



Victorian Local Governance
Association

BUILDING COUNCILLOR CHAMPIONS

WEDNESDAY 15 AUGUST 2018

Dr Susan Rennie

Senior policy advisor, Darebin councillor and public health
campaigner

Determinants of gambling harm

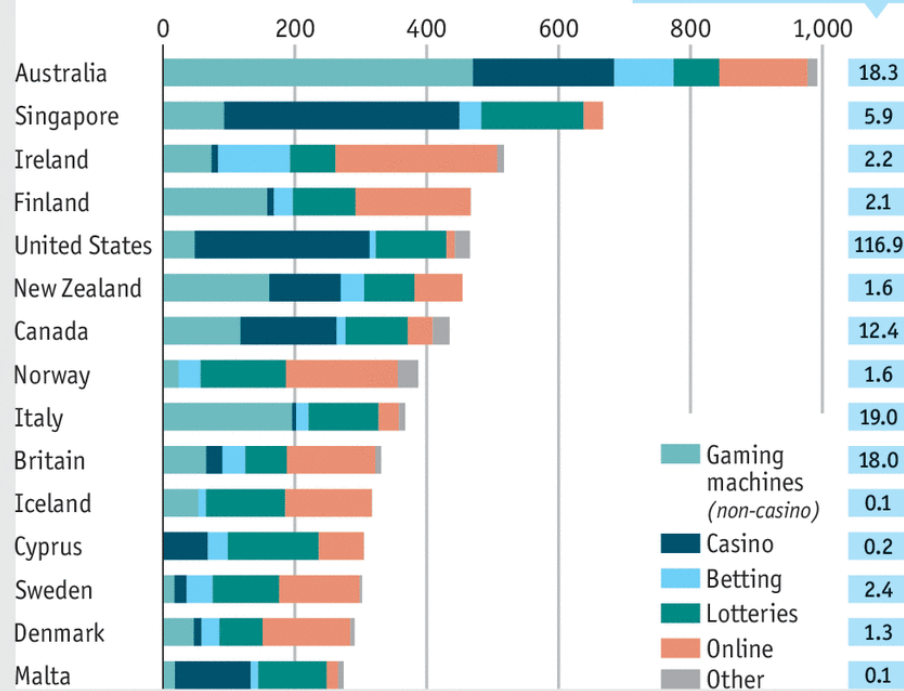
- Dangerous products
- High levels of access
- Normalisation of gambling

Losing streak

2016 estimate

Biggest gamblers, loss* per resident adult, \$

Total losses by country, \$bn



Biggest loss* by country, \$bn

United States

116.9

China†

62.4

Japan

24.1

Italy

19.0

Australia

18.3

Britain

18.0

Canada

12.4

Germany

11.2

France

10.4

Spain

8.9

South Korea

7.4

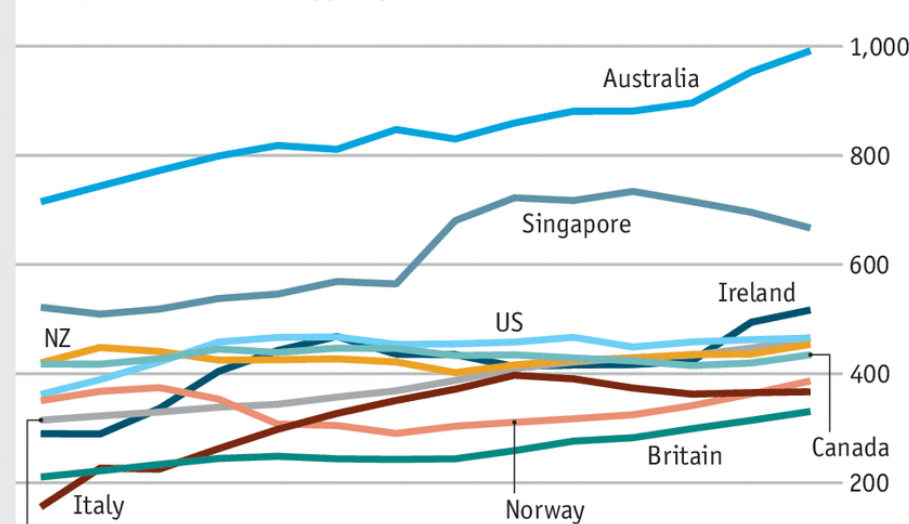
Singapore

5.9

Brazil

3.1

Loss* per resident adult, biggest gamblers in 2016, \$



Theory of change

- Changes to settings and regulations are required to reduce harm



- Address the barriers to achieving regulatory reform

- Reduce the social capital of the gambling industry

- Create reform supportive environments



Make maintenance of status quo difficult and

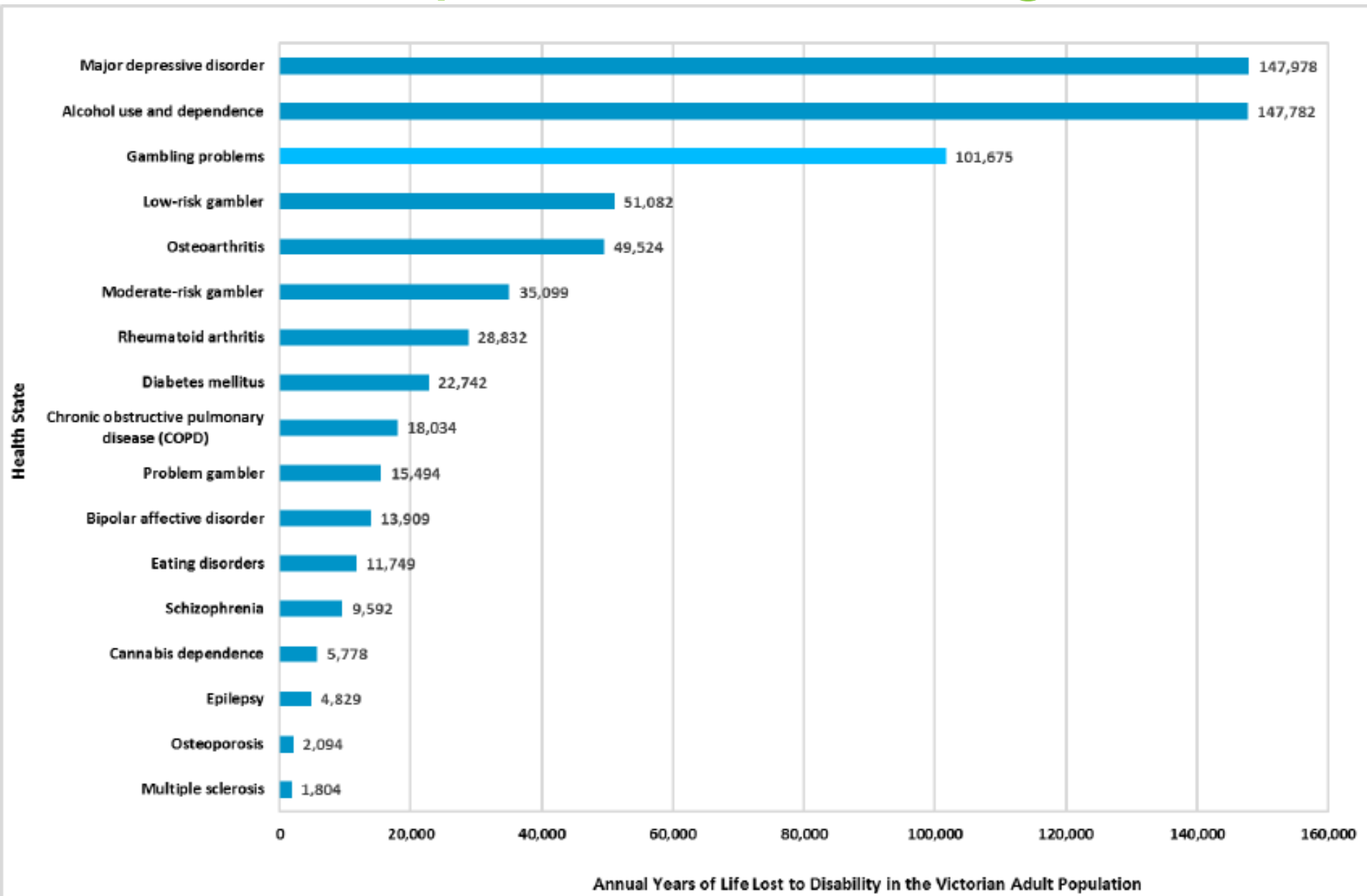
Why local government?

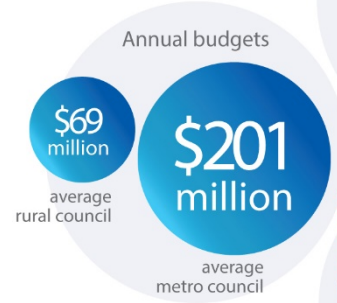
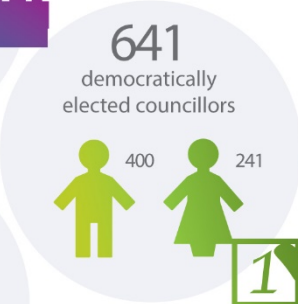
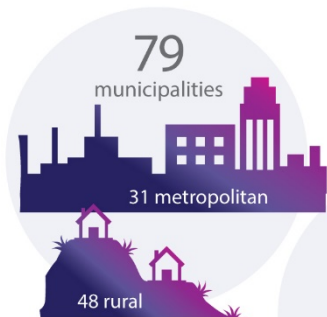
- Local government is the third level of government in Australia and has a significant impact on the lives of all Victorians.
- Each municipality varies in size, population, rate base and resources, but all must operate in accordance with the [Local Government Act 1989](#).
- Democratically elected councillors and council staff make up local government and, in partnership with communities, manage more than \$84 billion worth of community infrastructure and assets.
- Local government is responsible for implementing many diverse programs, policies and regulations set by the Victorian and Australian governments.
- Councils are part of their community every day, delivering more than 100 different services to people who live, work and visit the local area.

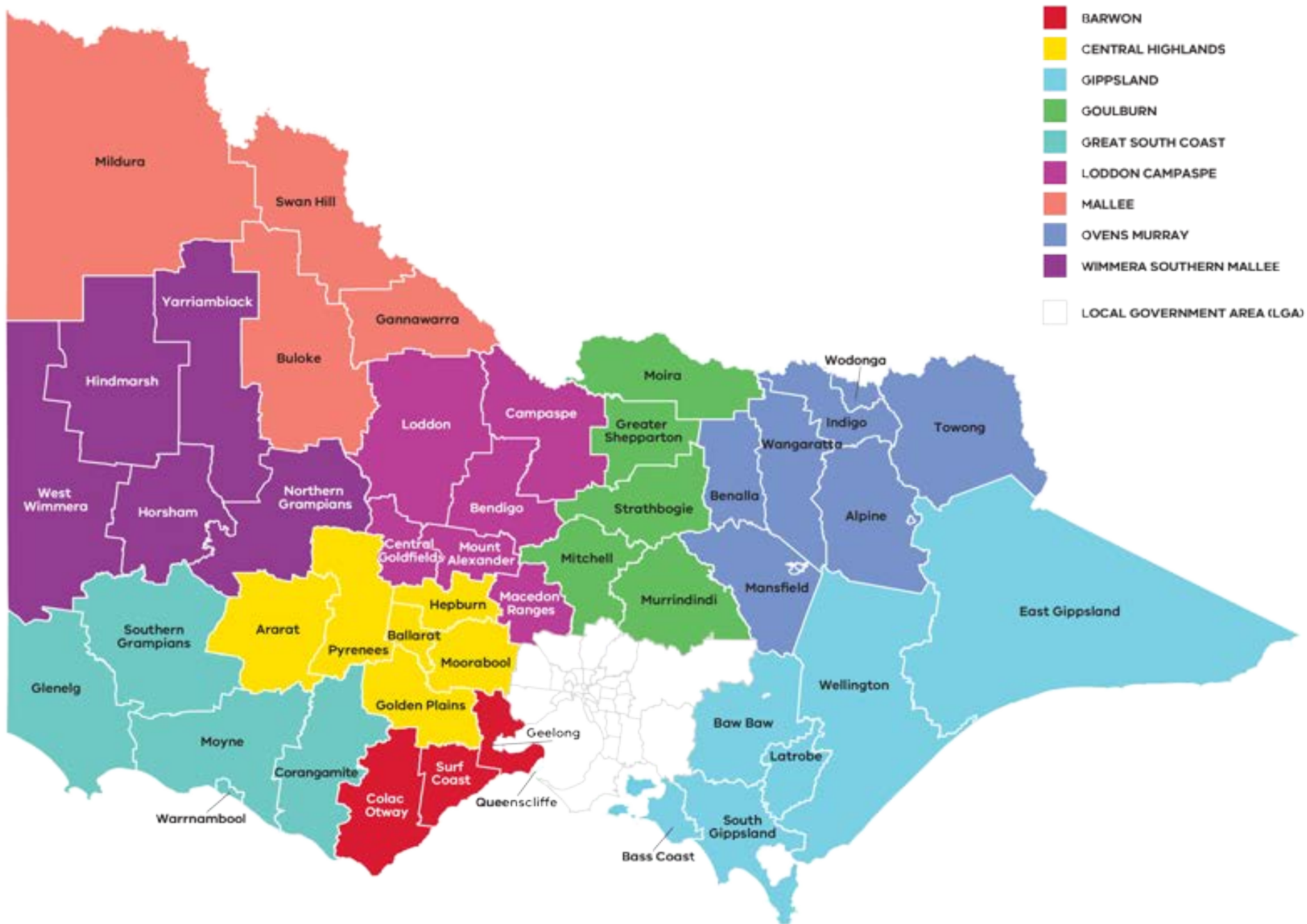
Why local government?

- The Health Act requires every council to have a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP). This plan is to be prepared every three years and reviewed annually.
- A Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan must:
 - ▣ identify and assess actual and potential public health dangers affecting the municipal district
 - ▣ outline programs and strategies which the council intends to pursue to prevent or minimise those dangers
 - ▣ enable people living in the municipal district to achieve maximum wellbeing and provide for periodic evaluation of programs and strategies.

Health Impacts of Gambling







How councils make decisions

- Councils are empowered by law to make decisions on many matters of importance to their local communities. Decisions may be made in formally constituted council meetings, or under delegated authority of the council. Neither the mayor nor the councillors have the legal authority to individually act or make decisions on behalf of the council.

Prerequisites when working with councils

- Credibility
- Access
- Relationships
- A good value proposition
- Evidence and data

Addressing the normalisation of gambling

Gambling has historically been a feature of Australian culture with 39 per cent of Australian adults gambling in a typical month.ⁱ Gambling in Australia is categorised into three main groups, namely racing (bookmaker, totalisator and TAB), gaming (EGMs, lotteries, interactive gaming, keno, lotto and pools) and sports betting.



Although EGMs are one of the most important sources of enjoyment for gamblers, they also pose the greatest risks to existing and potential problem gamblers.ⁱⁱⁱ



Gambling is a legal activity in Victoria that is regulated at the national, state and local government level.





POKER MACHINES

16.7%

of Victorians played poker machines in the last 12 months



LOCATION OF POKER MACHINE PLAY

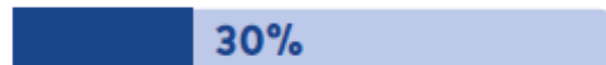
PUBS OR HOTELS



CLUBS



CASINO



PROPORTION OF MALES AND FEMALES



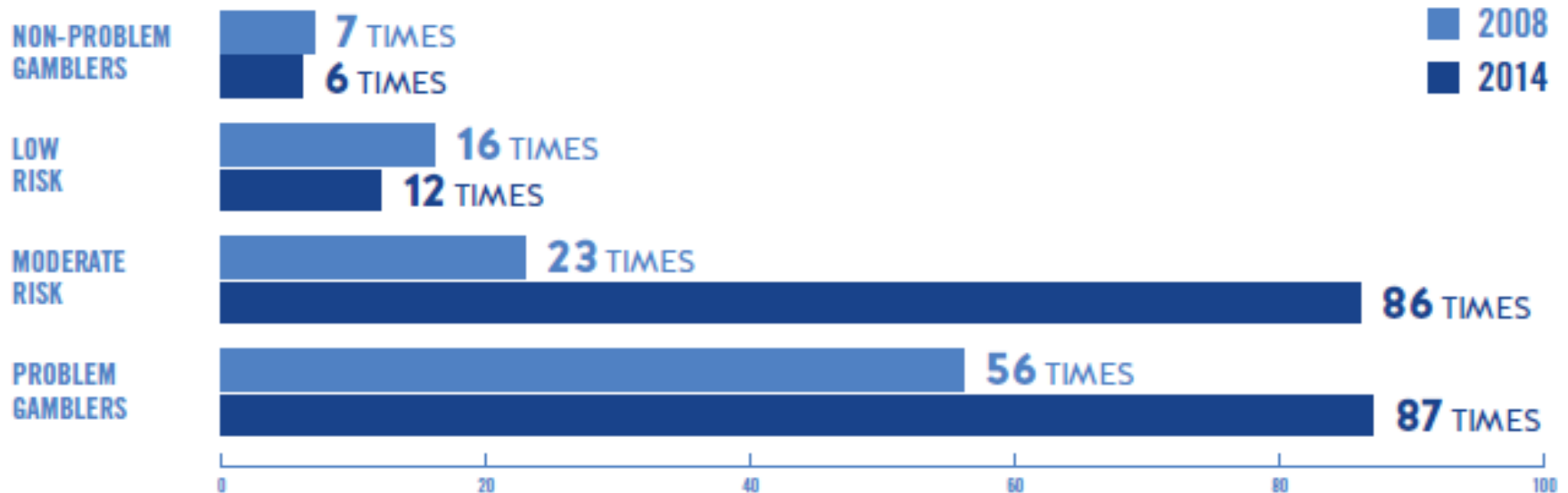
MALE
50%



FEMALE
50%

Who is using machines?

AVERAGE TIMES GAMBLERS PLAYED POKER MACHINES PER YEAR



Council policies

Yarra Vision

To advocate for a fairer society where the gambling industry no longer causes social and economic harm in the community of Yarra

Moreland Gambling Policy Statement

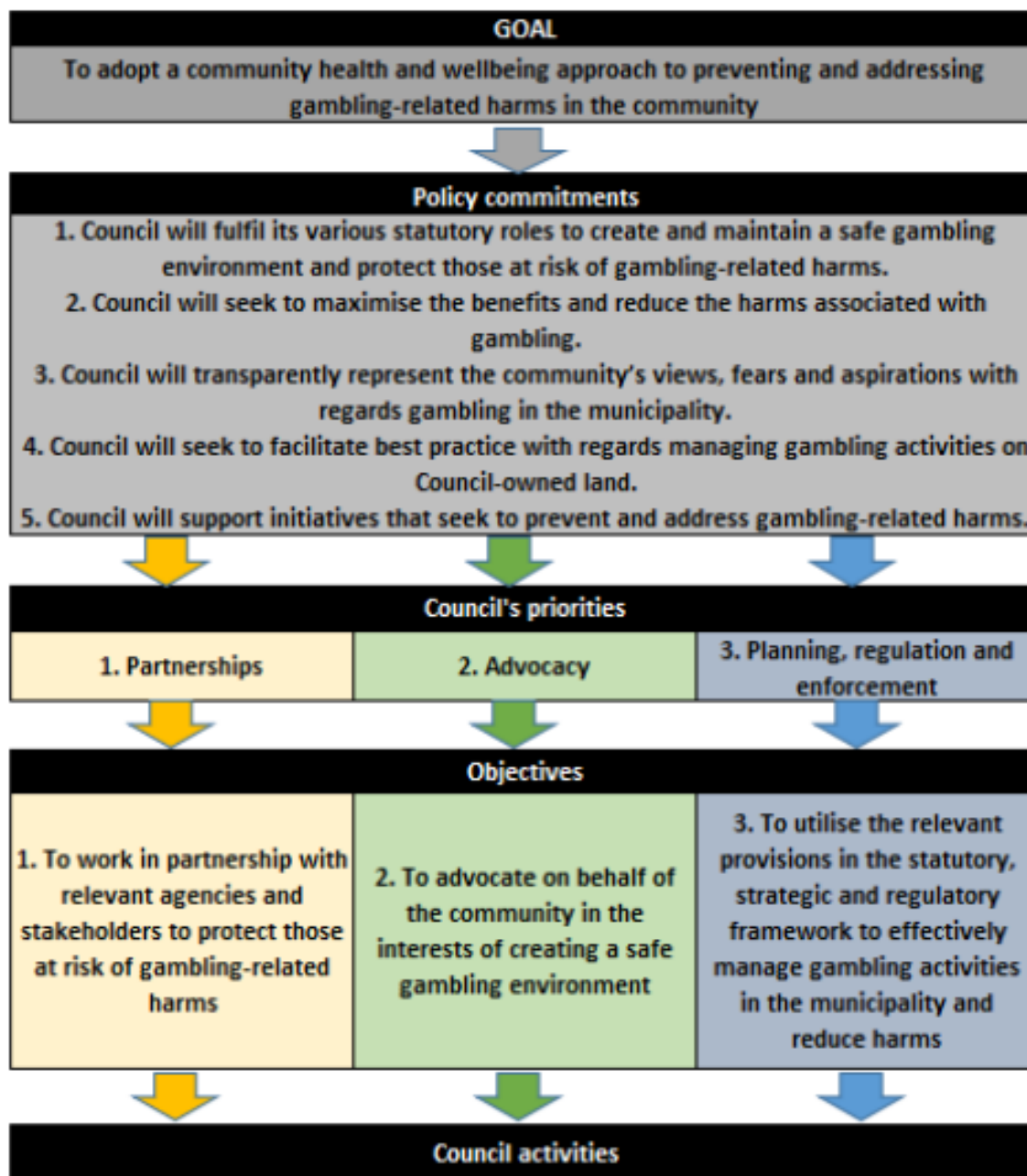
To reduce the harm from gambling Moreland City Council applies a primary prevention and harm minimisation approach. Council will work in partnership with the community, service providers and gambling venue operators towards vigilance in delivering safer gambling services. An evidence-based approach to planning, regulation, advocacy and community education will seek to reduce the negative impacts of current and emerging forms of gambling.

Council recognises that electronic gaming machines (poker machines) are legal technologies used at least occasionally by 20 – 25 % of Moreland residents. Council is concerned about their potential to harm those at risk from problem gambling. Advocacy for enhanced consumer protection measures for poker machine users is therefore a central policy objective.

Maroondah (DRAFT)

The Maroondah Gambling Policy 2018 (the Policy) is a 'whole of Council' approach to preventing and minimising gambling-related harm in the community. It describes Council's policy position on gambling in the municipality and describes three key priorities relating to service provision, advocacy and Council's statutory, strategic and regulatory roles.

Figure 4 – Maroondah Gambling Policy 2018 Action Plan Framework



NO BRAINERS



DO NOT TAKE
ACTIVITY GROUPS
TO GAMBLING
VENUES



DO NOT FUND SPORTS
OR CULTURAL CLUBS
THAT OPERATE POKER
MACHINES, OR PROMOTE
SPORTS BETTING



DO NOT HOLD
COUNCIL EVENTS
OR ACTIVITIES
AT GAMBLING
VENUES

Deliver quality and timely information

Email 27 July 2018

Dear Tom

Today the Victorian Government released the latest data on poker machine losses for each local government area in Victoria.

You can see how much money was lost on pokies in Banyule City Council by following [this link](#). When you click on your council area, you will get further detail of losses in each local venue.

If you have any questions about this data, or are interested in having a conversation about what can be done to reduce harm from gambling in Banyule City Council, please don't hesitate to send me an email or give me a call.

Regards

Susan

Follow up...

Thank you for the email Susan. It is a real issue. Our council will be discussing this in the upcoming weeks.

Regards Jason Modica

Thanks Susan. Keep up the terrific work that you are doing.

Breaching the 100m mark has only further cemented our resolve to work to push that number down in light of Wyndham's population growth.

The Darebin libraries project you have created recently is absolutely brilliant.

Talk soon.

JG

Hi Susan,

The amounts are described as follows

"Net Expenditure is the total amount lost by players"

I'm not sure I understand this definition. Does it include winnings as well as losses? Is it just total expenditure?

So if I go into a pokies venue with \$100, I win \$200, but end up losing it all in the end, what figure do you report? \$100 or \$300?

Thanks for your guidance

Regards

Cr Robert Davies

Hello Susan,

Firstly by way of introduction, I manage the Active Living department at Greater Shepparton and amongst our areas of responsibility, the Health Plan forms part.

The timing of this data is great as we are in final stages of development and data is always a great way of highlighting where needs/interventions are required.

We obviously work closely with Primary Care Connect locally who are central to efforts in addressing problem gambling.

In looking at the statistics, I wonder if you could confirm whether or not any surrounding LGA's losses have been aggregated into our figure of \$33M for 2017/18 and if so, what is that component.

More than happy to discuss if you have a moment.

Regards

David

Dear Timothy

You may be aware that a pokies venue in Casey, the Lynbrook Hotel, has applied to increase the number of poker machines in operation from 55 to 75.

This is particularly disappointing given that only a few months ago, the government announced a cap on EGM numbers in this part of Casey. I had hoped that such caps would effectively protect your community and council from having to deal with more applications. It appears that the application is somewhat speculative given that they will not be able to install more machines while the existing cap is in place. The Lynbrook Hotel is a high loss venue with each of their existing 55 EGMs averaging \$160,000 in losses per year.

I am pleased to report that in the past year, the VCGLR has rejected a couple of similar applications from venues in the City of Greater Dandenong (Club Noble applied for an increase of 10 EGMs), The City of Greater Bendigo (The Wellington) and the Shire of Cardinia (Club Officer applied for an additional 20 machines). In these cases, councils opposed the applications and actively participated in the VCGLR process. Also in 2017, the VCGLR disappointingly approved machine increases in the Cities of Hume, Casey, Bendigo (the Bendigo Club) and the City of Greater Geelong. In some of these cases, councils elected not to be represented at the VCGLR.

Participating in licensing matters is complex and time consuming, and outcomes can be uncertain, but the single most significant factor in determining outcomes appears to be the degree of Council and community involvement in the decision-making process.

If you have any questions about licensing processes as they may relate to the applications by the Lynbrook Hotel, or more generally, please do not hesitate to get in touch. My position is funded by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation to deliver advice and support to councillors in relation to such applications and other ways in which councils can prevent harm from gambling.

Regards and best wishes

Susan

0425 706 978

Application Rejected



Council programs and partnerships

- Libraries After Dark
- Ensuring pokies venues pay their way with rates
- Investigation of signage at pokies venues
- LGWGOG

VLGA support and guidance

- Gambling industry funding policy
- Guide to writing gambling policy
- Gambling as a workplace issue
- Council briefings

Pokies on council land

A difficult space...

□ Brimbank, Banyule, Hobsons Bay...

The funding model proposed by the WFC does not align with Council policy.

Council's Problem Gambling (Electronic Gaming Machines) Policy Statement adopted on 14 July 2015 states that 'Council will not provide funding, grants, sponsorship or other resources for any activities that promote gambling' (Commitment 4.4). The WFC operate the Seagulls Nest, which has 66 EGMs being the club's primary source of revenue.

Council's Community Grants Program Guidelines (adopted on 11 April 2017) state that 'organisations that derive income from and/or project activities that promote gambling' will not be eligible for funding.

There is a reputational risk to Council that contributing towards facility upgrades and acting as a guarantor for a loan for a club whose major revenue source is from EGMs. This could be perceived as supporting an organisation that promotes gambling.

Council motions...

Pressure on Woolworths for spying on gamblers

April 24, 2018: Manningham City Council

Cr Sophy Galbally moved the following motion (see **p515 of the agenda - second last page**) about Woolworths spying on heavy gamblers which was unanimously supported:

That Council advocate to the State Government, via the Minister for Gaming and the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation, for an amendment to the Victorian Gaming Industry Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct that requires that venues be prohibited from:

- A. collecting customer data on customers other than self declared problem gamblers;*
- B. storing and sharing customer data with other gaming venues;*
- C. gifting customers with drink cards as part of 'customer loyalty schemes'; and*
- D. setting staff targets with the aim to increase venues' gains by encouraging customers losses*

February 6, 2018: City of Melbourne

Cr Rohan Leppert put up **this strong motion** which was seconded by Acting Lord Mayor Arron Wood and unanimously supported.

That the Future Melbourne Committee:

- 1. Notes the endorsement of the draft Electronic Gaming Decision-Making Framework by this committee on 17 October 2017 and its findings relating to the significant social and economic harms to the City of Melbourne's citizens and communities caused by electronic gaming machines;*
- 2. Makes it policy in relation to the upcoming 28 February 2018 deadline for applications to renew existing electronic gaming machine entitlements for 20 years from 2022 to 2042 that all venues with existing entitlements are encouraged to apply for a substantially lower number than are currently operating at the venue;*
- 3. Requests that the CEO write to all incumbent venues in the municipality with a licence to operate electronic gaming machines (as listed at attachment 1 to the notice), as well as the CEO of each AFL club based in the municipality that operate venues with electronic gaming machines within the state (being Carlton, Richmond, Melbourne and Collingwood), by 9 February 2018, requesting that they respond to the policy of the City of Melbourne as stated above;*
- 4. Requests that management make a media statement by mid March 2018 listing all venues and AFL clubs as defined above with their current and known requested future electronic gaming machine entitlements, acknowledging those that applied for an entitlement below the number of machines currently operating, listing the most recent expenditure data as published by the VCGLR for those that did not, and generally setting out the current state of electronic gaming machine entitlements and impacts in the municipality;*
- 5. Reiterates the position of the City of Melbourne that the central city, currently the only part of the state without a cap on the number of electronic gaming machines, should be brought into the municipal cap;*
- 6. Requests that, following the action taken in paragraph 4, the CEO write to the leader and gaming spokesperson of all parties currently represented in the Legislative Assembly informing them of Council's position and requesting that each party make specific election commitments prior to the 2018 general election including bringing the uncapped areas of the municipality into the municipal cap and reducing the state cap commensurate with the permanent retirement of all non-renewed entitlements.*

Not supporting sporting clubs which rely on poker machine revenue

5 June 2017: Darebin

Submitted by: Cr Susan Rennie and Cr Trent McCarthy

That:

(1) Council will not provide sporting grounds, Council venues or use of Council property to any sporting clubs, community groups, organisations or associations who directly operate or own EGMs in Darebin or elsewhere.

(2) Council Leases and agreements are revised to include this provision.

(3) Any sporting club, community group, organisation or association that operate or own EGM's will be ineligible for community grants, financial assistance or in kind support from Council.

(4) Any sporting club, community group, organisation or association that receives sponsorship or grants (in-kind or cash) from poker machine revenue will have Council grants, in-kind support and funding reduced by the amount and level of funding and/or in-kind support received from EGM sources.

(5) All Council's grants programs, contracts, MOU's, procurement guidelines, sponsorship policy and other relevant agreements are revised to include these provisions.

(6) Council support any Darebin club that wishes to divest themselves of EGMs to develop a transition plan in order that they may continue to access Council facilities and resources and provide a community benefit to their members.

(7) Council request officers undertake an audit / impact assessment of those sporting clubs, community groups, organisations, associations or Council programs that will be affected in practical and reputational terms in order to inform any future transition plan and budget implications.

(8) Council write to all sporting clubs, community groups, organisations, associations to advise them of this motion and of Council's intention to reduce the harms of EGMs in the community.

Thank you

- For follow up...
 - Susan Rennie
 - ▣ susan@vlga.org.au
- 9349-7999



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