

File No: SF0282
MS:AvZ:bt

Your Ref:

4 August 2021



The Secretary
Department of Treasury and Finance
GPO Box 147
HOBART TAS 7001

Dear Secretary

HOLDING SUBMISSION ON EXPOSURE DRAFT OF THE GAMING CONTROL AMENDMENT (FUTURE GAMING MARKET) BILL 2021

Thank you for providing an opportunity to comment on the exposure draft of the *Gaming Control Amendment (Future Gaming Market) Bill 2021* (the Bill). The Council has previously adopted a watching brief over this reform process and elected not to make a submission in stage one of the consultation. However, the Council now has some concerns with the Bill and/or the reform process that it would like to raise for consideration.

Please note that this is a holding submission, which will either be replaced or withdrawn following a decision of the Council on this matter, which will occur on Thursday 12 August 2021.

The focus of Council's submission primarily relates to Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs). As the Government is no doubt aware, EGMs are located across Launceston within four areas deemed to be some of the most socio-economically disadvantaged suburbs in the State. There are some 326 EGMs spread across Launceston at an average of 5.6 machines for every 1,000 people (refer table below). While a majority of those machines are concentrated in the suburb of Launceston, 38% are located in lower socio-economically rated suburbs. For instance, Rocherlea, the most disadvantaged suburb in Launceston, has 30 EGMs within the suburb at a rate of over 27 per 1,000 people.

Suburb	No of EGM's
Launceston	111
Kings Meadows	30
Mowbray	30
Newstead	30
Prospect	30
Ravenswood	35
Invermay	30
Rocherlea	30
St Leonards	Keno and Tab only
Total	326

The Council has concerns that a shift to venue owners being licensees may make it harder to limit the harm to at-risk gamblers and believes that there should be more of a public discussion on this policy direction. The Council would like the Government to release the policy behind the Bill in order to facilitate a meaningful debate on the substance before the Bill is introduced to parliament. For instance, it has been suggested that a single licence model is the best model for Tasmania because the regulator has a greater degree of control over the industry and the new licence model would reduce this level of control and generate greater competition between venues.

Additionally, the Bill currently provides no pathway to harm minimisation and or gambling support, beyond the provision of more funding for it. The Council would like to see this further examined and outlined as part of the community engagement process.

Once again, I would like to thank the Government for consulting on this important reform and look forward to a more wide-ranging debate occurring with the community before the Bill is introduced to Parliament.

Yours sincerely



Albert van Zetten
MAYOR