

OFFICERS REPORT**PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY FROM GAMBLING HARM**

Submitting Councillor: Cr Josh Fergeus

MOTION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the work of the Alliance for Gambling Reform in preparing for a COVID-19 recovery which prioritises public health over profit;*
- 2. Writes to the Premier of Victoria requesting that the State Government follows the advice of public health experts by ensuring that pokies machines are only re-opened in a manner that addresses the harm that it causes.*

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

A commitment to advocacy in reducing gambling-related harm is ongoing and is delivered within Council's existing budget.

IMPACT ON INTERNAL RESOURCES

This action can be undertaken within existing resources.

COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

This motion focuses on harm minimisation strategies and on public health measures which are in line with expert advice. This motion is consistent with the City of Monash's existing stance on gambling-related harm, as shown in the *Public Health Approach to Gambling Strategy 2016-2020*.

Any advocacy for the harm minimisation around gambling activities aligns with the current work being undertaken by officers, and within the current policy.

RELEVANCE TO WORK ALREADY UNDERTAKEN BY OFFICERS OR COMMITTEES

This Notice of Motion is consistent with Council's 'Pokies Play Monash' campaign. This includes the reduction of opening hours, removing 'losses disguised as wins', together with promoting social activities and venues which serve as alternatives to spaces that operate Electronic Gaming machines.

Writing a letter to the Premier promoting measures that support the reduction of gambling harm locally, and the protection of the health of our residents, is consistent with work already undertaken by officers in the space of gambling. As a leadership Council within the Alliance For Gambling Reform, City of Monash has historically shown leadership in its advocacy and has previously provided support to the Alliance For Gambling Reform.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Nil