



28 November 2017

Hon Marlene Kairouz MP
Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gambling and Liquor Regulation
State Government of Victoria
Level 26, 121 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Minister

Re: Proposal to consider the introduction of 'cashless gambling' to Victoria

The City of Greater Dandenong is concerned at the haste with which the Gambling Regulation Amendment (Gaming Machine Arrangements) Bill 2017 is being brought before State Parliament for passage and its lack of substantial content to address gambling-related problems among Victorian communities.

This Bill presents an opportunity to institute reforms to the regulation of electronic gaming machine (EGM) gambling that would lessen the destructive impact of gambling losses upon many communities and individuals. These include measures to reduce the rate of gambling losses, venue opening hours and access to cash at venues.

It is Council's view that the Bill should be amended to incorporate reductions in bet limits on EGMs to \$1 – a proposal endorsed by the Productivity Commission as a means to reduce gambling-related harm.

It is further proposed that cashless gambling be banned so that gamblers may clearly perceive the financial impact and magnitude of their losses.

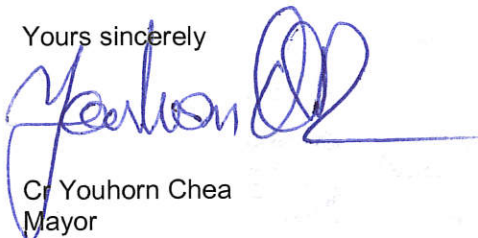
A reduction in the maximum permissible opening hours of gaming venues is also suggested as a means for deterring people from gambling throughout the evening – a pattern of gambling closely associated with gambling-related problems.

Finally, Council urges your consideration of a reduction in the limit upon EFTPOS withdrawals at venues to \$200 in any 24-hour period, rather than the present proposed limit of \$500, to set limits upon the rate at which gambling losses may be incurred.

Gambling-related problems are a matter of acute and enduring concern for the City of Greater Dandenong, where losses to gaming machines exceeded \$118 million in 2016/17 – the highest level of per capita gambling losses in Victoria. The impact of such losses is aggravated by social conditions in this community, which include the highest unemployment rate in metropolitan Melbourne and its lowest income levels.

In light of these considerations, we urge your government to incorporate amendments to this Bill to achieve substantial and effective reforms to gambling, and thereby ease the burden of gambling losses upon individuals and families throughout this State.

Yours sincerely



Cr Youhorn Chea
Mayor

cc. Gabrielle Williams, State Member for Dandenong
Hon Martin Pakula, State Member for Keysborough
Hon Gavin Jennings, State Member for South-Eastern Metropolitan