Gambling Venues Policy

Summary information

Policy references	
Date policy drafted:	01 10 2026
Effective date:	The policy comes into effect on the date of approval of the final policy by Tasman District Council.
Note dates of any reviews or amendments since the Policy came into effect:	Policy reviewed in 2013, 2016 and 2019.
Note who approved the amendments:	Strategy and Finance Committee
Review due:	2029 Gambling Act 2003 and the Racing Industry Act 2020 require a review of this policy within 3 years of adoption and 3 years after every subsequent review.
Legal compliance:	Gambling Act 2003; Racing Industry Act 2020
Associated documents/references:	Draft Long-Term Plan 2027-2037

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1. Purpose and scope

1.1 Council is required by Gambling Act 2003 to adopt a policy on class 4 gambling venues and by the Racing Industry Act 2020 to adopt a policy on TAB NZ venues.

1.2 These policies must specify if class 4 or TAB NZ venues may be established in Tasman District.

1.3 If class 4 or TAB NZ venues are allowed, Council must specify where the venues may be located.

1.4 In adopting these policies Council must have regard to the social impact of gambling within the territorial district.

1.5 This policy fulfils the requirements of both acts and is intended to minimize the social impact of gambling within Tasman District.

Policy Objectives:

1.6 To minimise the harm to the community caused by gambling.

1.7 To allow those who wish to participate in gambling through class 4 gaming machines.

1.8 To control the expansion of gambling within Tasman District.

1.9 To control the number of class 4 gaming machines permitted in Tasman District.

1.10 To achieve the objective in 1.9 by imposing a sinking lid on class 4 gaming machines.

1.11 To refuse to grant consent for new or relocated class 4 venues or for additional gaming machines at any venue.

1.12 To refuse to grant consent to TAB New Zealand venues in Tasman District.

2. Introduction/Background

2.1 The Gambling Venues Policy was reviewed in 2019. The 2019 policy review imposed a ‘sinking lid’ on class 4 gambling venues, the strongest form of class 4 gambling control currently available to local authorities. Since 2019 the number of class 4 venues has reduced from 13 to 9. The total number of gaming machines has reduced from 166 to 129. This policy updates and strengthens the existing policy, by further tightening control over gambling venues in Tasman District.

2.2 Despite there being no stand-alone TAB NZ venues in the district, the previous policy allowed applications by TAB NZ to establish betting venues, and it set conditions on the Council’s granting of consent.

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2.3 This policy makes clear that consent for the establishment of TAB NZ venues will not be granted. In doing so it eliminates the inconsistency between minimising gambling harm via the sinking lid policy, and the possibility of new TAB NZ venues being established, thereby expanding the opportunity to gamble within Tasman District.

2.4 This policy notes the recent passing of the Online Casino Gambling Act 2026, which establishes a regulatory regime for online casino gambling for New Zealand gamblers and includes online casino gambling within the overall gambling duty and problem gambling levy payment system that covers gambling in New Zealand.

2.5 The policy also notes the monopoly on racing and sports betting in New Zealand granted to TAB NZ by the Racing Industry Act 2020.

3. Definitions

3.1. **Class 4 gambling**: has the same meaning as defined in section 30 of the Gambling Act 2003.

3.2. **Class 4 venue**: has the same meaning as defined by section 4 of the Gambling Act 2003.

3.3. **Club**: has the same meaning as defined by section 4 of the Gambling Act 2003.

3.4. **Council**: means the Tasman District Council.

3.5. **Gaming societies**: are the organisations that hold class 4 licences, own and operate gaming machines, and make grants to non-profit community organisations.

3.6. **TAB NEW ZEALAND or TAB NZ venues**: have the same meaning as defined in section 5 of the Racing Industry Act 2020.

3.7. **Social impact of gambling**: For the purposes of this policy the social impact of gambling is to be assessed within the local context, and includes[1]:

- gambling harm
- community wellbeing
- deprivation effects
- the distribution of gambling venues
- crime and nuisance effects
- effects on families and communities

[1] The definition of 'social impact' draws on contemporary research literature, and contextualises discussions of gambling harm, social cost and impact to the Tasman context. For example, see: Browne, M. et al (2025*) Economic and social costs of gambling in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 2023-2024, Wellington, Ministry of Health; Browne, M. et al (2017) *Measuring the burden of gambling harm in New Zealand*, Wellington, Ministry of Health; Cox et at (2020) *Assessment of the effects of class 4 gambling on wellbeing in New Zealand*, BERL.

- effects on community funding.

3.8. **Harm**: has the same meaning as defined by section 4 of the Gambling Act 2003.

3.9 **Sinking lid**: refers to the policy that restricts the establishment of new class 4 venues and refuses consent for gaming societies to increase the number of machines at any venue in Tasman District. It also refuses consent for venue licence holders to relocate (unless they wish to surrender their gaming machine licence).

4. Alignment and integration

The Gambling Venues Policy contributes to Council's vision, strategic priorities and community outcomes by minimising gambling-related harm and supporting healthy, safe, inclusive and resilient communities. The revised policy:

- Supports Council's vision of ***thriving and resilient Tasman communities*** by minimizing gambling-related harm and promoting community wellbeing.

- Contributes to the community outcomes of
  - ***a strong, diverse and innovative local economy***, and
  - ***a place where people can thrive*****,** by adopting policy that carefully manages gambling opportunities and has regard for the social impact of gambling.

- Recognises that gambling harm can affect individuals, families, whānau, workplaces and the wider community, and seeks to reduce those impacts over time.

- Gives effect to Council's statutory responsibility under the Gambling Act 2003 and Racing Industry Act 2020 to consider the social impact of gambling within the district.

5. Policies

Policy on Class 4 venues

5.1 Council will not grant consent for the establishment of any additional class 4 venues or venue licences.

5.2 Council will not grant consent for additional class 4 gaming machines in existing venues.

5.3 Council will not grant consent for the relocation of any class 4 venue licence.

Policy on TAB NZ venues

5.4 Council will not grant consent for the establishment of any TAB NZ venues.

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6. Monitoring

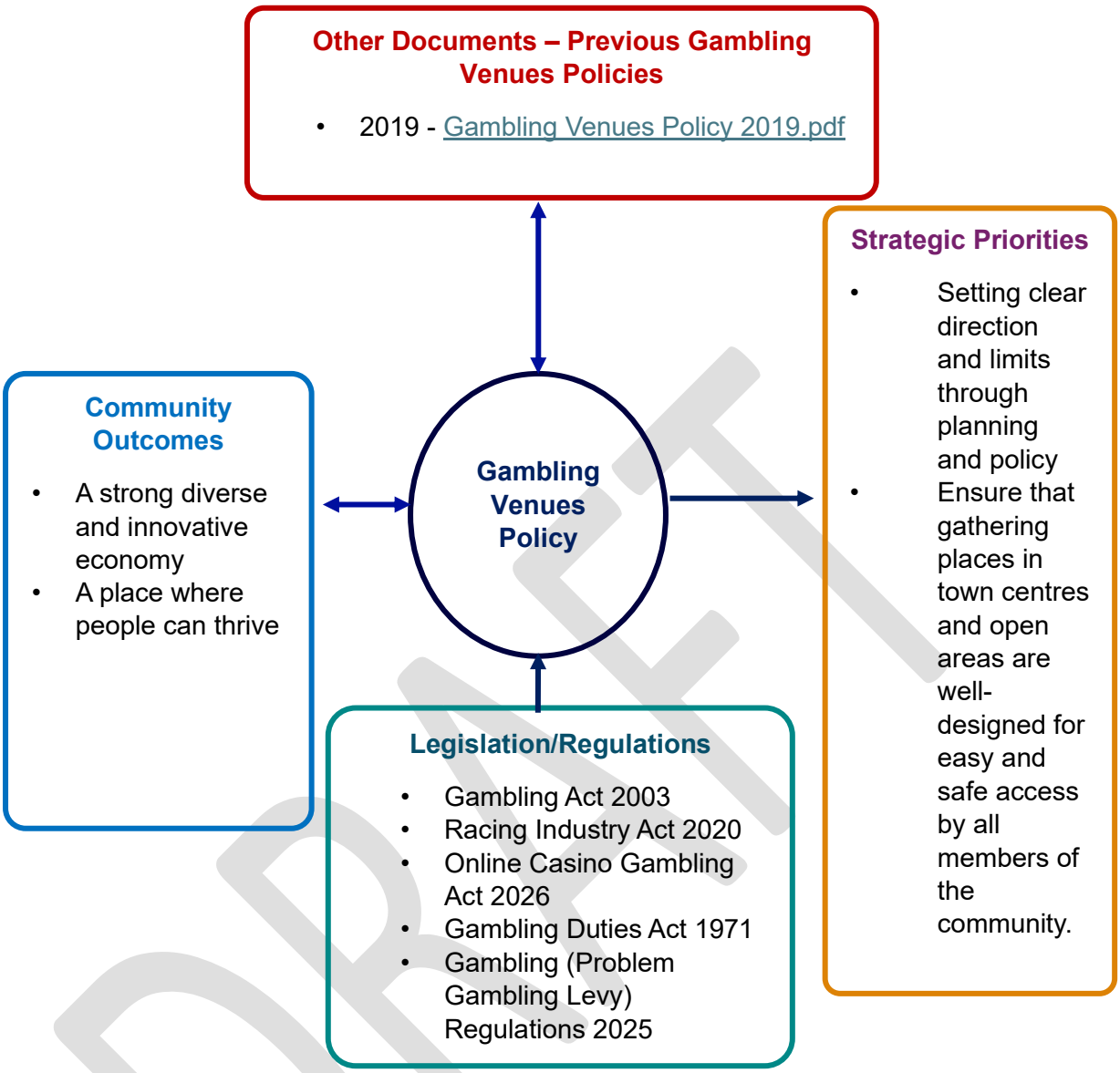
6.1 Pursuant to the Gambling Act 2003 and the Racing Industry Act 2020 this policy will be reviewed within 3 years of adoption, and then within 3 years after that review and each subsequent review.

7. Appendence

Relevant Legislation

- Gambling Act 2003
- Racing Industry Act 2020
- Online Casino Gambling Act 2026
- Gambling Duties Act 1971
- Gambling (Problem Gambling Levy) Regulations 2025

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Other Documents – Previous Gambling Venues Policies
• 2019 - Gambling Venues Policy 2019.pdf
Strategic Priorities
• Setting clear direction and limits through planning and policy
• Ensure that gathering places in town centres and open areas are well-designed for easy and safe access by all members of the community.
Community Outcomes
• A strong diverse and innovative economy
• A place where people can thrive
Gambling Venues Policy
Legislation/Regulations
• Gambling Act 2003
• Racing Industry Act 2020
• Online Casino Gambling Act 2026
• Gambling Duties Act 1971
• Gambling (Problem Gambling Levy) Regulations 2025

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