

6.3 STRENGTHENING THE RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING CODE OF CONDUCT

Submitting Councillor: Josh Fergeus

MOTION

That Council:

- 1) Notes that the Victorian Government is currently reviewing the Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct for EGM venues in line with a 2018 election commitment and that the Gaming Minister is expected to announce the outcome of this review in the coming weeks.*
- 2) Notes that harm from gambling is a public health issue and that Council supports reform in order to protect the local community from gambling harm, including strengthening of the Responsible Gambling Code of conduct for EGM venues.*
- 3) Publicly supports reform of the EGM venue codes of conduct so that:*
 - a) All venue staff are prohibited from engaging in activities aimed at increasing the amount of money people lose.*
 - b) All venue staff be required to monitor people gambling to identify signs a person is being harmed by gambling. Further, venue staff should be required to intervene and offer assistance to people displaying signs they are being harmed by their gambling.*
 - c) Introduce mandatory breaks and maximum daily limits on gambling time.*
 - d) The Code forbids the provision of free drinks (excluding water) in the pokies area of the venues and encourages people to take a break by having to go to other parts of the venue for food and drinks.*
 - e) The Code should prohibit the giving of gifts, inducements or any other item of value to people who are gambling.*
 - f) The Code requires pokie venues to assist in any research around reducing gambling-related harm that has been approved by the Victorian Government.*
- 4) Writes to the Hon Marlene Kairouz MP, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming & Liquor Regulation to communicate Council's support for these reforms to the venue code of conduct.*
- 5) Writes to our local members of State parliament encouraging them to support these reforms.*

BACKGROUND

With the current review of the Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct by the Victorian Government, there is an opportunity to advocate for key reforms that complement our current Public Health Approach to Gambling Harm Policy and that is in line with our advocacy through 'Pokies Play Monash'.

The Victorian Government needs to ensure that the code can hold venues accountable and conduct is enforceable, measurable and reportable.

DISCUSSION

Currently there is detailed evidence that the harm minimisation strategies currently in place are not actually significantly reducing harm.ⁱ To ensure a more responsible delivery of gambling in gaming venues, there is an opportunity to ask for the Victorian Government to review and deliver on a revised code of conduct that outlines key strategies that will support the reduction of harm from gambling for City of Monash residents.

CONCLUSION

Monash Council has made a commitment to limiting gambling-related harm, through the City of Monash Public Health Approach to Gambling Policy 2016-2020.

The City of Monash has included gambling-harm prevention as a focus within the key priorities outlined within the newly endorsed A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan 2017-2021.

Council is best positioned to advocate for the improved health and wellbeing of our community through a more effective Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct which will support the work of officers and supportive health services.

ⁱ <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2014/09/apo-nid41459-1093451.pdf>