

# Gambling Action Plan

*Preventing and reducing gambling harm in Kingston*

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2021 to 2025

An action plan of the City of Kingston's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

## Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Kingston recognises the Bunurong people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the municipality is a part. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who call Kingston home. Their enriched knowledge and wisdom of our land and waterways is an essential part of the culture of our community.

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# 1. Introduction

The *Gambling Action Plan 2021-2025* has been developed to support the application of Council's Gambling Policy 2020-2024 and Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 (PHWP 2021-2025). The action plan implementation will be lead by the Social Development department with support from the wider organisation. The implementation will be best achieved through the successful internal collaboration of Council departments. An annual review of the implementation will be undertaken with a focus on what actions have been implemented, identification of successes and challenges and prioritising actions for the following year.

## 2. Reducing gambling harm

### GUIDED BY THE COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025

The Gambling Action Plan is strategically guided by the Council Plan 2021-2025 and aligns as follows:

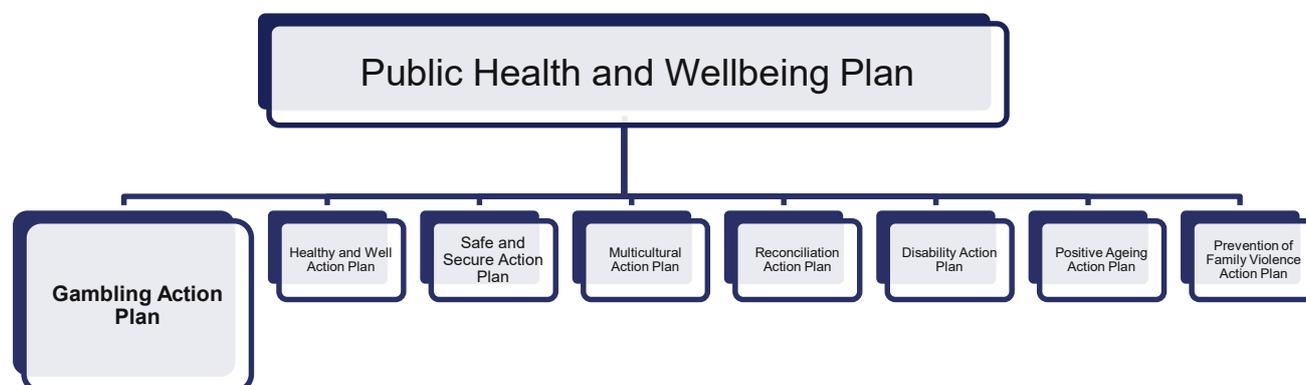
- Strategic Direction: Healthy and inclusive
- Strategic Objective: We are progressive, inclusive and prioritise the wellbeing of all members of our community.
- Strategy: Prioritise our community's mental wellbeing

### GUIDED BY COUNCIL'S PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2021-2025

The PHWP 2021-2025 provides an overarching strategic direction that identifies key health and wellbeing priorities for Kingston. The Gambling Action Plan 2021-2025 will directly contribute toward delivery of objective 1.4 of Council's PHWP 2021-2025 to 'reduce harm from alcohol and other drugs, smoking and gambling'.

The Gambling Action Plan 2021-2025 will consider an holistic approach in the shared delivery of the goals of the PHWP 2021-2025 by integrating with other action plans/strategies in the implementation, measurement and evaluation of actions and activities. There is a range of action plans / strategies across Kingston Council that deliver on the priorities of the PHWP 2021-2025. The action plans that have direct alignment and operate on the same four year cycle are listed below:

Figure 1: Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and aligned Action Plans



## PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2021-2025: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Kingston's PHWP 2021-2025 provides a strategic direction for Council's actions to improve the health and wellbeing of the community. The goals and objectives of the PHWP outline how we will all work towards addressing these factors, in which many actions will contribute positive outcomes to more than one objective.

The goals and objectives are outlined below:

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### 1. A healthy and well community

1.1 Increase participation in physical activity

1.2 Increase healthy eating

1.3 Improve mental wellbeing

**1.4 Reduce harm from alcohol and other drugs, smoking and gambling (Relates to this Action Plan)**

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### 2. A safe and secure community

2.1 Improve safety in the home and community

2.2 Improve feelings of safety in the home and community

2.3 Reduce the prevalence of family violence

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### 3. A kind and connected community

3.1 Increase participation in community activities and volunteering

3.2 Reduce social isolation and loneliness

3.3 Reduce discrimination

3.4 Increase inclusion, respect and belonging

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### 4. A liveable community

4.1 Increase preparedness and resilience for the impacts of climate change

4.2 Increase the availability of social and affordable housing

4.3 Increase participation in the workforce and local economy

4.4 Increase the accessible and equitable supply of facilities, services and activities

4.5 Increase access to and improve amenity of open spaces and the natural environment

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### 5. An informed and empowered community

5.1 Improve provision of accessible health and wellbeing information, programs and services

5.2 Increase participation in lifelong learning and education

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## 3. Actions

### Objective 1.4 Reduce harm from alcohol and other drugs, smoking and gambling

A range of lifestyle activities can impact negatively on individual and community health. The impacts on the community of alcohol consumption, use of illegal drugs, tobacco smoking and gambling are of most concern to Council. These activities contribute to the burden of preventable diseases, are linked to family violence and social isolation.

The specific focus of this action plan is on reducing gambling harm.

Gambling harm is defined as “any negative consequence or side effect that comes from gambling, which can range in severity from momentary feelings of guilt or regret right through to extreme outcomes, like bankruptcy”. There are many types of gambling harm including financial harm, relationship difficulties, health problems, emotional or psychological distress, issues with work or study, cultural stresses and criminal activity. A person can experience gambling harm as a result of their own gambling or someone else’s.

9.6% of Victorian adults who gamble (330,000 adults) experience at least one form of gambling-related harm and 70% of all gambling harm is experienced by people whose behaviour is not classified as problem gambling. Poker machines alone account for 37.7% of all gambling harm in Victoria. In addition, 6.1% of Victorian adults (about 300,000 people) are harmed by someone else’s gambling. Risky gambling behaviour, excessive alcohol consumption and heavy smoking are linked and self-reported satisfaction with life drops as risky gambling behaviour increases. Gambling harm leads to poorer health and wellbeing of the individual, family, community or population<sup>1</sup>.

To prevent and reduce gambling harm in Kingston the following actions are proposed:

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<sup>1</sup> Rockloff, M, Browne, M, Hing, N, Thorne, H, Russell, A, Greer, N, Tran, K, Brook, K & Sproston, K 2020, *Victorian population gambling and health study 2018–2019*, Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Melbourne, <https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/resources/publications/victorian-population-gambling-and-health-study-20182019-759/>

Priority Area	Goal	Action	Lead Council team	Timeframe	Measures
1. Advocacy	Lead and contribute to advocacy campaigns targeting issues related to gambling	<p>1.1 Lead localised advocacy campaigns aligned with the Alliance for Gambling Reform advocacy asks to prevent and reduce gambling harm which include but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the hours of operation of local gaming venues to 10am to midnight</li> <li>• Reduce the Kingston Electronic Gaming Machine cap down to the current number of electronic gaming machines (945 licenced EGMs)</li> <li>• Call on the State Government to use the machine approval process to remove designs from machines that contribute to gambling harm, such as losses discussed as wins, linked jackpots and free spins</li> <li>• The introduction of a \$1 bet limit per button push on electronic gaming machines</li> <li>• Call for the ban of gambling advertising to reduce the normalisation and accessibility of sports gambling</li> <li>• Continue to advocate for better protections against forms of online gambling such as lootboxes</li> </ul>	Social Development / Communications	Years 1 – 4	Community participation numbers in campaigns Change to reforms
		1.2 Continue to be a member of the Alliance for Gambling Reform and	Social Development	Years 1 – 4	Status of membership

		actively contribute to the national and statewide strategic advocacy at a local level.			Change to reforms
		1.3 Participate in working groups related to gambling as a platform for Council's lobbying and advocacy to reduce the harms from gambling in Kingston.	Social Development	Years 1 – 4	Attendance at meetings
2. Awareness raising	Increase awareness and knowledge in the community about gambling harm and the affects it has on the community	2.1 Provide information and educate the community about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The risks and potential harms of gambling;</li> <li>• Services and supports available for gambling related issues;</li> <li>• Detecting early signs of gambling related harm;</li> <li>• Alternative recreational and social activities to gambling</li> <li>• Gambling trends, expenditure data and research</li> </ul>	Social Development	Years 1 – 4	Assessed change in community understanding of issue
		2.2 Support local organisations and groups to undertake initiatives aimed at gambling prevention, raising awareness about gambling and potential harm, de-stigmatisation, help-seeking avenues and opportunities for community engagement free from gambling.	Social Development	Years 1 – 4	Amount of support provided (resources contributed) Number of initiatives supported
		2.3 Provide customised education and awareness raising for identified vulnerable groups (multicultural people, young people, isolated older people) and within socio-economically vulnerable areas of Kingston.	Social Development	Years 1 – 4	Assessed change in community understanding of issue
3. Partnerships	Increase networks with professionals and other organisations to	3.1 Build strong partnerships and alliances with the Alliance for Gambling Reform, Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Victorian Local Governance Association, Municipal Association of	Social Development	Years 1 – 4	Number of partnerships

	work in collaboration on reducing gambling harm in the community	Victoria, Gamblers Help Southern, local government sector and local neighbourhood houses and community groups on key gambling related issues.			
		3.2 Develop partnerships with and provide support to organisations, services and the community to address the impacts of gambling harm in Kingston and improve pathways for referrals to gambling support services.	Social Development	Years 1 – 4	Number of partnerships
		3.3 Support research into the impacts of gambling and the development of effective harm reduction strategies	Social Development	As opportunities arise	Level of support given / outcomes of research
4. Alternate activities to gambling	Build capacity in community members and groups to participate in non-gambling recreational and social activities	4.1 Support and promote local services, organisations and community groups to provide and promote alternative recreational and social activities to gambling.	Social Development	Years 1 – 4	Number of local services/organisations supported Number of programs/events available
		4.2 Work with community groups and sporting clubs to reduce reliance on funding or support received from the gambling industry	Social Development	Years 3 – 4	Reduction in the number of EGMs operated by clubs Assessment on level of gambling funded support provided to clubs
5. Policy and processes	Develop and contribute to Council policies and processes to prevent or reduce the impact of gambling harm	5.1 Complete a social and economic impact assessment regarding applications for new gaming venues, applications for additional gaming machines and planning applications in proximity to gaming venues in accordance with Council's Gambling Policy 2020-2024.	Social Development	As required	Outcome of application following assessment

	on the community	5.2 Integrate gambling harm reduction into Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan and other Council plans as relevant.	Social Development	Year 1 - 4	Evidence of inclusion
		5.3 Investigate the development of planning policy on gaming for incorporation into the Planning Policy Framework of the Kingston Planning Scheme.	Planning	Year 4	Outcome of investigation
		5.4 Revise all leases and agreements to include the provisions set out in the gambling policy statements.	Property and Service Coordinators	Year 1 - 2	% of all leases revised
		5.5 Revise all grants programs, contracts, sponsorship policy, advertising policy and other relevant agreements to include the provisions set out in in the gambling policy statements.	Governance	Year 1 - 2	% of all grants programs, contracts, sponsorship policies, advertising policies and other relevant agreements revised

## 4. Background information

### Legislative and policy context

The Gambling Action Plan 2021-2025 was developed with regard to the national and state legislation, strategies, frameworks and guidelines listed below:

#### NATIONAL

- [National Gambling Reform Act 2012](#)

#### STATE

- [Racing Act 1958](#)
- [Planning and Environment Act 1987](#)
- [Casino Control Act 1991](#)
- [Casino \(Management Agreement\) Act 1993](#)
- [Gambling Regulation Act 2003](#)
- [Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008](#)
- [Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation Act 2011](#)
- [Local Government Act 2020](#)

Council is guided by the Gambling Regulation Act 2003, Planning and Environment Act 1987 and Victorian Planning Provisions for its involvement in gaming management in Kingston. The Gambling Regulation Act 2003 entitles Council to make a submission to the VCGLR about social and economic impacts of gaming applications. The Planning and Environment Act 1987 requires a planning permit to be applied for from Council for the installation of gaming machines. The Victorian Planning Provisions in the Planning Scheme provide local governments with decision making powers over the location of EGMs.

#### LOCAL

- [City of Kingston Gambling Policy 2020-2024](#)

### Data and demographic profile

Collation and analysis of data and demographics from a variety of sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, VicHealth and the Crime Statistics Agency Victoria informs the development of the PHWP and Gambling Action Plan.

This is presented in the City of Kingston Health and Wellbeing Profile and is available on Kingston Council's website: [www.kingston.vic.gov.au](http://www.kingston.vic.gov.au)

## How we developed this action plan

The actions detailed in this action plan were identified within the development process for the Gambling Policy 2020-2024 and the PHWP 2021-2025. Data and information was gathered during this process to inform the development of the PHWP, and its action plans. The process involved an analysis of relevant data and demographic information, policy and legislative contexts and stakeholder and community consultation.

### DATA AND LITERATURE

- Evaluation of Council's previous Public Health and Wellbeing Plans
- Review and analysis of state and federal policies and literature
- Collation and analysis of health and demographic data from a variety of government sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, VicHealth and the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Gambling Policy 2020-2024 community engagement results
- Kingston Council's 2020 Health and Wellbeing Survey, which provided a representative sample of Kingston's residents and their views on gambling in Kingston
- Discussions with internal Council staff
- Consultation with key stakeholders and the community

### REPORTS

The following reports are available on Council's website ([www.kingston.vic.gov.au](http://www.kingston.vic.gov.au)):

- Health and Wellbeing Profile, City of Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- 2020 Health and Wellbeing Survey
- Gambling in Kingston
- Gambling Policy 2020-2024

### FEEDBACK

Feedback on the draft action plan was sought between August and September 2021.

### ADOPTION

The Gambling Action Plan delivers on the objectives of Council's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025, which was presented to Council on XXXX.

## How we will implement this action plan

This action plan outlines details about what Council commits to doing to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the community. Each action lists what will be done, who in Council will lead the initiative, and the timeline for its implementation.

Council's Social Development Team will oversee the development and coordination of this action plan and support and guide other teams with their actions. Working collaboratively within Council and with external organisations and with the community is an important aspect of implementing the identified actions.

## How we will monitor this action plan

Yearly tracking and reporting of the outcomes of this action plan will be undertaken. This will provide short term feedback about the successes and challenges of this action plan, shaping the next year's action plan and tracking how Council is progressing in achieving its Gambling Action Plan objectives of the PHWP.

Outcome reports will be presented to Council and posted on the Kingston website:

- Yearly – reviewing the outcomes of this action plan and the progress being made at impacting the PHWP objectives
- Four yearly – reviewing the outcomes of all health and wellbeing work across Council and its overall impact on the long term performance measures of the PHWP objectives.



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