



**Macedon
Ranges**
Shire Council



Gambling Harm Minimisation Policy

Policy sections and proposed implementation explained

To assist in understanding how Council's Gambling Harm Minimisation Policy would apply to specific situations, the following sections of the policy are explained in more detail below.

Policy Statement

Acknowledge gambling as a public health issue and, where appropriate, integrate harm minimisation into future planning and programming. This includes the Council Plan, the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.

Implementation

As key strategic documents come up for review and redevelopment, gambling harm minimisation strategies will be incorporated in them.

Example

Council will develop strategies and actions that address hazards to health (e.g. gambling harms in the new Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan).

Policy Statement

Not provide financial support or provision of grants for activities that take place in gambling venues.

Implementation

1. Any requests for financial support from Council to hold/deliver community activities in gambling venues will not be supported.
2. Applicants will need to declare, when applying for financial support for any activity, that the activity will not be hosted in a gambling venue.

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*Macedon Ranges Shire is located on Dja Dja Wurrung,
Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country.*



Example

If Council were to receive an application for funding from a community group to run an activity (e.g. information session or community lunch) in a gambling venue, the application would be ineligible for funding. This issue is already covered in the grants guidelines, however officers will update funding application forms asking if their proposed project is located in a gambling venue. If they say yes to this question, the application will be marked as ineligible and not assessed.

Policy Statement

Not provide Council financial support or provision of grants for a specific activity that also receives sponsorships from gaming venues, online betting companies or other gambling providers for that same activity in that financial year. [This policy position is to become effective from 1 July 2025 to allow community groups time to transition].

Implementation

1. All applications to Council for financial support or grants will specifically ask the details of any funding/sponsorship the group has received from gambling providers in the last 12 months.
2. Applications will be considered ineligible for funding if:
 - a. the specific activity they are seeking funding for has in the last 12 months also been funded by gambling providers; or
 - b. the club or group has (in the last 12 months) or is currently being funded/sponsored by gambling providers more broadly without any specific project or item.
3. Applicants are invited to discuss funding arrangements with officers prior to submitting an application, particularly if they are in receipt of funding from gambling providers.

Example

Where a community group applies to Council (Budget process or community grant) to fund a project, the application form will ask if that project is also funded by a gambling providers. If they say yes, the project will not be funded by Council.



However, if for example a tennis club applies to Council to fund a border fence (not co-funded by the gambling industry), but the tennis club has been funded by the gambling industry to re-surface two tennis courts in the last 12 months, there is nothing stopping Council from funding the border fence.

In another example, if a football club is broadly (not a specific project) funded/sponsored by the gambling industry, then Council could not fund/support them as there is the potential for Council to be seen as partnering with the gambling industry to fund the football club. With a 12-month transition period, the football club could renegotiate the sponsorship deal such that the funding is for a specific activity, for example, the gambling industry fund their player payments. Once that is clear, Council can fund other discrete projects.

Moving forward, clubs and community groups seeking funding from both the gambling providers and Council will need to identify discrete projects and ensure that they are not applying for something that is or will be funded by both.

Policy Statement

Assess the social and economic impact of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) applications and represent community interests in regulatory processes.

Implementation

Council will not have a predetermined position. If Council receives a planning application and/or notification of a license application for EGMs, it will undertake a social and economic impact assessment and community consultation. The outcome of these actions will drive Council's approach to the license and planning application. The planning scheme will also be updated so that it aligns with the policy.

Policy Statement

Work with current EGM licence holders leasing Council owned or managed land to relinquish their EGM licence and divest themselves of EGMs.

Ensure where a Council lease holder with EGMs has a lease due for renewal, Council will actively engage with the leaseholder two years before expiry of that lease to discuss the implications of this policy. A new lease will clearly state the conditions and timing for an agreed transition period (negotiated between Council and the leaseholder,



and further, formally endorsed by Council). EGMs and other forms of gambling will be permitted for that period only.

Implementation

1. Two years before the expiry of a lease, Council officers will meet with the leaseholder (with EGMs). Council will provide a key contact as a single point of contact for the leaseholder. The purpose of that first meeting is to start the process of developing an exit plan for EGMs. Initial steps for the lease holder may include:
 - a. engaging their own external advice and support to successfully:
 - i. plan for business continuity and financial sustainability
 - ii. complete the exit plan and submit to council for approval
 - iii. implement the exit plan.
 2. As the exit plan is being prepared, and all relevant information is gathered, the time (length of the new lease) required for the leaseholder to divest themselves of the EGMs will be negotiated. Factors to be considered will include:
 - a. the timing of the leaseholder's EGM licence with the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC)
 - b. time required to restructure business operations such that the club is not reliant on gambling income (it should be noted that Council wishes a successful outcome and is comfortable in allowing a significant time should it be demonstrated that it is required).
- Council acknowledges that a leaseholder may need seek out the assistance of a specialist business/financial consultants to provide advice around business restructuring.
3. Once divestment of EGMs has occurred, the leaseholder would be free to apply for community grants and Council would advocate on the leaseholder's behalf for any suitable State or Federal grant funding opportunities.



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Policy Statement

Work with current community groups to divest themselves of gambling related sponsors and advertising arrangements.

Work with sporting clubs to deliver gambling free environments including online betting and gambling sponsorship and advertising.

Implementation

Officers will encourage and support clubs to participate in the “Love the Game” program.

The “Love the Game” program supports clubs to take a stand against sports betting sponsorship and help juniors to love the game, not the odds.

Additionally, officers could work with a club to seek other forms of funding and sponsorship. This might involve building capacity regarding funding applications to seek State and Federal government funding.

For more information on the Policy, contact Council on 5422 0333 or email mrsc@mrsc.vic.gov.au