



HDC NEWS



Council's Role In Gambling

Council's responsibilities under the Gambling Act are to regulate the number of gaming machines and gaming machine venues within the district. To this end, it has adopted a Gambling Policy after public consultation on the subject. As well as this, Council must do some research on the social impacts of gambling within the District. As there was little time to get the policy completed within the timeframe allowed Council has deferred the impact assessment study until a later date. In order to gain some information on the subject, the chairman of the Planning and Finance Committee, Mary Carmine, was sent to the "Gambling and Problem Gambling Conference" in Auckland recently.

The conference was useful to get in perspective the importance of gaming machines in the gambling industry in New Zealand. Surveys indicate that over the past 15 years the number of people gambling regularly in New Zealand has dropped quite markedly. Over the same period, however, the amount of money lost in gambling has increased from around \$200,000,000 to in excess of two billion dollars - a tenfold increase. In other words, fewer people are losing lots more money. While gambling on LOTTO and racing has remained fairly constant, there has been a large increase in casino use and an even larger increase in money lost on gaming machines. The worrying aspect of this statistic is that the people who lose money in this way are, by and large, those who can least afford it. They include those in low socio-economic groups particularly Maori and Pacific Islanders.

Changing these patterns of behaviour is likely to be a complex process involving changing living standards and education within the problem gambling groups, as these problem gamblers see gambling as the ray of hope that may see them out of their poverty and life problems. In reality, of course, it only makes the situation worse.

The conference suggested that Councils could help by restricting the number of venues available, controlling signage so that "new recruits" are not encouraged to start gambling and by keeping a close watch on existing venues to ensure gaming machines are not the principal activity of a venue (which is illegal) and that no under aged gamblers are allowed on the premises. Some councils have regular inspections of premises but any member of the public who suspects a problem with a particular premises is entitled to complain to the Department of Internal Affairs and they are obliged to investigate.

From the 1st of July this year the Ministry of Health takes responsibility for the effects of gambling. New Zealand is the first country in the world to place gambling and problem gambling under the umbrella of Health. Council hopes to collaborate with workers from the Health area to do its social impact study into the effects of gambling in the district and gained an understanding with health workers on this issue during the submission phase of the adoption of the gambling policy.

In summary then, the gambling industry is regulated as follows:

- Licensing of venues, machines and control of gambling generally - the Department of Internal Affairs
- Control of the number of gaming machine venues and number of machines within the district and advertising signage - Council
- Coping with the effects of gambling and problem gambling - Ministry of Health..

Elected Members' Diary

For the week of the 24th May to the 30th May 2004:

Wednesday 26th May -
Full Council meeting.



Water On The Plains

While the main issue with water on the Hauraki Plains is usually too much of it and how to get rid of it most efficiently, the problem that is occupying much thought at the moment is that of how to ensure there is enough fresh drinking water for, not only the residents, but for the dairying industry, which is the economic backbone of the district.

Preliminary investigations into the use of off-stream storage for the Waitakaruru Water Treatment Plant have shown that dam and reservoir options are of moderate to high cost and moderate to high risk. Options using Tetley's quarry pit have the lowest development cost and are lower risk. The analysed cost, however, does not take into account the value of the good quality rock that would have to be left in place to separate the operating of the quarry from the water storage. Council has yet to make final decisions on these options.

On the other side of the Plains, investigations have been initiated to address concerns expressed by Environment Waikato about the operation of the Hikutaia Cut as a raw water reservoir. These concerns are about the effects the possible raising of the stop bank, to prevent salt water ingress, would have on flood control and the shore erosion from wave action arising from the rise and fall of the water level. Environment Waikato is also concerned about the effect the proposal will have on the activities of local users of the Cut for water sport. A consultant firm will investigate the issues and prepare a report to present to Environment Waikato and so that Council can make a decision on proceeding with proposals to use the Cut as a major water source for the Kerepehi treatment plant. The advantage of using the Cut is that the water would not require as much treatment as the Waihou water, particularly during King tides, and the plant would therefore be able to produce more water more quickly in times of high water usage. With the proposal to include small supplies, such as Puriri, into the Plains supply, extra water is required as well as improving the flow rate and productivity of the Kerepehi Plant.

Urban Stormwater Issues In Waihi

In February the Waihi Ward Committee approved the estimate for piping an open drain that runs through private land in George St on the basis of a one quarter share being paid by the landowners. While some of the land owners declined to participate in the scheme another, downstream of the planned works asked to be included. The scheme has therefore been altered to include the downstream work and to leave out the section where the landowners are happy with the existing situation.

In another area of town, a condition in the Waihi storm water discharge consent requires work to be done in Adams St to enlarge existing pipe diameters. The work has taken considerable planning in order to achieve the required outcome and in order to work in the area of the road and road embankment, the road will need to be closed for the period of the works. Through traffic will be required to detour but residents will all have access to their home from either end of the street.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Gum Tree Gossip

Fragments of hearsay have fallen out of the felling of the gum tree incident in Waihi recently. They may be of interest so we repeat them here.

- As you may have seen from the photos published in last week's paper, the tree was rotten to the core and even the good wood on the outside had several cracks through it.
- The tree was felled by a young woman of about twenty years who wielded a "mean" chainsaw.
- One of the female councillors from Waihi received a chainsaw for Mother's Day. The other Waihi female councillor also owns and uses a chainsaw regularly but neither councillor was near the said tree on the day it came down.
- The bees were fumigated before the tree was felled.
- The beehive was reported as being "massive".
- There have been no reports of whether Pooh got his 'hunny'.

PUBLIC NOTICE



RATES REMINDER

Ratepayers are reminded that a 10% penalty will be incurred on all third instalment 2003/04 rates unpaid at the close of business on Friday 28 May 2004.

Pursuant to Section 46 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, public notice is hereby given that the following meetings will be held during the month of March 2004.

All meetings are to be held in the Council Chambers, Williams Street, Paeroa.

MONDAY 31 MAY 2004 WARD COMMITTEES
PLAINS 9.00 AM
PAEROA 1.00 PM WAIHI 3.30 PM

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE WATER AND WASTES

TUESDAY 01 JUNE 2004 10.00 AM

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

THURSDAY 3 JUNE 2004 9.00AM

THURSDAY 10 JUNE 2004

10.00 AM WORKS COMMITTEE
1.00 PM PLANNING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

HAURAKI COROMANDEL DEVELOPMENT GROUP

TUESDAY 15 JUNE 2004 10.00AM

HEARINGS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 17 JUNE 2004 (if required) 9.00 AM

EASTERN PLAINS DRAINAGE COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 22 JUNE 2004, 10.00AM

WESTERN PLAINS DRAINAGE COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2004, 10.30 AM

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

THURSDAY 24 JUNE 2004, 10.00 AM

L D Cavers
CHIEF EXECUTIVE