

From: "Mayor@newham.gov.uk" <Mayor@newham.gov.uk>

Date: 2 September 2014 11:36:12 BST

To: "Owen, Tony, Cllr" <Tony.Owen@bromley.gov.uk>

Subject: Join the campaign to get high stake betting machines off our high streets

<image001.jpg>

Dear Cllr Tony Owen,

I am writing to you regarding the ever increasing issue of betting shop clustering and specifically the proliferation of fixed-odds betting terminals (FOBTs) on high streets across the country. Many local areas have long been campaigning on this issue and I ask that you support Newham's proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act to reduce the high stakes on FOBTs in high street betting outlets.

Residents are extremely concerned about the proliferation of high street betting outlets due to the impact on the vitality of high streets and the increased anti-social behaviour associated with clustering. As you will be aware, the Gambling Act 2005 removed licensing control from local government leaving councils hamstrung. Four FOBTs are permitted per betting outlet and it is in response to this cap that multiple premises have been opened. Following your support for the submission led by the London Borough of Hackney, the Government are consulting on placing betting outlets within a separate use clause. Whilst this is a welcome development, it will not address existing clustering.

There are more than twice as many betting shops in the poorest 55 boroughs compared with the most affluent 115, equivalent by population. Despite this evidence that the most vulnerable are being targeted, the Government has refused to act. For this reason, Newham is proposing to make a submission to reduce the stakes on high street FOBTs from £100 to £2, bringing them in line with other gaming machines. We are determined that local authorities should be given effective tools to strategically improve town centres, incentivise growth and protect residents from the disruption caused by FOBT machines. I therefore would appreciate your support for this proposal so we can continue to work together to tackle this problem.

The attached briefing available [here](#) provides further information and we will also provide each supportive council with the opportunity to comment on the final submission to Government along with supporting material for your local press engagement. I ask that in the meantime you share this campaign with your neighbouring authorities and take steps to formalise your support within your council structures. All that is required at this stage is confirmation of your support.

Thank you for your support and please do not hesitate to get in touch with my office for any further information.

Yours sincerely,

<image002.jpg>

Sir Robin Wales
Mayor of Newham