

8.1 NOTICE OF MOTION- APPOINTMENT AS MONASH REPRESENTATIVE TO VICTORIAN LOCAL GOVERNANCE ASSOCIATION AND GAMBLING COMMITTEE

Submitting Councillor/s:	Mayor Paul Klisaris
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RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to

1. **Appoint Cr Josh Fergeus as the Monash representative to the Victorian Local Governance Association for 2025.**
2. **Appoint Cr Rebecca Paterson as the Monash representative to the Victorian Local Governance Association's Local Government Working Group on Gambling for 2025.**

INTRODUCTION

This Notice of Motion seeks Council's approval for the appointment of representatives to the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) and the VLGA's Local Government Working Group on Gambling. These appointments are crucial for ensuring Monash's active participation and representation in key local government forums.

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

The VLGA is a key body representing councils across Victoria. It provides a platform for councils to collaborate, share knowledge, and advocate on behalf of their communities.

On 23 January 2025, the VLGA wrote to Council requesting two representatives. While all Councillors are able to attend VLGA events and programs, the VLGA have requested a singular Councillor contact to communicate offerings and benefits, where it doesn't make sense to contact the whole Councillor group.

The VLGA has also requested a representative for the Local Government Working Group on Gambling. This Group focuses on addressing gambling-related issues within local communities, promoting responsible gambling practices, and supporting affected individuals and families.

The appointment will be the 2025 year, with these appointments forming part of Council's broader representatives list for consideration and appointment each year.

CONCLUSION

The appointment of Cr Josh Fergeus and Cr Rebecca Paterson will ensure that Monash is well-represented in these important forums.

ATTACHMENT LIST

1. Officers Response to NOM [8.1.1 - 2 pages]

OFFICER'S REPORT

TITLE OF MOTION

Submitting Councillor: Mayor Paul Klisaris

MOTION

That Council resolves to

- 1. Appoint Cr Josh Fergeus as the Monash representative to the Victorian Local Governance Association for 2025.**
- 2. Appoint Cr Rebecca Paterson as the Monash representative to the Victorian Local Governance Association's Local Government Working Group on Gambling for 2025.**

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications if this Notice of Motion is passed.

IMPACT ON INTERNAL RESOURCES

There is no impact on internal resources if this Notice of Motion is passed.

COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

Appointing councillors to the VLGA and the LGWGOG aligns with the Council Plan and relevant Council policies in several ways:

- Both the VLGA and LGWGOG emphasise good governance practices.
- Councillors involved in these groups can better engage with their communities by staying updated on the latest developments and policies.
- Councillors can help implement and advocate for policies and initiatives discussed in these groups, ensuring alignment with broader local government strategies and reforms.

RELEVANCE TO WORK ALREADY UNDERTAKEN BY OFFICERS OR COMMITTEES

Council's Public Health Approach to Gambling Harm Prevention Policy guides Council's approach to preventing harm from gambling in Monash. The Policy provides strategic direction for Council actions under the pillars of Plan & Regulate, Advocate & Lead, Fund & Resource and Communicate. Council is known as a leader among local governments for gambling harm prevention through our historically strong policies and innovative and targeted community

initiatives including the 'You're Reading This Ad' awareness campaign and the sponsorship forum held for sporting clubs in partnership with Hawthorn Football Club and Love the Game in 2022.

There are 955 Electronic Gambling Machines (EGMs, commonly known as pokies) across 15 venues in Monash, these machines took \$121.4m from the community in 2023/24 financial year, this places Monash 8th highest in the state for EGM losses. Gambling harm prevention is a priority for all of Council and as such is identified as a priority within Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Local Government Working Group on Gambling (LGWGOG) is a crucial support to Council in its gambling harm prevention advocacy and initiatives. It provides information sharing, joint advocacy and networking opportunities. The group provides an opportunity for councillors and council officers from VLGA member councils to come together to hear from informed speakers about current gambling harm prevention research and policy and consider Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan implications and the regulatory environment. LGWGOG has facilitated introductions to high profile researchers which resulted in a webinar hosted by Monash Council in 2022 for Gambling Harm Awareness Week featuring leading researcher Professor Samantha Thomas.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Appointment to the VLGA:

As a VLGA representative, the Councillor's commitment involves serving as a point of contact for their council when it is not appropriate to contact the entire councillor group. The Councillor is expected to be knowledgeable about VLGA member offerings and benefits and to communicate these to the Councillor group when suitable. If needed, they can request support from VLGA to convey this information effectively.

Appointment to VLGA's *Local Government Working Group on Gambling (LGWGOG)*:

The LGWGOG committee meets every two months. While there are no specific responsibilities for representatives, attending these meetings will provide valuable information and updates. Additionally, there is no deadline for appointing a representative to this committee.