Bid to curb problem gambling

By Alana Mitchelson

PAKENHAM joggers, considered to be some of the most vulnerable to addiction in Cardinia Shire, have been invited to provide feedback following a State Government review into minimising harm from gaming machine use.

In the last financial year more than $868,000 was gambled in Cardinia Shire each day.

In September 2016 alone, $2.3 million was collected by gaming venues across the shire, up $126,000 on September last year.

Venues with gaming machines in the shire collected more than $25 million from gambling throughout the year.

The State Government’s review consultation paper released on Thursday 1 December, encouraged feedback from communities as well as industry figures on how regulations could be improved to better protect problem gamblers.

Minister for Gaming and Liquor Regulation Marlene Kairouz said the harm caused by gaming machines could not be ignored.

“This consultation is about putting people first by thoroughly reviewing the current rules to better protect problem gamblers,” Ms Kairouz said.

“A review of the rules and regulations covering gaming machines is long overdue. We’re seeking the right balance between protecting problem gamblers, and ensuring the current rules are up to date.”

A recent council review of its own gaming resulted in a new policy discouraging the addition of new gaming machines to vulnerable and disadvantaged areas within the shire to minimise the flow-on impacts of convenience gambling.

In July, the council rejected an application requesting for the introduction of 22 additional pokie machines to the shire.

The State paper outlines existing measures that apply to gaming machines, as well as research on their effectiveness.

Feedback on the paper will help guide future protection measures for problem gamblers.


For more information or to view the consultation paper, visit www.myviews.justice.vic.gov.au.

Students take the lead on merit rather than gender

BREAKING from tradition, this year Pakenham Secondary College made its selection of the 2017 student leadership team based on merit and not gender. Following a fair and well-planned process, an outstanding group of student leaders have been elected.

Students Mia Biggs and Abigail Nimmo will be the 2017 school captains, while Britney Porch and Tessa Patterson will fill the role as vice-captains.

Kirsten Trewarn will head the student representative council.

The five young ladies have been at the school since Year 7 and all expressed how the learning atmosphere has provided them with many opportunities and a fun environment in which to learn. This has been possible thanks to the helpful teachers supporting them, even after school hours.

They collectively believe that they have earned the role by demonstrating passion and articulating a desire to bring about change.

School captain Mia Biggs wishes to increase parent involvement, particularly in the younger years, and finding ways to increase parental access to what is going on.

Co-captain Abigail Nimmo wishes to share more widely the great work of students. This is especially important, as next year the college is approaching its 50th anniversary.

Vice-captain Britney Porch prepared extensively for her interview and already has a few shortlisted issues she wishes to address, such as littering and establishing a friendship inclusiveness group to support new students or those feeling excluded.

Vice-captain Tessa Patterson moved from New Zealand just after the earthquake. Tessa acknowledges the challenging times she has overcome throughout these years and wishes to help other students going through similar experiences.

Student representative council’s Kirsten Trewarn is excited to be the person to channel the students’ voice forward. A natural organiser of all things, Kirsten has a long list of issues to tackle, the first one is making sure students understand her role and how she can assist them.

Despite the diverse focus within the student leadership group, they believe the only way forward is to unite their skills and actively work as a team whose collective effort will have a greater impact. Something, we have no doubt, will be achieved.