

South Sydney Rabbitohs

NEWS

CLUB NEWS

Leagues Club says no to pokies

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The South Sydney Leagues Club (SSLC) Board has reached a majority decision to have no poker machines in the Club upon completion of the redevelopment in 2008.

The SSLC Board voted by a 4-3 majority to accept a proposal put forward by the South Sydney Football Club (SSFC) which will see the Club become poker machine-free in Redfern.

The proposal will see South Sydney Football Club seek to work with SSLC:

- to develop a 2500m² club on Level 1 of the Rabbitohs Building at 265 Chalmers Street, Redfern;
- to form a partnership with an experienced food and beverage venue operator, to manage the new facility;
- to create a family friendly club where children are welcome to enter the club restaurants and function spaces with their parents;
- to increase the parking available to SSLC members;
- to make this facility a consistently profitable operation which financially supports the South Sydney Rabbitohs, to help ensure it becomes a consistently successful football team well into the future;
- to support the Leagues Club with services such as marketing, membership services, co-promotion, management support, media/PR, events and business to business opportunities.

SSFC Executive Chairman Peter Holmes à Court said this is the best decision for the community of Redfern.

“We want to thank the Board of the Leagues Club for their support of this concept and their commitment to help make the proposal a success,” Mr Holmes à Court said.

“We will work with the Leagues Club Board to create a family friendly Club where children are welcome to enter the club restaurants and function spaces with their parents. The Football Club will be able to hold large events in the Club and the two organisations will work closely together to provide facilities for the community.

“This decision is about what is best for the community of Redfern and the work of both organisations within that community. Supporters of the South Sydney Rabbitohs, and its stance, can personally support the Club by becoming a Football Club Member. The days of massive Leagues Club grants from poker machines to Football Clubs are things of the past.

“The AFL has shown the way on this. They don’t have more Members per Club or bigger crowds because people think it’s a better game. It’s because they have made the game about Membership and about Members playing an active role

within their Club. This is what needs to happen across Rugby League, especially in NSW.

“Significant increases in Football Club Membership (at the Season Ticketed level) will form the foundation of financial stability for NSW Rugby League Clubs going forward, with the Rabbitohs calling on its faithful to lead the charge in NSW, as over 9000 Members have already done including 4300 Ticketed Members. A large and strong Football Club Membership base will drive more people through the doors of the Leagues Club and the other facilities the precinct will have to offer.

“SSFC Membership (which includes access to the Leagues Club in 2008) is how thousands of Rabbitohs fans show their support for what this Club does on the field, in the local community and throughout the country.

“SSFC and the Leagues Club have made a united move to focus supporters' energies on becoming Members of the Football Club to support their endeavours in this community.”

Chairman of South Sydney Leagues Club Bill Alexiou-Hucker said the decision of his Board opens up some exciting opportunities.

“We’re looking forward to working on a poker machine-free Club and working with the Football Club and the local community in creating a new-style licensed Club for the people of Redfern,” Mr Alexiou-Hucker said.

“We will not only have a Club that is more family friendly and more welcoming, but we will again be working with the Football Club, that represents this district, to provide the best support for the community.

“The deal we have struck will mean SSLC Members will have a better venue that will be 2500m² instead of the original 1500m², there will be better facilities for Members and the Leagues Club Board will be able to offer Members better deals and promotions at the Club.

“It also means the Football Club will be able to hold large events at the venue, something which hasn’t been able to happen in recent years.

“We, as a Board, have made a commitment to do everything we can to make this work and we’re excited about the challenge ahead.”

We encourage comments on this story in the Members Web Forum 'The Bell'.