

10 August 2021

Department of Treasury and Finance
GPO Box 147
HOBART TAS 7001

Email: future.gaming@treasury.tas.gov.au

Dear Sir or Madam

Future Gaming Market Project

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on Future of Gaming in Tasmania Stage Two that includes the release of the exposure draft of the *Gaming Control Amendment (Future Gaming Market) Bill 2021* (the Bill).

The Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) is incorporated under the *Local Government Act 1993* and is the representative body for Local Government in Tasmania.

The objectives of LGAT are to:

- protect and represent the interests and rights of Councils in Tasmania;
- promote an efficient and effective system of Local Government in Tasmania; and
- provide services to Members, councillors and employees of Councils.

This submission is consistent with three previous LGAT submissions on gaming: the 2020 feedback on *The Future of Gaming in Tasmania Policy*, the 2016 response to the Joint Select Committee of the Future of Gaming Markets and the 2017 response to the *Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission on the Gaming Control Act Community Interest Test Discussion Paper*. These continue to be relevant to the reforms for the gaming industry proposed in the future Gaming Market Model.

A number of councils will make submissions on this matter directly to the Department of Treasury and Finance. LGAT is fully supportive of those individual submissions, reflecting the views and circumstances of that council and their community. This submission takes account of council views, previous submissions, and the local government position from motions passed at LGAT General Meetings and consultations with councils since 2016.

The major shared concerns of local government remain harm minimisation and increased community engagement in the Community Interest Test (CIT). Harm minimisation is relevant to the proposed amendments to the *Gaming Control Act 1993*. In our 2020 submission, LGAT acknowledged the importance given by the government to harm minimisation and the commitment to closely monitor the operation of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) in the restructured gaming market. It is unclear how the proposed amendments will strengthen harm minimisation.

Council feedback on the current proposed reforms includes a range of concerns directly relevant to harm minimisation. They include the need for:

- lower maximum bets
- lower minimum bets
- slower spin speed
- reduce maximum jackpot
- no losses disguised as near misses
- mandated regular machine shutdowns.

LGAT welcomes the increase in Community Support Levy (CSL) funding and the government's commitment to improving the effectiveness of the CSL through the allocation of increased funds. LGAT has been invited to participate in the survey on this matter by the Future Gaming Market Team. However, as councils are major stakeholders on this issue with unique insights into the how CSL funding can best support effective place based and sustainable community improvement we have requested direct consultation with councils by the Future Gaming Market Team. The expertise and knowledge that local government brings on categories for distribution and considerations for funding should be considered a valuable resource.

Local government supports the proposed amendment to extend the period of time a person can object to an application for a venue licence that is subject to a CIT. However, our 2020 submission requested a commitment from the Tasmanian Government to consult with local government on the how the CIT will be affected by the regulatory changes - we reiterate that request. LGAT believes this must be done before the current proposed amendments are put in place and that an ongoing specific CIT review process is required.

If you have any queries or would like further information, [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Dion Lester
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER