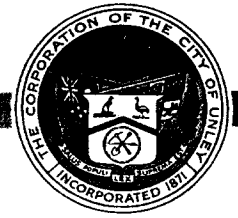


City of Unley



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Gambling Inquiry
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Our Ref: 01/01767

13 September 1999

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Productivity Commission into Australia's Gambling Industries.

Our submission to the Productivity Commission is primarily based on anecdotal information which Council receives on a regular basis.. The following provides a summary of this information, primarily received from local sporting clubs, community based, not-for profit organisations, and small business within the area, which has been attributed to the introduction of poker machines into South Australia:

- Many organisations have suffered a decline in membership, and the ability to raise revenue as a result. Council has received submissions from community organisations and sporting clubs, unable to raise enough revenue to pay accommodation lease fees and other debts. Some will not survive if the present circumstances remain.
- Non-profit organisations are struggling with their fundraising efforts, due to reported competition with gaming machines. This has come at a time, when these organisations have experienced increased in demand for their services, attributed to the economic climate in South Australia.
- Local traders and small businesses have been negatively impacted, which they, in part, have attributed to the introduction of gaming machines.
- Live music in local hotels has been displaced by gaming machines, with emerging artists finding it difficult to gain exposure to wider audiences.
- Council's Community Services area confirms the experiences of other non-profit community based organisations, in seeing first hand, the serious social and economic consequences of gambling on some individuals and their families.
- Local government's role in this area from a regulatory perspective is only in relation to Council's powers under the Development Act, for new establishments or extensions to existing ones, with few other powers to intervene and/or reflect the views of the local community.

- Council's attempts to gain funds through the Hotel's Association to increase Council's Community Services, and funds available for local community groups through our Community Grants Scheme, have not been successful to-date.

In conclusion, the draft report from the Productivity Commission is very informative and wide ranging. The City of Unley supports many of the report's key findings and recommendations, particularly in relation to the need for:

- increased regulation and control of the industry, such as use of credit, EFTPOS and ATM's, numbers and locations of machines.
- improved consumer information about the social and economic impact/risks of gambling.
- increased ongoing funding for services to assist problem gamblers and their families.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or the Manager, Social and Community Services (Kerry Symons) on 08 8372 5119, or e-mail pobox1@unley.sa.gov.au, if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,



RJ GREEN
CITY MANAGER