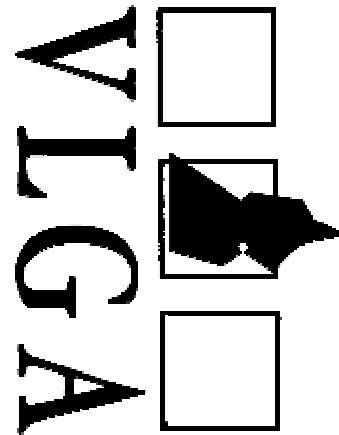


Local Government Gambling Policy Framework



Promoting responsible gambling policies in our municipalities

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Moonee Valley City Council
Moreland City Council
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

Local Government Gambling Policy Framework

Promoting responsible gambling policies in our municipalities

A policy framework

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Introduction

Gambling has always been part of the Australian way of life. Until the early 1990s, gambling in Victoria was largely centred on horse-racing and lotteries.

In 1991, the Victorian State Government legislated the introduction of gaming machines into this state. As a result there are now some 27,500 electronic gaming machines (EGMs) distributed across Victoria in licensed venues throughout the State's municipalities. There are another 2,500 EGMs located in Crown Casino. In the decade since 1991, the use of gaming machines has increased to significant proportions. This is shown by the net expenditure on EGMs. In the year to 30 June 2001, the amount of money lost on EGMs amounted to \$2.366 billion. This equated to an average loss for every Victorian over the age of 18 of \$650.

Of that \$650, between \$430 and \$490 left the municipality in the form of taxes paid to the State Government and payments to Tattersalls and Tabcorp, Victoria's two only gaming operators licensed to provide gaming machines to clubs and hotels within this state. A third operator, Crown Limited, is restricted to operating gaming machines within Crown Casino only.

Player loss continues to rise. The growth in player loss across Victoria was 11.1% in 1999/00. In 2000/01, player loss increased another 9%.

Repeated research and economic analysis has shown that losses through EGMs have an effect on a local economy; that gambling is higher where local access is available; and that the numbers of EGMs are most dense in areas of greatest disadvantage.

Surveys repeatedly demonstrate widespread community concern about the adverse impacts of EGM gambling on individuals and communities.

The development of a framework to assist local governments towards a local policy on gambling recognises the increasing prevalence of the use of EGMs within our municipalities and the increasing concern of communities about the impact of gambling. It also recognises that local governments are well placed to comment on these impacts and to lead their communities in responding to them.

Player loss data reveals that the losses per player in Mornington Peninsula Shire were higher than the Victorian average by 7.7% in 1998-1999 and 6.4% in 1999-2000.

However, in 2000-2001 the average losses per player in the Shire grew exponentially by \$163.63 or 25.40%.

At the same time Mornington Peninsula experienced an intensification in density of gaming machines in the municipality. In 2000-2001 the density of gaming machines was 25% higher than the average for Victoria and 23% higher than the density of 7.8 gaming machines per 100 adults over 18 years of age for Metropolitan Melbourne.

Total player loss in the Mornington Peninsula Shire was \$72.6m in 2000/01.

The growth in the density of gaming machines and increases in the player losses from electronic gaming substantiates the Shire's concern regarding gaming.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council 2001

This framework builds upon a decade of experience and practice by many local governments and the work of the Local Government Working Group on Gambling (LGGWG), a local government gambling policy working group resourced by the VLGA.

The framework also acknowledges the planning and regulatory roles of local governments in relation to the number and location of EGMs in any municipality, and local governments' role in establishing the social and economic impacts of additional EGMs.

This framework recognises that the social and economic impacts of gambling in municipalities require policy responses from Councils. It also recognises that such responses are being developed within a context characterised by a lack of clear policy direction from the State Government and its continuing reliance on gambling taxes as a substantial segment of its revenue base.

It also recognises that the organisation of local level gambling within Victoria has allowed for the development of three substantial operators of EGMs. With the growth of local level gambling, the interests of these operators have also grown. This policy framework acknowledges the roles councils play in advocating to the State Government on matters where their residents are unduly affected by current legislation and regulation. It also invites councils to take advantage of the leverage available through the VLGA, especially through participation in LGGWG.

This gambling framework focuses on the form of gambling conducted through the use of EGMs. The term 'local level gambling' is used to describe EGM gambling. References are made throughout the framework to 'responsible gambling'. This term is understood to refer to the activity carried out by responsible gamblers, persons who gamble within their means and without adversely affecting their health and wellbeing or anyone else's, particularly their family's. This is a view of gambling congruent with an emphasis on societal outcomes, rather than a moralistic approach, and acknowledges that responsible gambling is an accepted part of our society.

The explosion in poker machine numbers, their concentration in disadvantaged areas, the rise in problem gambling, the lack of Council planning control over pokie venues, the negative economic impacts and the lack of independent research on the impacts of gambling have all become concerns for local governments. The VLGA through its Local Government Working Group on Gambling has worked to:

- Share knowledge and understanding about trends and developments in the gambling industry, particularly that major segment of the industry which operates local gambling venues;
- Develop innovative and relevant research projects which inform local governments about the social and economic impacts of gambling at the local level;
- Develop practical policy frameworks and policy instruments to maximise the leverage of local governments in their interactions with their local communities, State Government and the gambling industry;
- Develop and share expertise and knowledge in relation to the planning process as it relates to local gambling venues;
- Develop and implement appropriate campaigns to highlight relevant issues related to gambling, particularly the need for adequate planning controls and other regulation of the gambling industry.

For more information on the work of the VLGA on gambling visit the web site of the VLGA at: www.vlga.org.au

For a summary of the financial aspects of the gambling industry in Victoria, see:

Gambling in the City of Maribyrnong, Directions Paper, 2002 available on www.vlga.org.au

See the Gambling Research Newsletter for:

- Updates on LGGWG activities
- Information on advocacy being undertaken by the VLGA and other advocacy groups

The Gambling Research Newsletter is a project of the VLGA.

For more information:

Contact grn@borderlands.org.au
or visit www.borderlands.org.au/grn

How to use this document

This framework for a policy on local gambling draws on the experience and practice of many Victorian local governments.

Background information, legislation and research evidence are provided via links to useful web sites, articles and other documents. The right hand column has been provided for this purpose.

The framework appreciates the diversity amongst Victoria's local governments and takes account of their leadership roles in community building and their capacity to promote community health and wellbeing across the municipality. It also acknowledges the roles local governments play in economic development.

The framework therefore advances an approach which treats gambling as an issue requiring a whole-of-council response.

This framework acknowledges the importance of quality consultation and engagement as building blocks for good governance. It should be used in conjunction with the Community Consultation Resource Guide jointly published by the VLGA and the State Government as a 'Best Value' exercise.

A practical guide is provided by applying excerpts of previous policy work of a number of councils to the proposed framework. It is hoped that other councils will be able to draw upon this work to assist with the development of local policies on gambling within their own municipalities.

These excerpts are also used to provide added information on the operation of gambling at the local level within Victoria.

See Community Consultation Resource Guide. Copies available from the VLGA.

For further information see www.vlga.org.au

Why develop a gambling policy?

Gambling continues to grow in Victoria. It is estimated that gambling taxes overall will contribute 16.5% of the State budget in 2002/03. Taxes from EGMs will contribute 11%. Residents from a large metropolitan municipality such as Maribyrnong are expected to lose on average \$2,800 per household each year from their use of EGMs.

Evidence to date does not confirm a net contribution of gambling to the community. Most frequently cited benefits from gambling at the local level include employment opportunities, increased social opportunities especially for women and older people, increased use of local tradespeople and services and increased contributions to local organisations.

The impacts on the spending patterns of the residents of a municipality from local gambling, together with the social impacts documented here and elsewhere in this framework, require policy responses.

At minimum, a gambling policy enables a local government to publicise its expectations to local gambling venue operators and the wider community. By so doing, it reduces the scope for arbitrariness and any legal ramifications which may result.

A gambling policy can also provide a framework for councils to continually review the way they are responding to the evolution of the gambling industry in their municipality, and for stakeholders to assist with the development of that response.

Local level gambling in Victoria

Whilst the term 'gaming' may be used to refer to activities relating to EGMs in clubs and hotels, and card and betting games played at tables in casinos, the preferred term used in this framework is 'local level gambling'. In the context of this framework, 'gaming' will be used to describe gambling activities relating to EGMs only.

Local level gambling in Victoria is largely controlled by legislation and regulation.

For information on the perceived benefits and negative impacts of gambling, see:

Research commissioned by Mornington Peninsula Shire Council in 1999, summarised in Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy 2001, available at www.mornpen.vic.gov.au

Striking a Balance: The Impact of Gaming in the City of Kingston, July 2002, available at www.kingston.vic.gov.au

The legislative context

EGMs have been available in Victoria since 1991 and are regulated under the *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*.

Under the Act, two companies, Tattersall's Gaming Ltd and TABCORP Holdings Ltd, are licensed to provide EGMs to licensed venues in Victoria. These two companies, Tattersalls and Tabcorp, are commonly referred to as the 'duopoly'. A third licence is held by Crown Limited. The general term applied to Tattersalls and Tabcorp is 'gaming operator'.

Licensed venues are defined under *the Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*.

EGMs can only be located in premises holding a liquor licence. For a venue to become an approved venue for gaming it must first be approved as a premises suitable for gaming and then be included on a venue operators licence.

A venue operator's licence is granted for up to five years. Applicants must meet the full probity requirements of the legislation.

The Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority (VCGA) has responsibility for issuing such licences.

Under the Act, the VCGA is empowered to:

- ensure that gaming is conducted honestly and without exploitation;
- regulate operators, machine manufacturers and venue management;
- ensure the implementation of Government policy;
- provide advice to the Minister for Gaming;
- advise the Minister on the social and economic impact of gaming; and
- foster responsible gambling

The main elements of the legislation, as well as key decisions flowing from the legislation, include:

Legislation relating to gaming:

Gaming Machine Control Act 1991
 Gaming Machine Control (Advertising) Regulations 2001
 Gaming Machine Control (Clocks) Regulations 2001
 Gaming Machine Control (Responsible Gambling) (Lighting and Views) Regulations 2001

Other legislation relating to gambling:

Planning and Environment Act 1987
Lotteries Gaming and Betting Act 1966
Public Lotteries Act 2000
Tattersalls Consultations Act 1958
Club Keno Act 1993
Gaming and Betting Act 1994
Gaming No 2 Act 1997
Liquor Control Act 1987
Liquor Control Reform Act 1988
Casino Control Act 1991
Casino (Management Agreement) Act 1993
Racing Act 1958
Racing Act 1987
Interactive Gaming (Player Protection) Act 1999
TT Line Gaming Act 1993

All legislation can be found at the Australasian Legal Information website:
www.austlii.edu.au/

- Allocation rules that apply to gaming machine approvals, specifying that:
- Tattersalls and Tabcorp are to be allocated equal numbers of EGMs to operate
- EGMs are to be allocated equally between clubs and hotels
- EGMs are to be allocated between metropolitan and country venues on an 80/20 basis
- Minors (under 18 years) are not permitted to use EGMs or to enter areas where EGMs are located (restricted areas)
- The Minister for Gaming has set the maximum number of machines in any single venue at 105 EGMs (excluding Crown Casino which has 2,500 EGMs and 350 gaming tables)
- A council planning permit is not required by a venue for installing EGMs providing they take up less than 25% of the floor area of the premises where liquor may be consumed
- Gambling venues must provide a full range of hotel facilities and services to club members
- EGMs should not be permitted in shopping complexes and strip shopping centres if specified in a Council's planning scheme.

At present there is a 'cap' on the number of EGMs permitted in Victoria. The Act limits the number of machines to 27,500 divided equally between Tattersalls and Tabcorp, with a further 2,500 allocated to Crown Casino. EGMs are located in almost all local government areas.

The Minister for Gaming and the VCGA have some discretionary powers in relation to the distribution and location of EGMs in the State.

The most recent use of these powers by the Minister for Gaming and the VCGA has seen the application of limits on the maximum number of EGMs available for gaming in a region. The regional caps policy is allowed for under Section 12AA of the *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*. The regional caps policy has to date identified 5 regions where numbers of EGMs must not exceed the numbers of machines at 30 June 2000. In four of these regions the numbers of EGMs will need to be reduced.

For data on the distribution of EGMs visit the web site of the Office of Gaming Regulation at www.ogr.vic.gov.au

Regional caps policy implemented:

Following a direction from the Minister for Gaming in February 2001, the VCGA has instructed gaming operators, Tabcorp and Tattersalls, to remove 406 EGMs from 5 designated regional areas: Bass Coast, Greater Dandenong Plus, Darebin Plus, La Trobe and Maribyrnong Plus. All EGMs are to be relocated to other areas by 14 February 2004

Gaming Machine Control Act 1991

See Section 12: Ministerial Directions as to requirements for Gaming Machines

See Section 12AA: Regional limits on gaming machines

See Section 27 and Part 2a : Local Governments submissions on social and economic impact

For Minister's directions and VCGA decisions on the regional caps policy and its implementation, go to Public Announcements on the web site of the VCGA: www.gambling.vcga.vic.gov.au

Gaming Machine Control Act 1991

Section 27(2AA)

For the purpose of complying with a regional limit, the gaming operator who supplies gaming machines to a venue operator may request the Authority in writing to propose an amendment of the conditions of that venue operator's licence by varying the number of gaming machines permitted in an approved venue.

The regions so determined under these powers do not necessarily align with municipal boundaries. Two of the five regions already defined are separate municipalities. Three are centred on distinct municipalities with the additions of a number of postcode areas from neighbouring municipalities. A region therefore may include five neighbouring municipalities, or more. The staged relocation of EGMs will mean additional EGMs in other municipalities.

Responsibility for the location of EGMs rests with the two gaming operators, Tabcorp and Tattersalls. However locations are subject to the limitations set by the State Government and to agreements with venue operators.

State Government administration and oversight of gaming in Victoria

The VCGA (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority) is a statutory body established under the *Gaming and Betting Act 1994*. The Authority commenced operations in June 1994.

The VCGA has been delegated authority by the State Government to regulate the activities of the key operatives in the gambling industry. Numbers and locations of gaming machines have to be approved by the VCGA.

The Office of Gaming Regulation (OGR) is a unit in the State Government Department of Treasury and Finance. The OGR has been established to provide support for the Minister for Gaming, the VCGA, the Director of Gaming and Betting and the Director of Casino Surveillance in carrying out their statutory functions of regulating the gambling industry in Victoria.

The Office of Gaming Regulation was established in July 2001.

The Gambling Research Panel (GRP) is an independent body, established under the *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991* on 10 May 2000 to commission and monitor research on the social and economic impact of gambling, the causes of problem gambling and strategies to minimise harm from gambling. Such research is to be made public.

The Gaming Research Panel is funded from the Community Support Fund.

For further information on the VCGA:
Go to www.gambling.vcga.vic.gov.au

Further information on the Office of Gaming Regulation is
available at www.ogr.vic.gov.au

For further information on the Gaming Research Panel and
details of the 2001/02 and 2002/03 Research Plans, go to
www.grp.vic.gov.au

For research commissioned by the VCGA prior to May 2000,
go to www.gambling.vcga.vic.gov.au

The Community Support Fund (CSP) was established under the *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991* to allocate a proportion of Government revenue from gaming machines in hotels to community projects, including gaming research.

The Community Support Fund also provides funds for problem gambling counselling services which are provided free of charge. The funding of these services is administered by the Department of Human Services.

For information on the Community Support Fund and details of its granting program, go to www.dpc.vic.gov.au

The CSP is administered through the Department of Premier and Cabinet

The DHS web site provides ready access to assistance for problem gamblers at www.dhs.vic.gov.au

Information on State Government policy on problem gambling is also available at www.dhs.vic.gov.au

Gambling and local governments

As responsible planning authorities, Councils have specific roles and responsibilities identified within State legislation. The roles and responsibilities in relation to gambling are mainly contained within:

- The *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*; and
- The *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The powers of Councils over the numbers and locations of gaming machines are limited by the legislation.

Because gaming machines may only be located in premises associated with the consumption of alcohol, and for which a planning permit is required, Councils may have indirect influence over the location of gaming venues under the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1988*.

The main opportunities under gaming legislation for Councils to affect gaming activities in specific municipalities exist:

- When a planning permit is required because the installation of gaming machines will take up more than 25% of the floor area of the premises where liquor may be consumed.

A planning application may only be refused for statutory planning reasons. Councils are not permitted to refuse an application on social or economic grounds.

- When requested by the VCGA to provide an Economic and Social Impact Submission to assist the VCGA in deciding on the application.

Impact Submissions must be provided within 28 days.

This timeline is generally recognised as being inadequate and extensions of time are usually possible on request.

Legislation relating to planning functions:

- *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Liquor Control Reform Act 1988*

Previous decisions of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) may have some bearing on gaming applications. In cases where a planning permit is required, zoning is the most decisive factor in determining the outcome of an application.

Decisions of VCAT show that Councils can specify that a range of provisions and conditions be met, including

- provision of car parking arrangements;
- times and operation of waste collections;
- safe escort services for patrons to their cars from midnight to dawn;
- security patrol arrangements in carparks between 11pm and 4.00am
- landscaping of carparks;
- signage
- access
- disability access; and
- consideration of artificial light, litter, untidiness, noise, smell, and smoke

Online copies of the form for making an Economic and Social Impact submission are available at:
www.gaming.vcga.vic.gov.au

A Pokies Application Response Kit, PARK, has been developed by the VLGA to assist Councils' submissions to the VCGA. Go to www.vlga.org.au

To meet the 28 day deadline, councils may need to document internal processes. Models have been developed by Maroondah and Moonee Valley Councils.
Go to: www.vlga.org.au

The VLGA has conducted a survey of the experiences of 6 Councils before the VCGA hearing process. A summary of the findings can be read in the February 2002 edition of the Gaming research newsletter.

VCGA decisions and reasons for decision are available at www.gambling.vcga.vic.gov.au, click on [Authority Information](#)

Gambling and the broader roles of local government

The opportunity for local government authorities to make submissions to the VCGA on the social and economic impacts of variations to the numbers of EGMs provides the basis for additional involvement of councils in the way gambling operates in their municipalities.

The 1999 Report of the Productivity Commission's inquiry into Australia's gambling industries infers a responsibility for councils to take on leadership roles in responding to gambling.

The key findings from the Productivity Commission's inquiry included:

- Gambling provides enjoyment to most Australians, 80 per cent of whom gambled in the last year. Some 40 per cent gamble regularly;
- Some 2.1 per cent of adult Australians are problem gamblers. They make up 15 per cent of regular non-lottery gamblers;
- Problem gamblers lose on average around \$12 000 each per year, compared with about \$650 for other gamblers;
- The prevalence of problem gambling is related to the degree of accessibility of gambling, particularly EGMs;
- The costs include financial and emotional impacts on the gamblers and on others, with on average at least five other people affected to varying degrees. For example:
 - one in ten said they have contemplated suicide due to gambling, and
 - nearly half those in counselling reported losing time from work or study in the past year due to gambling; and
- Around 70 per cent of people surveyed believed that gambling did more harm than good. 92 per cent did not want to see further expansion of EGMs.

The Federal Treasurer commissioned an inquiry into Australia's gambling industries in August 1998. The Productivity Commission was asked to examine:

- the economic and social impacts of the gambling industries; and
- the effects of the different regulatory structures that surround these industries.

For a copy of the report, go to www.pc.gov.au/inquiry/gambling

Striking a Balance: the Impact of Gaming in the City of Kingston is a research report on the perceived local social and economic impact of poker machines in the City of Kingston. The research was conducted in 2002.

The report also provides a review of relevant Australian and international literature surrounding aspects of gaming machines. It also analysed available data on problem gambling.

Additional findings for the literature review presented in the Kingston report include:

- Housing crisis and homelessness are significant for residents whose gambling becomes problematic. This particularly relates to EGM gambling;
- About one in ten gamblers have committed a crime because of their gambling;
- Up to two-thirds of problem gamblers in counselling have committed a crime to finance their gambling; and
- The crimes by problem gamblers are typically of the non-violent, property-related variety.

Summary findings from the Kingston research were:

- There is a great deal of community concern about the negative impacts of gaming machines on the local community and on business; and
- Most findings locally reflect the findings in the national and international literature on gaming machine gambling.

A copy of the full report is available at:
www.kingston.vic.gov.au and www.vlga.org.au

The State Government requires venue operators to show how the installation of EGMs, or additions to existing numbers, will impact socially and economically on local communities.

The Gaming Machine Control Act also requires the VCGA to take into account any submission from the relevant council on the economic and social impacts for applications for increased gaming machines.

As stated by the Productivity Commission, and reaffirmed in the 2002 study in the City of Kingston, there is substantial community concern about the adverse impacts of gaming on individuals and the community.

Thus local governments have additional areas for attention beyond planning controls to be involved with gaming in their municipalities.

A local government gambling policy framework

Introduction

The introduction of electronic gaming machines into Victoria in 1991 and the experiences of their impacts on local communities in the years since have revealed the need for local governments to engage in policy making to respond to the impacts of gambling on their local communities.

Local governments need coherent and predictable approaches to

- their responsibilities as laid down in legislation, and
- to the widespread community concern about the adverse impacts of gambling, especially EGMs.

The approach recommended here recognises existing legislative requirements in the *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*. It also recognises that local governments are increasingly called upon to document the social and economic effects of gaming on their communities. The assessments of these effects may in turn demand increased research and data collection. They may also lead some councils to plan for interventions toward reductions in the adverse effects of gaming on individuals and the community at large.

This policy framework on gambling draws upon the established role of local governments in strategic planning, community building and the promotion of community health and wellbeing.

It relies on the desirability of any responsible gambling policy being embedded in 'joined-up' arrangements within each council and in its relations with its community and key stakeholders.

It recognises that community involvement is a prerequisite of good governance and hence good policy making.

This framework in summary is based on an approach that incorporates:

- the involvement of the community in policy development;
- the integration of the policy within each council's corporate planning framework;
- the recognition of problem gambling as a key public health issue.

Many councils have already responded to the rapid growth in the numbers of gaming machines in their municipalities. They have sought to meet their legislative obligations as well as seeking to protect the health and wellbeing of the community.

A number of councils have had for some years clearly articulated policy positions on gaming in their municipality. Others have added some strategic directions to their policy positions, indicating a need to develop ongoing responses to how gaming is impacting on their communities.

Some councils have clearly articulated current policy positions, and have indicated through action plans areas for direct action and attention.

A number of councils have developed charters for responsible gambling to encourage responsible gambling practice within existing and potential gaming venues in their municipalities.

Charters have provided frameworks for responsible action by local gaming venues, enabling them to demonstrate that they care about the community, and provide safe, healthy and pleasant environments.

Charters have been developed in conjunction with forums for responsible gambling, with ongoing membership from the local council, venue operators and community organisations with a focus on gambling issues.

Charters and forums appear to be least successful when membership includes representation from Tatteralls and Tabcorp, who are unable to reflect local interests.

The early work done by councils on charters has contributed to the development of an Industry Code of Practice for Responsible Gaming. This Code has met with general acceptance by most local governments, and has allowed them to release resources previously supporting the operation of a local charter.

For a copy of a charter developed within the City of Maribyrnong, go to:

www.vlga.org.au, or
www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

Key elements of a local government gambling policy

The key elements of a gambling policy include:

- Identification of Council's obligations and responsibilities
- Articulation of areas for additional attention and action
- Community engagement process to determine policy directions
- Clear position statements
- Assignment of accountability for policy areas
- Ongoing monitoring and awareness raising through local processes.

Steps/Tools needed to develop a policy

- The listing of gambling as an issue for investigation of the positive and negative impacts on the municipality, and council endorsement of this direction.
- Assignment of responsibility for gaming policy development to a relevant branch of council's administration
- Collection of data on the location and distribution of EGMs in the municipality, as well as comparative data across all LGAs and populations
- Collation of legislative obligations on local governments and other responsibilities arising from the implementation of State Government legislation
- Literature search to ascertain issues relating to the impacts of gambling on social and economic development
- Identification of where gambling policy relates to other council plans
- Conducting of local area research to ascertain impacts of gambling on the local community
- Collaboration with other councils, locally, regionally and statewide through LGWGOG, to share experience of gambling and expertise

- A process of ongoing engagement with the community to inform the community and for it in turn to inform the council of the community's needs, attitudes and opinions and to assist council in determining how it should respond to gambling and its impacts.

Steps: a checklist

- ✓ Listing of gambling as an issue for policy development
- ✓ Allocate responsibility for gaming policy within council's administration
- ✓ Data collection:
 - Location and distribution of EGMs
 - Aggregate and comparative data across all LGAs for
 - EGMs per 1000 adults
 - losses per adult
 - LGA ranking for level of poverty and other indicators of gaming activity
- ✓ Collate relevant legislative requirements
- ✓ Literature search
- ✓ Link gambling to other council plans/policies
- ✓ Identify key organisations in gambling research and funding
- ✓ Check the availability of local area research on local impacts:
 - Social
 - economic
- ✓ Collaborate with other councils
- ✓ Identify local stakeholders:
 - venue operators
 - advocacy groups
 - problem gambling counselling services
- ✓ Design ongoing community engagement process which:
 - identifies policy areas for council to address
 - supports the policy development process

- advises on ongoing consultative mechanisms to support the implementation of the final policy
 - assists with the evaluation of the policy
 - builds community knowledge and capacity to support ongoing policy development on EGMs and their impacts on the community
-
- ✓ Prepare a draft issues paper for discussion
 - ✓ Endorsement by council
 - ✓ Begin the community engagement process
 - ✓ Prioritise issues for inclusion in the draft policy
 - ✓ Determine what objectives council may have for its gambling policy
 - ✓ Prepare a draft policy for consultation
 - ✓ Continue with community engagement process
 - ✓ Review draft policy
 - ✓ Adoption of policy by council
 - ✓ Implementation
 - ✓ Evaluation

A suggested format for a gambling policy

1. Statement of purpose
2. Statement of vision on the conduct of gambling in the municipality
3. Background/History on gambling in the municipality
4. Key policy statements on gambling in the municipality
5. Statement of key areas to be addressed in the policy

Example 1: Gaming machine locations and numbers:

Example 2: The social and economic impacts of gambling

Example 3: Problem gambling

For each example:

- Goal statement for each area: statement of broad purpose
- Statement/description of any legislative and regulatory requirements or opportunities
- Local data to provide additional clarification of the area and its relationship to the municipality
- Linkages to other council policies/plans
- Position statements for each area

6. Community engagement mechanisms to advise on policy implementation, including communication strategy
7. Implementation, accountability and resource commitment
8. Evaluation process and timetable

Building on the experience of others

The following pages show how a number of councils have responded to the expansion of gambling in their municipalities. Existing council documents have been used as examples of approaches taken to date. Excerpts have been grouped under the framework headings as advanced in this document.

1. Statement of purpose (general intent or starting point)

Knox City Council

Knox City Council recognises that legal gambling is a social activity enjoyed by many. It provides entertainment, recreation and socialising opportunities for residents. However, Council believes irresponsible gambling has a detrimental impact upon individuals and communities. Council supports a harm minimisation approach to gambling to reduce any adverse economic, social and environmental impacts upon the Knox community and maximise the positive effects on the community. Council's harm minimisation approach will be based on three broad areas: demand and supply reductions and assistance for those adversely affected.

Knox City Council Draft Responsible Gaming Policy 2001

Maroondah City Council

The impact of gambling on our community should be seen as a continuum. At one end, gambling is an everyday activity that provides entertainment, recreation and socialising opportunities and one which a majority of people can 'take in their stride'.

At the other end, a small but significant (and increasing) number of people gamble excessively and experience a variety of personal, family and financial problems as a result. Council recognises the existence of this continuum and that gambling is a legitimate recreational activity, however, Council's goal and long term commitment is to reduce the negative impacts (current and potential) on our community.

Maroondah Gaming Policy and Statement of Practice 2001

2. Vision statement for the conduct of gambling in the municipality

Moreland City Council

The following goal and objectives are intended to guide the Council's future work on responsible gambling:

Minimise and ameliorate the adverse effects of gambling, particularly through EGMs, on the Moreland community by:

- Reducing the incidence of problem gambling
- Achieving distribution of the community gains from gambling that is more effectively focused on areas with the greatest social impact (including Moreland) and more equitable
- Stopping any further growth in EGMs in Moreland

Moreland Gambling Strategy Draft 1998

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

The Mornington Peninsula Shire does not advocate the prohibition of electronic gaming machines but it does have a strong commitment to mitigating the negative impacts of gaming on the community. This commitment to the mitigation of the negative impacts of gaming is the foundation upon which the Mornington Peninsula Shire's Responsible Gaming Strategy has been developed.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy 2001

3. Background/History on gambling in the municipality

City of Moonee Valley

The City of Moonee Valley is home to an established gambling industry comprising a range of legal and regulated gambling activities. The historical development of the horse racing industry is woven into the social fabric of Moonee Valley. In addition to being historically and socially significant, the racing industry is economically important, and a major tourism asset for the City of Moonee Valley, and the State of Victoria.

Council wishes to adopt a balanced and inclusive approach to developing a Responsible Gambling Strategy. The scope of Council's strategy takes in the broader picture of the diverse gambling industry in Moonee Valley. However, Council's policy framework is principally focused on responding to the current and unfolding challenges of the new electronic gaming machine

(EGM) industry, which has been associated with an increase of social and economic concerns, and for which a regulatory framework is still evolving.

In recent years, following the introduction of EGMs by the Victorian State Government in 1992, there has been considerable community concern in response to the rapid expansion of the EGM industry and the associated impacts of increased gambling. Since the introduction of EGMs in 1992, the number of venues in the City of Moonee Valley has increased from 0 to 14; and the number of machines has increased from 0 to 757. Electronic Gaming Machine (EGM) expenditures (turnovers) in Moonee Valley have increased from around \$20 Million in 1992-93, to more than \$78 million in 2000/01.

Proponents of electronic gambling identify benefits for the community, such as local employment, increased entertainment choices and significant dividends flowing from venues to local clubs and charities, via taxation and direct support. On the other hand, there are significant concerns about detrimental impacts gambling can have on individuals and local communities. While local councils have a very limited planning and regulatory role in controlling the number or location of electronic gaming machines in their municipality, they can play a role in the planning process and in addressing gambling issues at a local level.

Recent changes to the State's Gambling Legislation have defined an enhanced role for Local Governments to represent the interests of their communities in decisions on gambling regulation, and the processing of applications for Venue Gaming Licenses. It has also introduced a number of strategies to regulate the gambling industry and minimise harm associated with gambling. In developing this paper and seeking feedback on its content from the community and stakeholders, Council's goal is to identify and address the key issues arising from gambling in the City of Moonee Valley.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

4. Key policy statements/commitments to date on gambling in the municipality

City of Moonee Valley

The Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy is Council's policy framework for coordinating action in, for, and with the community to address the issues arising from gambling within the city, and to mitigate any harm from the negative social and economic impacts from the expansion of electronic gaming machines (EGMs).

In November 2000, Council adopted the following principles as the basis of its policy framework, and endorsed a process for the further development and implementation of the Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy:

- Council is committed to seeking to minimise the harm of gambling;

- Council is committed to limiting Electronic Gaming Machine (EGM) expansion in Moonee Valley;
- Council is committed to providing leadership on gambling issues;
- Council is committed to consulting with and undertaking advocacy on behalf of its community on this issue;
- Council is committed to undertaking appropriate research to underpin its decisions in respect to Gambling in Moonee Valley.

Council also adopted a policy to undertake and provide to the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority (VCGA) a social and economic impact assessment for all new applications for EGMs, under provisions of the (Victorian) Responsible Gambling Legislation 2000. A process was endorsed for undertaking and providing social and economic impact assessments to the VCGA incorporating appropriate research and community consultation.

Council has in place a range of policies relating to gambling in Moonee Valley:

- Policy for Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) on land owned or managed by Council, (18 November 1997);
- Gaming Machines in Strip Shopping Centres, (17 February 1998);
- Gambling Code of Good Practice, (17 August 1999);
- Development and Implementation of the Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy 2000-2001, (including a process for undertaking Social and Economic Impacts Assessment, (SEIA)), (21 November 2000);
- Establishment of the Responsible Gambling Task Force, (20 March 2001)

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

Maribyrnong City Council

Council's policy position in relation to gambling has been formalised on two separate occasions, the focus of both these statements by necessity being on EGMs. Firstly, on 14 December 1998 with the adoption of an Interim Policy On Convenience Gambling Venues. Secondly, on 11 December 2000 Council adopted the Draft Policy Guidelines on Local Gambling Venues.

Additional matters on EGM gambling were the subject of two Council reports in 2001. The report, Analysis of Victorian State Government Data on Money Lost to Electronic Gaming Machines during the 2000 / 2001 Financial Year, was discussed by Council at its meeting of 1 October 2001. The recommendations were –

1. That Council contributes \$3,000 to Phase Three of the VLGA's Gambling Research Program.

2. That Council request the State Government's Gambling Research Panel and the VLGA undertake further research into the connection between problem gambling and low socio-economic advantage.
3. That Council approach the Minister for Gaming, the Hon John Pandazopoulos, seeking support for research into problem gambling associated with EGMs.
4. A report be submitted to Council detailing options for developing further Council's own gambling policy framework and actions.

In November 2001, the Office of Gambling Regulation (OGR) issued a regulatory impact statement into its draft Proposed Gaming Machine Control (Responsible Gambling) (Lighting and Views) Regulations 2001. A Council report of 26 November 2001 discussed the draft regulations in detail and Councillors endorsed a recommendation to make a submission to the OGR in light of identified concerns discussed by Councillors.

Directions Paper: Gambling in the City of Maribyrnong 2002

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

On 23 November 1999, Council established a Community Consultative Committee on Gambling to respond to:

- community concerns about the increased number of electronic gaming machines in the municipality; and,
- the impact of gaming on the quality of life of residents of the Shire.

In May 2000, the Consultative Committee on Gambling in Local Communities held a public forum attended by 50 people. In September 2000, the Consultative Committee held a specific Venue Operators' Forum with gambling venue operators.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire resolved on the 18 September 2000 to:

- Develop a Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy;
- Adopt an interim policy that supports a cap on the number of electronic gaming machines and gambling venues in the municipality at the current level until the development of the Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy;
- Encourage community input into the application process for gaming;
- Advocate with, and on behalf of, the community in relation to the impacts of gaming, where appropriate;
- Hold public forums on gaming and related issues; and,

- Advocate to the Community Support Fund for notification of applications for funding to enable co-ordination and better equity of distribution of funds across the municipality.

The Shire has limited planning powers in relation to the location of gaming machines. State Government planning policy and legislation sets out the limitations on local government making determinations regarding gaming. The State planning policy is set out in the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme (Clause 19.02 and Clause 52.28).

The key aspects of the policy are:

- Gambling venue operators do not need to apply for a permit if less than 25% of the liquor licensed floor space is to be used for gaming machines .
- The installation and use of a gaming machine should be allowed in a hotel or club if it does not result in a change of land use.
- Gaming premises should have a full range of hotel or club facilities and services available to patrons.
- Gaming machines should not be located in nominated shopping complexes for venues established since 20/12/95.
- Gaming machines should not be allowed in strip shopping centres unless:
 - within an existing hotel or club, or a premises where approval was obtained for the installation of gaming machines prior to 19/12/97; and,
 - within a hotel or club issued with a permit and a liquor licence prior to 16/6/98.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy 2001

5. Statement of key themes to be addressed in the policy

Example 1: Gaming machine locations and numbers

- **Goal Statement**

Darebin City Council

Council supports the principle of a cap on EGM numbers in the municipality. . . Therefore Council determines that no more EGMs be permitted in Darebin, even if there is a natural attrition in EGM numbers over time.

Draft Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine Strategy 2001

Maribyrnong City Council

Council will not support any application for a new venue or for an increase in EGM numbers if Council's assessment of the socio-economic impact of that application demonstrates a likely detrimental impact on the social or economic well-being of Maribyrnong's community or that part of the community most affected by the proposal.

Directions Paper: Gambling in the City of Maribyrnong 2002

- **Statement/Description of relevant legislative and regulatory requirements/opportunities**

Maroondah City Council

The main legislation which identifies specific roles and responsibilities for Councils in respect of gaming activities in their municipality are:

- *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*
- *Gambling Legislation (Responsible Gambling) Act 2000*
- *Planning and Environment act 1987*

Based on the above legislation, the main opportunities for Councils to have direct input in respect of gaming applications are:

- if the gaming activities cover more than 25% of the venue floor space then a planning permit must be applied for through Council; and

- any application for an increase in electronic gaming machines submitted to the Victorian casino gaming Authority (VCGA) is forwarded to the relevant Council which then has the opportunity to submit an Economic and Social Impact submission prior to the VCGA deciding on the application.

Maroondah Gaming Policy and Statement of Practice 2001

- **Local data to provide additional clarification of the theme and its relationship to the municipality**

City of Maribyrnong

Outlets for Gaming in the City of Maribyrnong

There are fifteen outlets licensed to operate EGMs in Maribyrnong. As at Dec 2001, there were 774 machines of which 354 are owned by Tattersalls and the remaining 420 owned by TABCorp Holdings Pty Ltd. With the implementation of the Maribyrnong Plus regional cap strategy, it is anticipated that these numbers will progressively reduce by February 2004, the amount of which is unclear at the time of preparing this paper.

Venue	Address	Operator	Number of EGMs	Venue Type
Anglers Tavern	2 Raleigh Rd Maribyrnong	Tattersalls	29	Hotel
Ashley Hotel	226 Ballarat Rd Braybrook	TABCorp	80	Hotel
Australian Croatian Assoc	72 Whitehall St Footscray	NIL	0	Club
Braybrook Hotel	353 Ballarat Rd Braybrook	Tattersalls	68	Hotel
Club Saigon	17 Leeds St Footscray	Tattersalls	40	Club
Courthouse Hotel	166 Nicholson St Footscray	Tattersalls	40	Hotel
Footscray Football Club	417 Barkly St Footscray West	TABCorp	65	Club
Footscray RSL	48 Geelong Rd Footscray	Tattersalls	29	Club
Highpoint Tavern	Rosamond Rd Maribyrnong	TABCorp	100	Hotel
Maribyrnong Maidstone RSL	56 Raleigh Rd Maribyrnong	NIL	0	Club
Powell Hotel	202 Ballarat Rd Footscray	Tattersalls	53	Hotel
Victoria Hotel	188 Hyde St Yarraville	TABCorp	35	Hotel
Yarraville – Footscray Bowling Club	Francis / Hawkhurst St Spotswood	TABCorp	40	Club
Yarraville Club	135 Stephen St Yarraville	Tattersalls	95	Club
Yarraville Club Cricket Club	Cnr Ballarat / Rosamond Rds Maidstone	TABCorp	100	Club

It is well documented that, excluding the Melbourne capital city area, Maribyrnong has the highest density of machines for any local government area in Victoria at 15.7 EGMs compared to the state average of 7.7 EGMs per 1000 adults. Excluding Melbourne, Maribyrnong residents lost in the financial year ending 30 June 2001 the highest amount per annum at \$1,207 than residents of any other local government area (state average \$ 668).

Directions Paper: Gambling in the City of Maribyrnong 2002

Details of local gambling venues for all municipalities are available through the Office of Gambling Regulation at www.ogr.vic.gov.au

See also Gaming Indicators and Rankings for Local Areas prepared by the City of Greater Dandenong for the VLGA. This data is available for all LGAs. See www.vlga.org.au

- **Linkages to other council policies/plans**

Maroondah City Council

The following documents also include sections which deal with gaming in the municipality and should be cross-referenced as appropriate:

- Standard Licence and Lease Agreements
- Maroondah Municipal Public Health Plan 2000
- Fees and Charges Policy for casual use of Council facilities

Maroondah Gaming Policy and Statement of Practice 2001

- **Position statements on this area**

Maribyrnong City Council

Policy Guidelines on local gambling venues and associated issues

The following policy guidelines are intended to deal with planning applications, submissions to VCGA, and other matters related to local electronic gambling machine (EGM) venues and the consequences of gambling. It supersedes and replaces Council's Interim Policy on Convenience Gambling Venues which was last amended on 14 December 1998.

These policy guidelines have been developed as a result of Council's concern at the high density of EGMs in the City of Maribyrnong, and the consequences of this. The ratio of EGMs to population in Maribyrnong continues to be by far the highest in suburban Melbourne. There are disproportionate economic and social effects associated with the pattern of development of EGMs. Council does not have a moral position on gambling. Council however wishes to take steps to ensure that the economic and social effects of developments associated with EGM gambling are equitably distributed throughout Victoria.

Part A Policy guidelines in respect of town planning and like decisions:

Proposed EGM venues (clubs or hotels) on private property

If established licensed premises are within strip shopping centres the floor space devoted to EGMs must be not more than 25% of the licensed area. Planning approval is not required for such venues.

Other venues outside strip shopping centres may also operate EGMs in floor space up to 25% of their floor area without seeking planning approval, but are required to seek such approval if the floor space devoted to EGMs is greater than 25%. An important factor in considering such applications will be that the applicant demonstrates by satisfactory evidence that the social and economic impact of the redevelopment will not be detrimental to the local community, including

the aggregate economic and social well-being of local households, and will not have a detrimental impact on existing economic activity within the local area.

In some circumstances, redevelopment of venues may be required to accommodate EGMs and planning approval may be required for such redevelopment. An important factor in considering such applications will be that the applicant demonstrates by satisfactory evidence that the social and economic impact of the redevelopment will not be detrimental to the local community, including the aggregate economic and social well-being of local households, and will not have a detrimental impact on existing economic activity within the local area.

In matters of this nature Council may also undertake its own assessment of the likely socio-economic impact of the application using the best available means at its disposal to assess the likely socio-economic impact of the relevant application on Maribyrnong's community. In particular, the impact of such applications on the likely target group/s or local area most affected by the application will be taken carefully into account to the extent possible. Council will not approve a new venue or an increase in EGM numbers if Council's assessment of the socio-economic impact of that application demonstrates a likely detrimental impact on the social or economic well-being of Maribyrnong's community or that part of the community most affected by the proposal.

Existing EGM venues (clubs or hotels), on Council or private property, seeking an extension of hours for EGM operations:

It is likely that some existing EGM venues will seek an extension of hours, for which planning approval is required. The following factors will be important in considering such applications: (i) the applicant demonstrates by satisfactory evidence that the social and economic impact of the extension of operating hours will not be detrimental to the local community, including the aggregate economic and social well-being of local households, and will not have a detrimental impact on existing economic activity within the local area; and (ii) a full range of facilities is available to patrons during the period of extended operating hours.

In matters of this nature Council may also undertake its own assessment of the likely socio-economic impact of the application using the best available means at its disposal to assess the likely socio-economic impact of the relevant application on Maribyrnong's community. In particular, the impact of such applications on the likely target group/s or local area most affected by the application will be taken carefully into account to the extent possible. Council will not approve a new venue or an increase in EGM numbers if Council's assessment of the socio-economic impact of that application demonstrates a likely detrimental impact on the social or economic well-being of Maribyrnong's community or that part of the community most affected by the proposal.

Part B Policy Guidelines in respect of Council-controlled property utilised by clubs, etc:
(Details not included here)

Part C Policy Guidelines in relation to applications for new gambling venues or an increase in EGM numbers at existing venues referred by VCGA for comment by Council:

Recent amendments to relevant legislation have provided local governments with an opportunity to make submissions to the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority in relation to the likely socio-economic impact of gambling venues on the local community. Council believes that the process adopted by VCGA in response to this legislative requirement is flawed, particularly in relation to the limited time available for local governments to prepare submissions, and believes that the most appropriate way to deal with these issues is through the established planning process. However, in the absence of the necessary amendments to planning processes and policy Council supports the process adopted by VCGA and will participate in that process.

Council will make a submission in relation to all applications to the VCGA for new premises approval or for an increase in EGM numbers within Maribyrnong. In broad accordance with Council's approach to similar matters arising under the Town Planning system, Council will utilise the best available means at its disposal to assess the likely socio-economic impact of the relevant application on Maribyrnong's community. In particular, the impact of such applications on the likely target group/s or local area most affected by the application will be taken carefully into account to the extent possible.

Council will not support any application for a new venue or for an increase in EGM numbers if Council's assessment of the socio-economic impact of that application demonstrates a likely detrimental impact on the social or economic well-being of Maribyrnong's community or that part of the community most affected by the proposal.

Council will forward a submission to VCGA in the form required by VCGA and will provide additional material as necessary to support Council's assessment of relevant likely impacts. The Chief Executive Officer or her delegate shall be authorised consistent with this policy to make submissions to VCGA on behalf of Council, to forward those submissions within the statutory time period set out in the relevant legislation, and to inform Council at the earliest opportunity of Council's response to such applications.

Part D Policy Guidelines in relation to the Local Government Gambling Research Program, the Local Government Working Group on Gambling, regional capping of EGMs, EGM numbers generally, access to EGM and other data, and reliance by government on gambling revenue:

Council has been an active participant in local area gambling research and the Local Government Working Group on Gambling, convened by the Victorian Local Governance Association. Council will continue to support this activity and seeks to be provided with regular reports on research and other activity associated with this important area of local government activity

Council supports the capping of EGM numbers at the local level and believes that the most appropriate boundary for regional caps on the number of EGMs is the boundary of local government area. In particular, Council believes that no system of regional capping of EGMs will be effective unless no local government area in Victoria has more than 120% of the Victorian average of EGMs per 1,000 adult population.

Council believes that there is adequate evidence that there are too many EGMs in Victoria and supports a reduction in the total number of EGMs to levels supported by local government, as determined by VCGA consultation with local government.

Council strongly believes that all relevant data collected by VCGA, the Department of Human Services and other agencies in relation to gambling should be in the public domain to assist in public debate on gambling and its consequences, and supports the release of all such data regularly and promptly.

Council is concerned at the growing dependence of State and Federal governments on gambling revenue and supports the development by Australian governments of a strategy to reduce dependency on gambling revenue over the shortest possible timeframe. Consistent with this, Council does not support the hypothecation of gambling revenue or Community Support Fund (CSF) contributions to local communities contributing such revenue or contributions. Projects funded under the CSF should be funded on the basis of their adherence to transparent guidelines dealing with issues of social equity and community need. In keeping with this view, Council supports recent reforms of the CSF by the Victorian government and supports the development by the recently appointed Gambling Research Panel of a process to allocate a proportion of gambling research funds to community or locally focussed research projects developed by local government, community organisations or consortiums involving such partners.

Draft Policy Guidelines on Local Gambling Venues and Associated Issues 2000

Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Engaging with local venues and the gaming industry to provide responsible gaming practices within venues that is responsive to local needs.

Council acknowledges that our communities broadly value hotels and clubs. Council recognises these venues as valid businesses providing services to the general community.

The Victorian Gaming Machine industry has developed Codes of Practice which Council supports as part of its harm minimisation policy.

Council recognises the importance of maintaining dialogue with local gaming venue operators.

Council Action

Council will continue to facilitate communication and dialogue with local gaming operators.

Agreed voluntary Responsible Gaming Protocols for gaming venues located within the Macedon Ranges Shire.

A Responsible Gaming Protocol has been developed in collaboration with local gaming operators. The protocol establishes a voluntary agreed code of conduct between the electronic gaming providers in the Shire, being hotels and clubs, and the local communities.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council supports the principles and practices expressed in the Industry Code of Practice for Responsible Gaming. Council notes that this Code is endorsed by the Australian Hoteliers Association Victoria (AHA Vic), the Licensed Clubs Association of Victoria (LCAV), TABCORP, Tattersalls and Crown.

Council draws Venue Operators' attention to the Code and in addition, places emphasis on the following aspects: -

Hours of Operation

Council does not support 24 hour gaming venues.

Patron support services information

Council believes that it is the responsibility of the venue operator to ensure that adequate information is available to all venue patrons, identifying the availability of support services for persons experiencing problem gambling. All information must be sensitive to the cultural profile of the community in which the venue operates.

Patron Facilities

Council expects Venue Operators to include visible time clocks in the gaming area.

Any free refreshments to patrons should be provided to patrons away from the gaming machines to encourage patrons to take a break away from the gaming activity.

Council opposes the provision of Auto Teller Machines within the gaming areas of the premises and the provision of credit facilities to patrons for the purposes of gambling.

Child Safety

Council believes that a responsible venue operator will ensure children are not present in the gaming areas of the venue at any time.

Car parks should be monitored on a regular basis by each venue's management.

Local Employment

Council encourages venue operators to employ local residents and where the opportunity exists that training opportunities are pursued through local educational and training institutions within the Shire.

Council also encourages local venue operators to source goods and services from local providers.

Staffing skills and training in responsible gaming practices

Council expects that Venue Operators will ensure that all staff deployed in the Gaming area will be appropriately trained in responsible gaming practices, including the appropriate knowledge and skills required to offer assistance to patrons who present with signs of a potential gaming problem. All staff employed in the gaming venue are to be provided with ongoing staff development and training opportunities.

Contributions to the community

In keeping with the expectations of the community regarding the philanthropic activities of corporate citizens, Council expects that the Gaming Venue Operators will make contributions to wider community infrastructure, commensurate to the profit generated by the commercial activity of the Gaming Venue and its associated operations. Such contributions may include specific contributions to the resident community of the Shire either by direct donation, by a locally orientated trust fund or in – kind. This would be determined by mutual agreement.

Pay out of winnings

Council strongly supports the Victorian Gaming Machine Industry Codes of Practice, which encourages patrons with large winnings to have a cooling off period and take payment by cheque.

Advertising

Venue operators seeking to advertise their premises and services need to comply with Council's Planning Scheme Controls and Local Laws.

Advertising to attract patrons to the gaming facilities that are placed within the venue should comply with the relevant legislation.

Education

Council is supportive of educational initiatives, which target and encourage the development of preventative strategies that assist patrons of gaming venues to avoid the pitfalls associated with problem gambling. Council encourages Gaming Venue Operators to support educational programs designed to prevent the growth of problem gambling.

Council Action

Council will continue to maintain dialogue with local gaming operators, peak bodies and Government to update the Responsible Gaming Protocols as required.

Macedon Ranges Shire Responsible Gaming Policy 2002

Example 2: The social and economic impacts of gambling

- **Goal statement**

Moonee Valley City Council

Council is committed to encouraging local economic growth, sustainable economic activity, and employment in the municipality.

Council Plan 2001

Macedon Ranges Shire Council

The view of the Macedon Ranges Shire is that the net economic and social impacts of electronic gaming machines upon our communities are negative.

Council is concerned about the consequences that arise from the proliferation of electronic gaming machines within the boundaries of the Macedon Ranges Shire and surrounding municipalities. Council shall use its mandate under the *Local Government Act 1989*, to develop the Shire's social, environmental and economic well being in a manner that represents the goals and aspirations of the communities of the Macedon Ranges.

Council seeks to minimise the harm experienced by problem gamblers. Council considers that it, together with the State Government and Gaming Operators, has a responsibility to collaborate on harm minimisation strategies.

Responsible Gaming Policy 2002

- **Statement/Description of relevant legislative and regulatory requirements/opportunities**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council

The *Victorian Local Government Act 1989* defines the following responsibilities for Local Governments in Victoria.

Part 2, Section 6 of the *Victorian Local Government Act 1989* prescribes the Purposes of a Council:

The purposes of a Council are—

A gambling issues roundtable was convened by the State Government in August 2002.

Six sub-groups were formed to ensure ongoing discussion of the social impacts of gaming;

- Early intervention
- problem gambling services
- Impact on ethnic communities
- Education and advertising
- Gambling industry codes of conduct
- Impacts on the general community

Further information is available by contacting LGWGOG at the VLGA

- (a) to provide for the peace, order and good government of its municipal district; and
- (b) to facilitate and encourage appropriate development of its municipal district in the best interests of the community; and
- (c) to provide equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that those services and facilities are managed efficiently and effectively; and
- (d) to manage, improve and develop the resources of its district efficiently and effectively.

Part 2, Section 7 of the *Victorian Local Government Act 1989* prescribes the Objectives of a Council :

In seeking to achieve its purposes, a Council has the following objectives—

- (a) To facilitate the involvement of members of the community, users of facilities and services and Council staff in the development, improvement and co-ordination of Local Government.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council Responsible Gaming Policy 2002

Maroondah City Council

All applications for increases in gaming machines in existing venues or for approval of new premises in regions determined by the Minister for Gaming will be processed in accordance with sections 12AA, 27 and Part 2a of the *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*.

Section 27(2C) states:

Within 28 days after receiving a copy of a proposed amendment referred to in sub-section (2B), the municipal council may make a submission to the Authority –

- (a) addressing the economic and social impact of the proposed amendment on the well-being of the community of the municipal district in which the approved venue is located; and
- (b) taking into account the impact of the proposed amendment on surrounding municipal districts.

The economic and social impact submissions are optional for Councils. However they must be completed by the applicants as part of their applications for new premises and/or increases to electronic gaming machines in a municipality.

In accordance with the *Gaming Machine Control Act 1991*, the VCGA can only approve an application if it is satisfied that the proposal would not be detrimental to the well being of the community of the municipal district in which the premises or approved venues are located.

Maroondah Gaming Policy and Statement of Practice 2001

- **Local data to provide additional clarification**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Macedon Ranges Shire Council recognises that the issue of problem gambling has social, economic and environmental impacts on the health and well being of our communities.

Economic Impacts

Research shows that gaming has both a beneficial and adverse economic impacts upon a municipality. Gaming activities may benefit local communities by:

- The creation of new jobs in gambling venues
- Incentive to local trades people and suppliers , where venues use local suppliers and services for regular supplies and building purposes
- Financial contributions from gambling venues to support the work of the local community organisations and charities.

However the negative effects upon local gambling communities include:

Decline in consumer spending and a decline in non-gaming local business because of increased expenditure on gaming.

Expenditure across the Macedon Ranges Shire Council for the 2000/2001 financial year was \$7.3 million; this represents a loss of \$280 per year per adult.

Since 1993 the total expenditure on electronic gaming in our community has been approximately \$33 million.

Gaming taxes and returns to the State government, Tattersalls and TABCORP represented a leakage of approximately 72% of total revenues expended on gaming from the local economy.

Gaming expenditure is usually highest in areas of low socio-economic status. Addiction to gaming activities can lead to personal debt, bankruptcy and increased financial hardship for their families.

Reduced productivity and increased absenteeism from work has economic ramifications for businesses.

Increased demand for emergency relief and counselling that creates increased demand upon council and other government resources.

Social impacts

Venues containing electronic gaming machines in the Macedon Ranges provide many social and recreational opportunities for the community.

The positive effects of these venues include:

- Provision of reasonably priced meals and drinks.
- Expansion of recreational opportunities particularly in areas lacking social venues;
- Opportunities to socialise and experience a sense of belonging for people who are socially isolated or lack confidence in social situations.
- Opportunities for sporting and community organisations to gain sponsorship.

Gambling Problems can produce harmful social effects including:

- Increased pressure on relationships and family breakdown (including family violence)
- Increased stress and depression because of gambling problems
- Crime such as theft and fraud
- Increased demand on support services
- Increased absenteeism from work and community commitments

Environmental Impacts

The environmental impacts of gaming are less significant than the economic and social impacts of gaming. In the Macedon Ranges the community is concerned about the

number of gaming venues and machines within the Shire. Concern has also been raised regarding the visual appearance of venues affecting the overall visual historical value of towns particularly Kyneton. Concerns have also been raised regarding noise and traffic levels within the vicinity of gaming venues

Macedon Ranges Responsible Gaming Policy 2002

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

Impacts of Gaming in the Mornington Peninsula Shire

This section presents a discussion of the specific impacts of gaming in the Shire. It addresses the relationship between gaming and community development, recreation and leisure, health and well being.

Gaming Revenue and Community Development

The increased revenue generated by gaming has stimulated the expansion and development of a range of leisure and recreation services and facilities in local clubs and hotels in the Shire. Gambling venues also offer a range of financial and in-kind contributions to the community of Mornington Peninsula such as:

- Donations to local charities, clubs and public services such as local hospitals, health services and schools;
- Fundraising activities for local groups, for instance, the provision of meal vouchers for raffles and the organisation of bingo nights; and,
- Provision of free meeting room facilities for local community groups such as Rotary.

Community Perceptions

In 1999 Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services conducted a community survey of 184 community members, 47 retailers and 29 community workers regarding the impact of electronic gaming on the local community. The report *Peninsula on Pokies* (Ayres-Wearne & Farnsworth 1999) indicated that there is growing community concern regarding the negative impacts of electronic gaming.

In 2000, approximately 60 people attended community and industry consultations about the local impacts of the electronic gaming industry in Mornington Peninsula. In 2001, a Responsible Gaming Strategy Discussion Paper was circulated and discussed at four consultations with 30 community members and venue operators. A further nine written commentaries regarding the discussion paper were received.

These consultations reveal a diversity of interests and perspectives regarding the impact of gaming on the local community.

Positive Benefits to Local Communities

The research undertaken by Ayres-Wearne & Farnsworth (1999) and the consultations held in the Shire identified the following local positive benefits of gaming:

- Increased social opportunities especially for women and older people;
- Extended safe and affordable leisure and recreational opportunities, particularly for people who are isolated;
- Expansion of local employment opportunities in the hospitality industry;
- Contribution to the local economy through the increased use of local trades-people and services;
- Improved or enhanced physical infrastructure of venues; and,
- Increased financial and in-kind contributions to development of local sporting clubs and support for charities and community groups and services.

The Detrimental Impacts on Local Communities

At the same time, the research and consultations have identified the following detrimental impacts of gaming for the Shire:

- Negative social impacts of intensified personal risk, particularly increased financial hardship, increased poverty and increased family distress;
- Limited competition between recreation and leisure options;
- Detrimental impact on local employment e.g., casualisation of employment;
- Negative economic impact on the local economy including reduced expenditure on 'non-essentials' and downturn in non-gaming local business;
- Changes in the character of key venues in the community that now focus on gaming recreation;
- Erosion of the urban character or amenity of local towns; and,
- Increased dependence on gaming generated resources for local community development, support and sponsorship.

Gaming and Recreation and Leisure

Playing gaming machines is often referred to as recreational gambling because gambling is considered a form of leisure providing recreation and/or entertainment. However, electronic gaming

should not be considered as a benign passive recreation activity. Similar to all forms of gambling, players risk substantial financial losses that can flow on to financial hardship and family breakdown for people who develop gambling problems.

At the same time studies have revealed that gaming venues are seen as a place to visit to allay feelings of isolation and dislocation, especially for women, young and old people. Gambling venues are attractive to people who are vulnerable, low income and isolated as they offer a range of facilities and services in an unobtrusive environment.

Some of the attractive features of gaming venues are:

- A range of self-activated electronic entertainment facilities;
- Provision of increased social outlets with a comfortable, non-judgemental “welcoming” atmosphere in which to meet and congregate;
- A social setting that allows privacy and non-participation in any organised activity;
- Low cost refreshments and quality meals as well as complementary products; and,
- Accessibility and personal security over a wide time-range.

Electronic gaming is also attractive to local sporting clubs as the revenue from gaming machines provides an income source for the club to subsidise other activities and expand the recreational activities they can offer.

Gaming and Community Health and Well Being

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is in an advantageous position as the majority of the hotels and clubs are owned by local people and are a part of Mornington Peninsula’s community infrastructure. The introduction of gaming machines has provided keenly sought after resources that have enabled venue operators to expand their facilities as well as increase the range of leisure and recreation activities on offer. At the same time, the growth in resources has enabled venue operators to increase their sponsorship of and contributions to the local community and sporting groups.

However, the growth in gaming machines in the Shire has created new divisions between different sections of the community resulting in tensions between the gaming industry and other segments of the community. One issue of community concern is multiplier effect of problem gambling for individuals and their families and associates. It is estimated that for each individual problem gambler several other people are detrimentally affected by the associated loss of work, loss of the home and family breakdown (Productivity Commission 1999).

Moreover, the limited capacity social and sporting clubs have to raise or access resources to expand their facilities and offer a range of activities has led many clubs (8) in the Shire to invest in gaming machines. However, the resources gained by clubs with gaming machines creates an inequity as clubs without gaming machines are unable to provide the same quality of services and facilities and, as a result, lose membership and patronage.

Local retailers, clubs without gaming machines and social and community support organisations have expressed concern about the negative social and economic impacts of gaming on the community. This has created a feeling amongst local gambling venue operators that they are under attack and are no longer seen as contributing and respectable business and community members of the Shire.

These divisions have a negative impact on community health and well being. The negative impact can detrimentally affect the cohesion and capacity of local communities and the sense of belonging of individuals in the Shire.

The different impacts of gaming on the health and well being of the community also place the Shire in a difficult position. The Shire could raise revenue from local gambling venues for the development of services and facilities to improve the quality of life, health and well being of the community. However, raising revenue from gambling venues would result in the Shire:

- being unable to comment on the impacts of gaming due to a perceived conflict of interest;
- becoming dependant on revenue from gaming, an activity that has a diverse range of impacts on the community of Mornington Peninsula; and,
- limiting its capacity to undertake regulatory actions as a responsible authority particularly in relation to planning matters affecting gambling venues and gaming machine activity.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy 2001

- **Linkages to other council policies and plans**

Mornington Peninsula Shire

The Responsible Gaming Strategy responds to the Shire's Community Plan and other relevant policies and strategies.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Community Plan 2000-2003.

The Community Plan sets out the Mission and Vision for the Shire. The Vision sets out that the Shire will work towards ensuring that the municipality is

“A place where diverse communities can enjoy a quality lifestyle”.

Two of the five themes of the Community Plan are:

To Facilitate A Robust Local Economy

"Council will actively support economic development that encourages employment opportunities, enhances social and community well being and is consistent with the special character of this Shire."

To Service and Strengthen Local Communities

"Council is committed to strengthening its communities and will promote and provide quality services, facilities, programs and opportunities that foster community health and well being."

A key action of the Community Plan is to:

"Establish a Community Consultative Committee on Gambling to respond to community concerns and develop strategies to address these concerns."

Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy 2001

Maribyrnong City Council

Gambling is a public health issue

The draft municipal health plan highlights the increasing anecdotal and research evidence of a potential link between poor community health status and gambling. Issues identified include substance abuse, poor family nutrition and domestic violence. Whilst gambling of the nature covered in this paper is legal, it is evident that the harm minimization paradigm is an appropriate, effective and valuable perspective with which to approach problem gambling. The public health aspect of the negative consequences from gambling is one that should be explored and developed much more fully within the Municipal Public Health Plan for the reasons mentioned.

Recommendation:

That in the Maribyrnong Gambling Policy, the approach to problem gambling be assessed and pursued from the harm minimization perspective with appropriate strategies and actions for Council to implement.

That the Municipal Public Health Plan consider and recommend on the health aspects resultant from or linked to the incidence of gambling in the community.

Directions Paper: Gambling in the City of Maribyrnong 2002

- **Position statements for this area**

Moonee Valley City Council

Council will:

- Continue to consult, liaise with, and assist local venue operators, the gambling industry and other businesses in Moonee Valley, to promote Responsible Gambling practices; and, to facilitate a sustainable low-impact gambling industry within the City;
- Undertake further economic research, including the modelling and evaluation of the Gambling Industry in respect to the local economy, to other industries, and to tourism development;
- Maintain a current qualitative and quantitative data-base to underpin the implementation of the policy and process for preparing Social and Economic Impact Assessments (SEIA);
- In partnership with local service providers and government agencies, analyse the financial support and emergency relief needs of individuals and families experiencing the negative impacts of problem gambling;
- Ensure integration of gambling issues into Council's Economic Development policy framework, including the Moonee Valley Economic Development Strategy and the Moonee Valley Tourism Strategy.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Providing Social and Economic Impact statements to the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority for applications to establish a new gaming venue or to increase the number of electronic gaming machines in an existing venue located within the Shire.

In May 2000 the *Victorian Responsible Gaming Act 2000*, gave for the first time, Local Governments the capacity to make Social and Economic Impact submissions to assist the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority (VCGA) to hear and determine gaming venue licenses or variations.

While Council appreciates the opportunities presented for local community input into the decision making processes of the VCGA, the current reporting and public hearing system enacted through the *Victorian Responsible Gaming Act 2000* raises concerns to Council, these being:

- the costs and time involved for the preparation of Social and Economic Impact Statements,

Other advocacy;

BLAB Campaign: Bankruptcy Legislation Amendment Bill

BLAB is a campaign to remove current discrimination against bankrupts with gambling debts

Contact the Australian Financial Counselling and Credit Reform Association (AFCCRA)
Email: janpentland@hotmail.com

- the prohibitive expense of providing legal representation to the public hearing process,
- The lack of benchmarks to establish what social and economic disadvantage is per local area,
- the difficulties for local governments in establishing research and monitoring process to assess the impacts of problem gambling within our communities.

Council Action

As per the stated policy, Council shall oppose any further applications for increases to electronic gaming machine numbers in existing venues and oppose any applications for new venues to be established within the Shire through the processes available.

Council shall continue to lobby both the Australian Federal Government to improve policy and the Victorian State Government to improve policy and the gaming application and evaluation processes.

Macedon ranges Responsible Gaming Policy 2002

Example 3: Problem gambling

- **Goal statement**

Moonee Valley City Council

Council is committed to minimising the harm of gambling.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

Moreland City Council

Minimise and ameliorate the adverse effects of gambling (particularly EGMs) on the Moreland community by reducing the incidence of problem gambling.

Moreland Gambling Strategy Draft 1998

For more information on problem gambling;

www.problemgambling.vic.gov.au
www.knowodds.org

See also the report of the Uniting Church, Justice and International Mission Unit of the Synod of Victoria:
 "It's a risky business: the Impact of gambling on Victorian families.
 A copy of the report is available at
<http://vic.uca.org.au/jawm/>

Relevant organisations:

CAPP:
 Communities Against the Pokie Plague

CAPP aims to prompt the Victorian Government into taking action to protect the state's compulsive gamblers and their families

- **Statement/description of relevant legislative and regulatory requirement/opportunities**

Moonee Valley City Council

The VCGA is required to foster the minimisation of problem gambling. Councils can make submissions on social and economic impacts of EGMs.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

- **Local data to provide additional clarification of the theme and its relationship to the municipality**

Moonee Valley City Council

Within the City of Moonee Valley, there has been ample evidence of the harms arising from problem gambling since the introduction of 'EGMs' in 1992. Individuals who run into problems may experience a range of personal impacts, which are similar to other addictive disorders: loss of financial security, loss of self-esteem and emotional stability, family conflict and breakdown sometimes accompanied by family or self-directed violence. Some individuals or groups are more vulnerable to problem gambling than others. There is now much evidence to suggest that gambling is more problematic to disadvantaged social groups including: fixed and low income earners; people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and people with mental health issues, including drug and alcohol dependency.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

- **Linkages to other councils policies/plans**

Moonee Valley City Council

Council will adopt a 'Harm Minimisation' approach to problem gambling that is consistent with the social model of health adopted by the Moonee Valley Health Plan. This model is prevention and education based, whilst ensuring the availability and accessibility of appropriate support services to meet community need.

Council will ensure integration of gambling issues into Council's social development, community services and health planning frameworks, including the moonee Valley Health Plan, the Primary Care partnerships and community support programs.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

See also:

Australian Institute for Gambling Research

Gamblers help 1800 156 789

A kit, Problem gamblers, Educational Resources for GPs, has been developed by the Melbourne Division of General Practice in association with the Greater South Eastern Division of General Practice, Gamblers Help City and the Addiction Research Institute.

For more information, contact

swyman@gsedgp.com.au

Greater South Eastern Division of General Practice

Suite 303\3 Chester Street

Oakleigh Vic 3166

Tel; 03 9569 5077

Problem gambling prevention kit for young people

for more information, visit

www.knowodds.org/yfio.html

- **Position statements for this theme**

Moonee Valley City Council

Council will:

- Undertake an investigation of the community's needs for appropriate and accessible problem gambling support services, including mapping of current services;
- Continue to consult, liaise with, and facilitate coordination of Council-and community-based service providers to ensure provision of quality services, appropriate to the needs of the sectors of the community most impacted by gambling;
- Advocate for reduced access to EGMs by socially vulnerable groups, by supporting the location of EGM venues away from local areas where socio-economic disadvantage exists;
- Endorse and encourage gambling industry initiatives including training of staff to better deal with problem gambling in venues, and provision of self-exclusion programs at venues;
- In partnership with local service providers, industry and government agencies, identify resources to develop and implement a targeted health promotion program aimed at preventing problem gambling within 'at risk' sectors of the Moonee Valley community;
- Ensure integration of gambling issues into Council's social development, community services and health planning frameworks, including the Moonee Valley Health Plan, the 'Primary Care Partnerships' and community support programs.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

6. Community engagement mechanisms to advise on policy implementation and communication strategy

Moonee Valley City Council

Community Consultation Strategy

Council has undertaken to consult with the community and stakeholders in the preparation of this document. Consultation in 2001 has included:

- Research Project, interviews;
- Responsible Gambling Task Force;
- State and other Local governments;

- Reports to the Community consultative Committees and Council;
- Preparation of this document for public consultation.

Additional consultation will be undertaken based on the attached Draft Strategy and Action Plan. The process will comprise consultation with the wider Moonee Valley community, community organisations, gambling service providers, the gambling industry, local businesses, legal and financial advice services.

Methods of consultation will include:

- Circulation of the Draft Strategy paper to key stakeholders;
- A series (4-8) of small group (focus group) discussion sessions through various community groups and in different settings – covering culturally diverse groups, low income groups, different life stages, different locations within Moonee Valley;
- A Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community leaders group forum;
- A service provider forum;
- A forum for local clubs, local businesses and proprietors of gaming venues;

Invitation for comments via public advertisement, and the availability of the Draft Strategy on Council's web-page.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

Maroondah City Council

Advocacy, Consultation and Information Provision

Council will continue to participate on local, sub-regional and state-wide gambling networks to ensure that Council is up to date with developments in this rapidly changing industry. Council will be regularly briefed on matters relating to gambling activities in the municipality.

Council will continue to advocate to the State and Federal Governments in respect of any gambling matters, direct or indirect, which have an impact on local residents. Issues which Council will strongly advocate on include, but are not limited to, banning smoking in gaming venues, the need to reduce the total number of gaming machines in Victoria, and the need to reduce State Government dependency on gaming taxes.

Council will maintain open and strong links with local gambling support agencies and community advocacy groups to ensure that it is up-to-date with the issues and impacts of gambling based on 'first hand' experience.

Council will ensure that community publications (e.g Council Community Guide) include key contact numbers for gambling support agencies.

Statements of Practice:

- Council will encourage community input into the development of Economic and Social Impact Submissions (to VCGA) by providing a formal mechanism within the required timeframe. This will include, but not be limited to, calls for submissions via public notices in local newspapers.
- Officers will prepare an annual report (February) for Council which outlines the current status and impacts of gaming in the municipality in respect of the past 12 month period. The report will include input from interested community groups, residents, venue operators and relevant support agencies. The report will also review the financial 'benefit' to the community through the Community Support Fund (hotels) and community contributions (clubs).
- Council will continue to advocate to the State Government on key issues which relate to gambling activities and their impact on the local community.
- Council will include relevant contact numbers for local and regional gambling support agencies and community advocacy groups under an appropriate heading in the community guide.
- Council will convene an annual community forum to discuss the impact of gambling on the community, advocacy groups and venue operators.

Maroondah Gaming Policy and Statement of Practice 2001

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

Fostering Community Health and Well Being

The tensions that have been created by the introduction and growth of gaming in the Shire need to be addressed in this Strategy in a way that recognises and respects the different perspectives and impacts of electronic gaming.

Responsible Gaming Forum

The establishment of a Responsible Gaming Forum with membership drawn from all hotels and clubs offering gaming and local community agencies would create an environment where the different members:

- meet and exchange views and information; and,
- develop respect for and understanding of the perspectives of other interests and members of the community of the Mornington Peninsula.

The Forum should meet regularly to exchange information between the members and develop collaborative responses to changes in the electronic gaming industry.

The terms of reference for the Forum are:

- Provide information on changes to gaming operations in the municipality, including changes to the gambling industry's Code of Practices;
- Develop collaborative responses or submissions regarding electronic gaming regulation, legislation, Codes of Practices or funding from the Community Support Fund, where appropriate;
- Develop a process for information exchange regarding gaming operators' and gambling venues' community contributions to the municipality and the priority needs of local community groups and organisations;
- Provide updates on support services and programs in the municipality for people facing gambling problems; and,
- Contribute to the monitoring of the Responsible Gaming Strategy.

Recommended Actions:

The Shire undertakes the necessary steps to establish and resource a Responsible Gaming Forum that would meet three times a year.

The effectiveness of the Responsible Gaming Forum be decided by the membership after the Forum operates for an initial 12 months.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy 2001

7. Implementation and accountability

Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Responsibility for policy and review

Macedon Ranges Shire Council's Community Planning Unit will coordinate the implementation and review of this policy.

A range of Council Officers will continue to update information on gambling related issues as required.

A reference group of Councillors, community members and Council Officers will develop changes to the policy as required by Council's determination.

This policy will be reviewed annually, unless there is significant change in legislative and/or practice implications at which point policy will be reviewed immediately. A report will be prepared and presented to Council.

Macedon Ranges Responsible Gaming Policy 2002

Knox City Council

Responsibility for policy

Knox Council's Social Planning Unit will coordinate the implementation and review of this policy.

A range of Council officers will be required to update information on gambling related issues as required.

A reference group of Council officers may be necessary to develop changes to the policy as required for Council's determination.

Knox City Council Draft Responsible Gaming Policy 2001

8. Evaluation process and timetable

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

Evaluation and Monitoring of the Responsible Gaming Strategy

The Mornington Peninsula Shire's Responsible Gaming Strategy will operate alongside State Government legislation, regulations and policy with regard to electronic gaming and the Victorian Gaming Machine Industry (VGMI) Codes of Practices. At the same time the Shire of Mornington Peninsula is in the process of developing a range of policies that complement this strategy. To ensure that the Strategy takes account of changes to State Government legislation and policy, VGMI regulations and is compatible with new policies of the Shire it is necessary to carry out monitoring and review of this Strategy.

Recommended Actions:

The Shire establishes an interdisciplinary internal group to closely monitor and review the Responsible Gaming Strategy after 12 months.

The evaluation include consideration of:

- Changes to State Government regulation and policy with regard to electronic gaming;
- Changes to Victorian Gaming Machine Industry Codes of Practices; and,
Development of a range of Mornington Peninsula Shire policies and strategies.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Responsible Gaming Strategy 2001

The action plan framework used by the Knox City Council includes:

- Task
- Council's role
- Overall responsibility: council unit
- Action Responsibility/Liaison
- KPIs
- Timelines

Go to www.knox.vic.gov.au or
www.vlga.org.au

Moonee Valley City Council

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

A process for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the Responsible Gambling Strategy will be put in place to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of strategies to the objectives and priorities of Council on this issue. Strategies will include:

- Regular reports to the Responsible Gambling Task Force, community consultation committees and Council monitoring implementation;
- An evaluation report to be presented to Council in the preparation of Council's Annual 'Council Plan';
- A review of Council's Responsible Gambling Strategy to be undertaken within three years, with a 'report card' to the community on the progress and effectiveness in addressing gambling issues in the City of Moonee Valley.

Moonee Valley Responsible Gambling Strategy Draft for Consultation 2001

Glossary of gambling terms

EGMs are electronic gaming machines or poker machines. They are commonly referred to as 'pokies'.

Gambling is the act of staking money on uncertain events driven by chance. It usually includes games of chance ranging from raffles, bingo, lotteries, sports betting, betting on horse racing and playing EGMs.

Gaming refers to all legal forms of gambling other than wagering.

Wagering is another name for betting. The main forms are racing and sports betting.

Responsible gambling refers to the activity carried out by responsible gamblers, persons who gamble within their means and without adversely affecting their health and well-being, or anyone else's, particularly their family's.

Problem gambling refers to the situation where gambling in our society gives rise to harm to the individual player and/or to his or her family and may extend to the community.

Gaming operators are the holders of licences to provide EGMs to licensed venues. Two companies, Tattersalls Gaming Ltd and TABCORP Holdings Ltd, have been licensed to provide EGMs to clubs and hotels in Victoria. They are often referred to as the **duopoly**.

A **venue operator** is a holder of a venue operator's licence which includes an approval of a venue as an approved venue for gaming. EGMs can only be located in hotels or clubs which hold a liquor licence.