



# Pokies reform

**Council is calling on the State Government to implement the Alliance for Gambling Reform Pokies agenda, including \$1 maximum bets for all electronic gaming machines, together with a suite of complementary harm reduction measures — such as changes to opening hours, access to cash machines in gambling venues, and increased local government and community say over the planning approval of poker machine gambling.**

## POKIES REFORM — REDUCE HARM FROM GAMBLING

Glen Eira City Council has joined with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), other councils and many other organisations as a founding supporter of the Alliance for Gambling Reform. Launched in October 2015, the Alliance seeks to campaign for reforms to the gambling industry to reduce harm from poker machines and to protect disadvantaged communities from the infiltration of increasing numbers of poker machines.

Australians spend more money gambling than on other activities that can be addictive and dangerous including alcohol, tobacco and all illegal drugs. It is a major driver of household debt, and family and personal dysfunction. There are 780 electronic gaming machines in Glen Eira and people lost a total of \$74 million (\$203,410 per day) across Glen Eira's 11 gaming venues in 2019<sup>1</sup>.

## FACTS

Last year, more than \$2.69 billion was lost in pokies across Victoria. That is the equivalent of \$550 per adult, or \$7.38 million lost every day. Pokies machines are concentrated in areas of social and economic disadvantage. Those who can least afford to carry this burden are being targeted by big operators.

Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation research shows that in Glen Eira:

- there are 780 electronic gaming machines in Glen Eira (2018);
- people spent a total of \$74 million across Glen Eira's 11 gaming venues throughout 2018–19<sup>1</sup>; and
- in 2018–2019, Glen Eira ranked 14th out of 79 municipalities for the highest pokies expenditure in Victoria (one is the highest)<sup>2</sup>.

The Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation identifies harms from gambling that include health, financial, relationship, emotional, psychological, work and study and criminal harms.

There is an established link between harm from gambling and family violence. Recent Australian research indicates that people who have significant problems with their gambling are more likely than people without gambling problems to be victims and perpetrators of family violence and over half of people with gambling problems report perpetrating physical violence against their children.

1. <https://www.vcgr.vic.gov.au/CA256F800017E8D4VCGLR/2C4FB00D26AF1EFFCA257B320078D3F5?OpenDocument>

2. <https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/resources/gambling-victoria/pokies-across-victoria/glen-eira/>

	Venue	Attached Entitlements	Licensed EGM's	Expenditure (July 2018–June 2019)
1	BENTLEIGH CLUB	88	88	\$ 2,865,942.43
2	BENTLEIGH RSL	90	90	\$ 8,356,966.74
3	BOUNDARY TAVERNER	75	90	\$ 9,581,039.49
4	CAULFIELD GLASSHOUSE	105	105	\$ 10,856,077.43
5	CAULFIELD RSL	52	52	\$ 2,445,182.68
6	MCKINNON HOTEL	45	45	\$ 2,812,823.80
7	ROSTOWN HOTEL	103	103	\$ 16,153,327.34
8	SOUTH OAKLEIGH CLUB	40	42	\$ 980,801.77
9	THE CAMDEN TOWN HOTEL	50	50	\$ 5,877,188.02
10	THE ELSTERNWICK CLUB	32	32	\$ 1,752,877.08
11	ZAGAME'S CAULFIELD CLUB HOTEL	100	100	\$ 12,562,449.94

## THE ASK

Council is calling on the State Government to implement the poker machine reform proposal developed through the Gambling Alliance partnership, including:

- \$1 bet limit per button push on all electronic gaming machines;
- reducing venue operating hours to 10am to midnight for gaming areas;
- removing designs from machines that contribute to gambling harm, such as: losses disguised as wins; linked jackpots; and free spins;
- reducing daily EFTPOS cash-out limits to \$200 in all poker machine venues; and
- banning political gifts and donations by poker machine owners, operators and peak bodies to local and state politicians and parties.

## COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Council recognises that whilst gambling is a legal form of entertainment and gambling bodies profit from this form of entertainment, gambling can have profound health, social and economic impacts to individuals, families and communities at harmful levels.

A clear benefit will be a reduction in the significant impacts of problem gambling faced by families and children including financial insecurity, family stress, poor access to essential household items and the need to sell property and/or other household items to cope with the losses associated with problem gambling.

In addition, the community will see a reduction in the significant individual burden of health caused by problem gambling including health, financial, relationship, emotional, psychological, work and study and criminal harms.

## MORE INFORMATION

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