clubs to ensure fair and equitable distribution of funds to a range of community organisations.

4.5. Community Leadership

Discussion

Northern Beaches Council can demonstrate community leadership through not allowing gambling related advertising or promotion on its buildings (similar to bans on alcohol and tobacco advertising). This will impact assets such as Brookvale Oval which currently has naming rights by a gambling entity, organised by a third party.

Council might also consider restricting or placing a ban on gambling/EGMs on any of its properties which are being leased to other organisations, through conditions in the lease when they are new or up for renewal. This may have severe financial and social implications for leases where sporting clubs (golf, bowls, football etc) rely on EGM income as part of their operational revenue stream. Restrictions may make some of these clubs non-viable, impacting on their community, social and sporting activities. It may also restrict the financial viability of organisations applying to lease and build new premises, such as at District Park. Placing these lease conditions on Council owned land may also be tested in the courts in the future.

Actions -

6. Council explore the option to ban the future advertising of gambling on its buildings and properties and in any form of sponsorship. This does not include general promotions for clubs, ClubGrants and hotels, or their other services and activities.
7. That Council continues to monitor legislative change to ensure the Policy and the Plan remain up to date and relevant.

5. Appendices

5.1. Appendix 1 - Australian Government Productivity Commission Report 2010

Recommendations:

Game features and machine designs -

- The amount of cash that players can feed into machines at any one time should be limited to \$20 (currently up to \$10 000).
- All new EGMs are played at a maximum of \$1 per button push.

Pre-commitment strategies -

- Full pre-commitment system for gaming machines by 2016 including 'safe' default settings with players able to choose other limits (including no limit).
- Modifications to self-exclusion arrangements including capacity for family members and venue staff to apply for third party exclusions.

Information and advertising -

- Electronic warnings when style of play indicates potential for harm.
- Users informed about the cost of play.

Access to cash and credit -

- Relocating ATMs away from gaming floors.
- Limiting cash withdrawal limit to \$250 a day not including casinos.

Accessibility of gaming machines -

- Shutdown periods for gaming in hotels and clubs should commence earlier and be of longer duration.

5.2. Appendix 2 - NSW Select Committee on the Impact of Gambling 2014

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government ensure that the electronic gaming machine Local Impact Assessment process is independently reviewed with objectives that include:

- Identifying mechanisms to stop the concentrations of poker machines in neighbourhoods and clubs where they will create greater harm
- Examining the number of entitlements in all local government areas with above average frequencies of problem gambling.

If the review concludes that the process does not adequately assess the appropriateness of additional gaming machines in venues then the approval process should be reformed. In the interim, the NSW Government should give consideration to a freeze on the transfer of entitlements between venues and the creation of any new entitlements.

Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government publish its response to the findings of the Gambling Research Australia investigation into the relationship between gaming machine design features and gambling harms, and take whatever action is required.

Recommendation 3

That the NSW Government reviews the maximum jackpot prize for electronic gaming machines in the New South Wales Jackpot Technical Standard.

Recommendation 4

That the NSW Government reviews the maximum bet limit for electronic gaming machines in New South Wales in the Australian and New Zealand Gaming Machine National Standard.

Recommendation 5

That the NSW Government investigate third-party exclusion with a view to implementing a scheme in the NSW clubs and hotels by 2017 at the latest. In conducting its investigations the Government should consult with industry, healthcare professionals, gambling researchers and other relevant stakeholders.

Recommendation 6

That the NSW Government review the Gaming Machines Regulation 2010 (NSW) to provide that a daily cash withdrawal limit applies to automatic teller machines in venues with electronic gaming machines.

Recommendation 7

That the NSW Government amends section of 32 of the Gaming Machines Regulation 2010 (NSW) to specify an appropriate distance between automatic teller machines and electronic gaming machines.

Recommendation 8

That the NSW Government work with the Australian Government to develop mechanisms that restrict short-term credit being made available through automatic teller machines in electronic gaming machine venues.

Recommendation 9

That the NSW Government approach the Australian Government to request that a set of standards be established for online wagering websites and that the Interactive Gambling Act 2001 (Cth) be amended to prohibit financial institutions from processing transactions to noncompliant online offshore wagering websites.

Recommendation 10

That the NSW Government review Gambling Research Australia's report into the impact of wagering advertising on young people when it is published in 2015. If a link between wagering advertising and problem gambling is found, then the NSW Government should approach the Australian Government to request that the national broadcasting codes of practice further restrict betting odds promotions and gambling advertising during live sports broadcasts.

Recommendation 11

That the NSW Government launch an awareness campaign specific to the risks of online gaming. The awareness campaign should focus on improving consumer knowledge about the risks they face accessing offshore online gaming websites. The campaign should also be delivered in different languages targeting a broad spectrum of communities.

Recommendation 12

That the NSW Government ensure that the Duty and Responsible Gambling Levy Agreement for the Barangaroo Restricted Gaming Facility is used to support the work of the Responsible Gambling Fund. If in future other large gambling facilities are approved, then these should also be subject to a levy to support the Responsible Gambling Fund.

Recommendation 13

That the NSW Government reviews the adequacy of funds committed to the Responsible Gambling Fund to ensure that it is appropriately resourced to deliver in different languages an awareness campaign that promotes the courage required to admit to a gambling problem and to seek treatment.

Recommendation 14

That NSW Health reviews its patient screening protocols to ensure that patients with gambling problems are identified and referred to specialist gambling treatment services.

Recommendation 15

That the NSW Government investigate the models of both the Australian Capital Territory and New Zealand that require venues to intervene to assist problem gamblers with a view to implementing such a scheme in New South Wales.

Recommendation 16

That the NSW Government, via the Council of Australian Government's Select Council on Gambling Reform, work to secure funding for Gambling Research Australia.

Recommendation 17

That if the NSW Government is unsuccessful in securing an ongoing national role for Gambling Research Australia beyond 2014, then the government should develop alternate models for the provision of publically funded gambling research in New South Wales.

Recommendation 18

That the NSW Government support school education programs that promote healthy lifestyle choices. The Government should:

- Investigate the approaches of other Australian State Governments in seeking to protect young people from the risks associated with gambling via school-based gambling education.
- Examine whether its school-based gambling education programs are appropriate and achieving the desired outcomes.

These findings should form the basis from which to determine whether school-based gambling education programs need to be expanded in New South Wales.

6. References

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