

# MEDIA RELEASE

25 November 2009

## **PROPOSED GAMING FUND MERGER RINGS ALARM BELLS**

### **Lion Foundation move may further erode local funding**

#### **“Use it or lose it” - call to community groups**

The merger of gaming machine funding organisations the Lion Foundation and Perry Foundation means Papakura community groups may miss out on funding for work they do in the community.

Takapuna-based Lion Foundation, already the second-biggest trust after the Wellington-based NZ Community Trust, will merge on January 1 with fourth-ranked Perry Foundation, based in Hamilton. The move creates the country's biggest gambling charity, to be run from Takapuna.

Papakura District Council says this may mean community groups working in the district will find it harder to secure funding for their activities. Papakura Community Development Manager Leora Hirsh is urging groups to make sure they apply for funding for projects that benefit the local community.

She says the Lion Foundation administers gaming machines based in Papakura and across the region and distributes funds to community groups from the profits. Local groups serving community needs have every right to access the funds gathered by gaming machines administered under the Lion Foundation.

“But we don’t seem to have a good record of securing funding for community projects this way.”

Lion Foundation funding is available for any charitable, philanthropic or cultural purpose that benefits the local community.

“Our local groups do good work with very little financial support, and they are missing out. When the South Auckland Charitable Trust was merged into the Lion Foundation a significant local funding channel went with it, and this new merger may well further restrict access to funds for the smaller local groups that work directly in our community,” she said.

The most recent figures on the Lion Foundation’s web site show that the Papakura district received \$1,067,942. The latest hard copy report from the Foundation shows

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that of that total, more than \$600,000 went to organisations providing services to the greater Counties-Manukau or Auckland regions, such as a major boost for the Order of St John which helped fund new ambulances for the greater region.

The Lion Foundation's funding goes to sport (35 per cent), education (15 per cent), health (20 per cent) and community (30 per cent).

Funding channelled into community projects in Papakura in the period April 2008 - April 2009 totalled \$368,230; into education \$40,273; into health \$458,000; and into sport \$200,989.

"The regional and national organisations that receive the rest of this funding all do excellent jobs and are worthy recipients of the funding, there is no doubt of that. But this money was generated locally from people in our community who use local gaming machines, and we would like to think a greater proportion of the profit was coming back directly to groups working right here in Papakura for the benefit of the community," Ms Hirsh said.

"Frequently it is more a case of insufficient local applications, rather than the Lion Foundation not funding local services."

Ms Hirsh said the Council runs workshops on making funding applications to the Lion Foundation and other charitable trusts and can also provide general advice on funding sources. The next such workshop will be held in early 2010.

"If local groups need help making an effective application they are invited to come along to the workshop or make contact with us directly."

Information about how to apply for funding is also available on the Lion Foundation's web site, [www.lionfoundation.org.nz](http://www.lionfoundation.org.nz)

Ms Hirsh can be contacted at the Council on telephone 295 1395.

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