



WHAKATĀNE DISTRICT COUNCIL

# GAMBLING VENUES POLICY REVIEW 2022

We are reviewing our Gambling Venues Policy and want to hear your views on our proposals.

The policy focuses on gaming machines (pokies) and TABs. It says how many TABs and gaming machines there can be in the district, and where they can be located.

Councils are required to have a gambling policy and to review it every three years. Our policy was last reviewed in 2019.

For several years, we have taken a 'sinking lid' approach to the number of pokie machines in the district by not granting consent for any new ones.

## Social impact

Risk factors for problem gambling and gambling harm are over-represented for whānau, hapū and iwi, Pacific people, and people living in low socio-economic communities.

Last year, we undertook a social impact assessment that looked at the impact of gambling machines on the district's communities.

This assessment found that some people in the district are at greater risk of gambling harm than people in other parts of New Zealand.

It also found that the existing gambling policy had not reduced the harm of gambling in the district as much as anticipated. For example, the number of gaming machines in the district increased by nine since 2019.

## Key numbers

**11** gaming venues in the lowest socio-economic communities

In the Whakatāne District, 11 of the 12 gaming machine venues are in the lowest socio-economic communities.

**193** licenced gaming machines

There are licences to allow 193 gaming machines in the district, of which 188 are in operation – nine more than three years ago.

**\$11** million

In 2019, people spent \$11 million on gaming machines in the district. Of this, \$2.2 million (20%) was returned to the community (e.g. through grants).



# Kōrero mai Let's talk

Tell us what you think  
by 5pm Sunday,  
27 March 2022

## Social impact (CONTINUED)

We used a social impact assessment to find out the positive and negative effects of gambling in the district.

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POSITIVE EFFECTS	NEGATIVE EFFECTS
Entertainment	Pokies mostly in high-deprivation/low income areas so people living in these areas more at risk
\$2.2 million community funding (2019)	People spent \$11 million on pokies in the district (2019)

The policy proposals aim to strengthen the rules around the number and location of gaming machines and TABs.

## Key proposals

1. Update the policy's wording to clarify that Council will not grant consent for any new gaming machines licences or for new gaming venues to be established, with the aim of gradually reducing the number of machines in the district.
2. Gaming venue licenses cannot be transferred to a new location in the district.
3. When clubs merge, they must operate their gaming machines from an existing venue (i.e. no 'new' venue is allowed).
4. Council will not grant consent for any new TAB venues to be established.

## It's easy

You can view the draft Gambling Venues Policy and Social Impact Assessment on our website and make a submission in the following ways:

**Online:** [whakatane.govt.nz/haveyoursay](http://whakatane.govt.nz/haveyoursay)

**Email submissions:** [submissions@whakatane.govt.nz](mailto:submissions@whakatane.govt.nz)

**Email inquiries:** [info@whakatane.govt.nz](mailto:info@whakatane.govt.nz)

**Post:** Whakatāne District Council, Private Bag 1002, Whakatāne 3158

**Deliver:** To our Council offices in Whakatāne and Murupara.

Submission forms are also available on our website [whakatane.govt.nz](http://whakatane.govt.nz) or from libraries and Council offices.

Submissions should include your name, address, phone number and email address. They should also state whether you wish to speak to the mayor and councillors in support of your submission.

## What happens next

We will review the public submissions and provide a summary to Council's Strategy and Policy Committee.

We will contact all submitters who wish to speak in support of their submissions to advise them of the time, date and venue of the hearing.

The Council's Strategy and Policy Committee will read and hear submissions before deciding whether to adopt the new policy, retain the current policy with some changes, or adopt some alternative options.