



STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL

Proposed Wairarapa Class 4 Gambling and Standalone TAB Venues Policy

The Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa District Councils are undertaking a joint review of the Wairarapa region's gambling policies to ensure they continue to meet the needs of our community. We are now seeking feedback on the proposed Wairarapa Class 4 Gambling and Standalone TAB Venues Policy.

Under the Gambling Act 2003 and Racing Act 2003, every Council is required to have a policy on Class 4 gambling and standalone TAB venues. The policies:

- » **Must** state if Class 4 gambling venues and standalone TAB venues may be established in the district and, if so, where they may be located.
- » **Can** restrict the number of gaming machines (pokies) that can be operated at a venue.
- » **Can** allow existing venues to move to a new location.

Masterton District Council (MDC), Carterton District Council (CDC) and South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) have had a joint Wairarapa Gambling Venue Policy and Wairarapa TAB Board Venue Policy since 2004.

Under legislation, both policies must be reviewed every three years. The current policies were last reviewed in 2016 and remain in effect until a new policy is adopted.

HOW YOU CAN HAVE YOUR SAY

Submissions are open until 4:30pm on Wednesday 15 May 2019. See page 4 of this document for details on how you can have your say.

DEFINITIONS

What is a Class 4 Gambling Venue?

A Class 4 gambling venue is a place licenced to Class 4 gambling i.e. gaming machines (pokies) in pubs and clubs. Class 4 gambling does not include pokies in casinos.

There are currently 12 gambling venues in the Wairarapa. Of these, three are in Carterton, four are in Masterton and five are in South Wairarapa.

What is a standalone TAB venue?

A standalone TAB venue is a place where the main business carried out is to provide racing or sports betting services. These are standalone and do not include TAB outlets or agencies that are additional activities of a bar or hotel.

There are currently no standalone TAB venues in the Wairarapa.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

The proposal is to continue the existing policies, with minor amendments. The proposed policy is provided as Appendix 1 and the key aspects are summarised below.

Proposal	Reason for Proposal and Alternative Options Considered
1 Combine the two current policies into one Wairarapa Class 4 Gambling and Standalone TAB Venues Policy	The current Wairarapa TAB Board Venues Policy duplicates the content in the current Wairarapa Gambling Venue Policy. Combining the policies removes this duplication and makes the policy simpler for our community to access.
2 Continue the current policy to prohibit new Class 4 gambling venues and cap the number of gaming machines	<p>This proposal means that the number of venues and gaming machines cannot increase from the number currently operating (12 venues and 165 gaming machines). This approach is considered the best method available to Council to minimise gambling harm over the long-term.</p> <p>Alternative options considered as part of the policy review were capping the number of venues at current levels or removing all restrictions on venues and gaming machines. These options are not recommended as they do not support a continuing reduction in venue and gaming machine numbers over time and, if all restrictions were removed, may see numbers increase. This is inconsistent with the policy aim of minimising harm from gambling and controlling Class 4 gambling.</p>
3 Continue the current policy to permit existing Class 4 gambling venues to relocate	<p>This proposal means that under certain circumstances and subject to conditions, an existing venue may be permitted to relocate. This approach is considered most appropriate as it means that an existing venue will be able to relocate to another location, either temporarily or permanently, under certain circumstances e.g. if the venue building requires earthquake strengthening.</p> <p>The alternative option is to remove the ability for existing venues to relocate. This option is not recommended as it may negatively impact local business.</p>
4 Continue the current policy to permit new standalone TAB venues to be established	<p>This approach is recommended as there are currently no standalone TAB venues in the Wairarapa and the risk of a significant number of venues applying to operate is considered low.</p> <p>The alternative option is to prohibit new standalone TAB venues, ensuring none open in the Wairarapa. Considering the low risk, this approach is not recommended.</p>
5 Continue the current policy not to permit Class 4 gambling or standalone TAB venues in locations where there may be an adverse impact on the character of the district, preschools, schools, places of worship or community facilities	<p>This approach gives Council discretion on the locations where a Class 4 gambling or standalone TAB venue may be located.</p> <p>The alternative option is to state specific locations where Class 4 gambling or standalone TAB venues may be established. This option is not recommended as it would mean Council has less flexibility when considering an application.</p>
6 Minor amendments	Minor amendments have been made to the wording to update references and to ensure the policy is clear and simple to understand.

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

When reviewing gambling policies, Councils are required to consider the social impact of gambling on its community. The full Social Impact Assessment is provided with this proposal as Appendix 2. In summary, the social impact of gambling in the Wairarapa showed that:

- » The number of gambling venues and Class 4 gaming machines is decreasing.
- » Expenditure (the amount lost) on gaming machines is increasing.
- » In 2018, expenditure was over \$7.5 million.
- » An estimated 2,035 people in the region may experience some level of gambling harm.
- » The region has access to three specialised problem gambling support services, less than one service per 10,000 people.
- » Approximately \$2.9m was received by Wairarapa community organisations from the corporate societies that operate the region’s gaming machines.
- » There are benefits to gambling including community grants, providing employment opportunities and as a form of entertainment.
- » The benefits of gambling must be balanced with the costs of gambling which include physical and mental health problems, and impacts on finances, relationships, work, study and crime.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED BY COUNCIL

In accordance with section 77 of the LGA, all reasonably practicable options have been considered. The advantages and disadvantages associated with each option are detailed in the table below. We are proposing to proceed with Option 1.

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>1 Adopt the proposed Wairarapa Class 4 Gambling and Standalone TAB Venues Policy.</p> <p>This is the preferred option.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Carries over the existing policy. » Supports a reduction in gambling venues and gaming machines in the long term. » Has been developed in consideration of the social impact of gambling in the Wairarapa and provides an appropriate balance between minimising gambling harm and continuing access to gambling as a form of entertainment and source of funding for community organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » May discourage new hospitality businesses, if they need gambling machines to be financially viable. » May reduce over time the amount of funding available to community organisations.
<p>2 Adopt a more restrictive proposed Wairarapa Class 4 Gambling and Standalone TAB Venues Policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Current and potential levels of gambling harm could be further reduced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Could negatively impact existing businesses and their ability to operate. » May reduce over time the amount of funding available to community organisations. » May lead to some job losses in the hospitality industry.
<p>3 Adopt a less restrictive proposed Wairarapa Class 4 Gambling and Standalone TAB Venues Policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » May have positive flow on effects for community organisations accessing pokie machine proceeds. » Possible economic gain from visitors who frequent gambling venues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Current and potential levels of gambling harm may increase. » Once Council consent is granted, a venue or gaming machines within a venue cannot be removed. » Would be a significant shift from Council’s current stance to promote the Wairarapa region’s wellbeing and may be negatively perceived by the community.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Submissions on the proposed Wairarapa Class 4 Gambling and Standalone TAB Venues Policy are welcome from any person or organisation who wishes to give feedback. Submissions close at 4:30pm on Wednesday 15 May 2019.

Written submissions

Written submissions can be made using either our submission form, by sending us an email or by writing a letter.

Please note that MDC is managing submissions on behalf of CDC and SWDC.

Submit Online: www.mstn.govt.nz/current-consultations

Email to: submissions@mstn.govt.nz

Post to: Masterton District Council
Attn: Kylie Smith
Freepost 112477
PO Box 444
Masterton

Deliver to: Masterton District Council
161 Queen Street, Masterton
Attn: Kylie Smith

Carterton District Council
28 Holloway Street, Carterton
Attn: Gambling Policy Review

South Wairarapa District Council
19 Kitchener Street, Martinborough
Attn: Gambling Policy Review

Hearing

MDC, CDC and SWDC will hold a joint hearing to provide any person or organisation who makes a written submission the opportunity to be heard.

Please indicate in your submission if you wish to speak at the hearing. We will contact you after submissions close in May to arrange a time.

The hearing will be held in early June. The date will be notified to the community once confirmed.

Want more information?

If you have any questions about the proposed Wairarapa Class 4 Gambling and Standalone TAB Venues Policy or the consultation process, please contact Kylie Smith at submissions@mdc.govt.nz or phone 06 370 6300.

Next Steps

Date	Activity/Milestone
15 April 2019	Submissions open.
15 May 2019	Submissions close.
5 June 2019	Joint MDC, CDC and SWDC hearing.
26 June 2019	Final policy submitted to the three Wairarapa Councils for adoption.