Attachment 1

Draft Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy

Policy Number:	Issued by Governance	Directorate:	Connected Communities
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager Community Strengthening
Approval Date:	29 September 2025	Version Number:	1
Review Date:	3 Years from Meeting Date		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to state Council's commitment to preventing and minimising the health, social and economic harms associated with all forms of gambling in the Knox community. The Policy guides Council's decision making on gambling harm prevention.

The Policy aligns with, and responds to, the key health and wellbeing priority 'Reduce harm form alcohol, smoking, vaping and gambling' outlined in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.

This Policy replaces Council's previous Electronic Gaming Machine Policy and takes a public health approach to ensure the social and economic impacts are considered in Council actions.

2. Scope

While Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) is the form of gambling over which Council has direct influence through its statutory role in planning and decision-making processes, this Policy responds to all forms of gambling harm that impacts the Knox community and applies to:

- Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs);
- Online gambling;
- Sports betting;
- Keno;
- Commercial bingo;
- Casino games; and
- Horse/dog race wagering.

This Policy does not cover lower risk gambling activities such as lotteries, fundraising raffles and community bingo.

3. Context

Council recognises that gambling is a legitimate form of entertainment in Australia, however gambling is also recognised as a significant, global health concern, which impacts individuals, families and the wider community. Almost one quarter (23.9%) of Victorian adults gamble at least monthly.[1]

In 2022-2023 the total loss across all forms of legal gambling in Knox was estimated at $191 million[2]. Gambling losses/amount lost is defined as the amount wagered (bet) by gamblers less the amount won by gamblers.

Knox residents faced greater financial losses from electronic gaming machines (EGMs) than Metropolitan Melbourne in 2024-2025, with $79 million EGM losses, averaging $217,000 per day[3].

A full summary of gambling data can be found in Appendix 1.

4. Guiding Principles

A set of guiding principles has been developed to guide decision making and underpin the implementation of the Policy. These principles are:

Public Health Approach

Council will utilise a public health approach to ensure it addresses the broader social, economic, environmental, and built environments that influence gambling harm in the community.

Evidence-informed

Council will regularly collect and analyse gambling data to help understand the local impact of gambling in the community and inform future policy and decision-making.

Partnerships

Council will seek out greater alignment and collaboration both within Knox and across the broader Eastern region to amplify efforts to prevent and minimise gambling harm.

Intersectionality

Council will apply an intersectional approach, recognising that effective actions need to take into consideration the diverse and overlapping needs of priority population groups.

5. Council Policy

Four priority areas have been developed that align to where Council can have the largest influence

[1] Victorian Population Gambling and Health Study 2023
[2] City of Greater Dandenong, Social Statistics
[3] VGCCC, Monthly Expenditure Data Report, August 2025.

in preventing and minimising harm, these are:

- Planning and Regulation;
- Building Community Capacity;
- Leadership; and
- Advocacy.

6.1 Planning and Regulation

Council recognises that through effective planning and regulation we can prevent exposure and minimise gambling-related harms in the community. Council will assess each application for EGMs and will take into consideration each case individually based on merit:

6.1.1 Council will actively discourage and oppose any application for new EGM licenses, an increase in EGMs, a new EGM venue or transfer of EGMs where the application is seen to cause a net social or economic impact that is detrimental to the local area and in areas where the community is most at risk of harm from gambling.

6.1.2 Council will continue to collaborate with neighbouring municipalities when responding to EGM license applications.

6.1.3 Council will not enter into new lease to any club or organisation that operates EGMs on Council owned or managed land nor will they support any increase in the number of EGMs held by the gambling venue that currently leases Council-owned land.

6.1.4 Council will not support any future applications for EGMs on Council-owned or managed land.

6.1.5 Council will ensure all planning decisions and advice related to gambling matters will be made with reference to this Policy and the relevant provisions in Knox Planning Scheme.

6.2 Building Community Capacity

Council recognises that to reduce gambling harm caused to individuals and the community it is important to build capacity of the community to understand the risks of gambling and to share information that supports gambling harm prevention and minimisation:

6.2.1 Council will work with community organisations and sports clubs to foster the development of alternative recreational and social activities.

6.2.2 Council will partner with key stakeholders to educate staff, community groups and sporting clubs on the risks associated with gambling harm and where to seek help.

6.2.3 Council will continue to raise awareness of gambling harm in the community, including understanding the impacts of gambling, the health and wellbeing impacts, local EGM numbers and losses and understanding the risks and harms associated with EGMs and other forms of gambling.

6.2.4 Council will provide notice to the community when there is an application for a new EGM license, an increase in EGMs or a transfer of EGMs and provide an avenue, where possible, for the community to provide feedback.

6.2.5 Council will promote Gambler's Help and family violence support services in all communications regarding gambling harm.

6.3 Leadership

Council recognises in order to influence change in the broader community it is important to demonstrate leadership to prevent and minimise harm from gambling:

6.3.1 Council will embed reducing gambling harm as a priority area in Councils strategic documents, including future Council and Health and Wellbeing Plans.

6.3.2 Council will not provide community grants, financial assistance, or in-kind support to organisations or businesses that operate EGMs or other forms of gambling more strongly related to gambling harm, excluding Council's obligations as a landlord.

6.3.3 Council will not accept direct financial contributions from the gambling industry and will not promote events or activities held at venues with EGMs.

6.3.4 Council will not hold any activity, event, function or program at venues that operate EGMs.

6.3.5 Council will endeavor to filter and block gambling related internet sites for devices connected to the Council's core ICT Network.

6.4 Advocacy

Council recognises that to effect change at a broader level, change is needed at all levels of government. Council will identify advocacy opportunities and work in partnership, where appropriate to strengthen advocacy efforts:

6.4.1 Council will take a proactive approach to advocacy and will continue to advocate for best practice regulatory reforms to reduce harmful practices in the gambling industry by advocating for:

- A permanent reduction to gambling room operating hours, with all gambling rooms to be closed between midnight and 10am;
- The reduction of the maximum bet on EGMs to $1 per spin;
- Reforms to the Community Benefit Scheme, including a more transparent reporting process and the exclusion of sponsorships and operating costs as claimable community benefit;
- Greater transparency of the State Government Community Support Fund at a municipal level; and
- The banning of sports betting advertising, particularly during live viewing of sport; the banning of gambling inducements; and the banning of targeted online gambling to young people.

6.4.2 Council will increase its advocacy for gambling harm prevention in Knox through its partnerships and focus on collaborative action with State Government, peak bodies, community stakeholders and other councils.

6. Implementation and Review

This Policy informs and applies to all relevant Council planning, policy, programs and decision making. Implementation of this Policy is undertaken by relevant Departments across Council.

Council will review this Policy every three years or as necessary when evidence base or legislation changes.

7. References

7.1 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Gambling Regulation Act 2003
- Interactive Gambling Act 2001

7.2 Charter of Human Rights

- This Policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights.

7.3 Related Council Policies

- Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029
- Knox Planning Scheme
- Knox Gambling Policy Review Profile 2024

8. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Chief Executive Officer. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

Appendix 1 - Knox City Council Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Background Paper

Gambling is defined by the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission as an activity which includes a prize of money (or something of value) offered or won; a person paying (or staking) money or valuables to participate; an outcome involving chance, even if influenced by skill.

Knox City Council's commitment to preventing and managing gambling harm has evolved over time, starting with its first Gambling Policy in 2001. The most recent iteration is the Electronic Gaming Machine Policy 2020, which primarily guides Council's statutory roles in planning, regulating, and managing the operation of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) within the municipality.

While EGMs is the form of gambling over which Council has direct influence through its statutory role in planning and decision-making processes, it is important to recognise and respond to all forms of gambling harm that impacts the Knox community.

Gambling is recognised as a significant, global public health concern. Taking a public health approach recognises that:

- Gambling, like tobacco and alcohol, are addictive products and need to be regulated;
- Certain population groups will be more vulnerable to harm;
- Evidence must inform the selection of appropriate strategies; and
- Success will come from working in partnership with community clubs, support services and businesses.

The intention of the Gambling Harm Prevention Policy is to build on the Electronic Gambling Machine Policy to take a public health approach to ensure the social and economic impacts are considered in Councils actions.

The Policy aligns with and responds to the key health and wellbeing priority 'Reduce harm from alcohol, smoking, vaping and gambling' outlined in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.

Legislation and Policy context
Council's Gambling Harm Minimisation Policy is guided by the following State and Local legislations and policies:

- Planning and Environment Act 1987;
- Gambling Regulation Act 2003;
- Local Government Act 2020;
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008;
- Knox City Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029; and

- Knox Planning Scheme.

Gambling in Australia

In Australia, gambling is an entrenched part of the culture and often viewed as a legitimate form of entertainment. Gambling is recognised as a significant, global health concern, which impacts individuals, families and the wider community. In 2022–2023 the total losses in Victoria, to all forms of gambling were $7.4billion, with 46% of gambling losses to EGMs and 35% from wagering[4].

The harms experienced from gambling is not limited to financial, it also includes psychological distress, relationship conflict, cultural harms, health problems, impacts to work or study and increased crime. The most reported harm from gambling was financial, followed by psychological harm and relationship stress[5].

Participation in gambling is continuing to decline with just over half (53.3%) of Victorian adults participating in gambling in 2023, compared to 69% in 2018–2019. However, harm among people who gamble has increased, with 13% reporting at least one form of gambling harm, compared to 9.6% in 2018–2019[2].

More than two thirds (70 per cent) of gambling-related harm is experienced by people whose behaviour is not classified as 'problem gambling'. Almost half of Australians who gambled in 2022 (46 per cent) were classified as being at some risk of gambling harm in the past 12 months[6]. Those most likely to experience gambling harm gambled on casino table games (36%), followed by sports (35%), bingo (32%) and EGMs (29%)[2].

Estimates are that for each 'problem gambler' harm is experienced by up to six others. Affected others are more likely to be female, aged between 25 and 44 and earn a low-to-middle income[2].

Most people gamble solely in a physical gambling venues (56%) compared to online (31.5%), with only 12.6% of people gambling in both venues and online[2]. The average gambling amounts losses per adult are highest for EGMs and around 80% of presentations to counselling agencies relate to problems associated with EGMs.

There is growing concern about the harm caused by other forms of gambling such as sports betting and online gambling. In 2022–2023 the total losses in Victoria, to all forms of gambling were $7.4 billion, with 46% of gambling losses losses EGMs and 35% from wagering[7].

Recent trends, such as the widespread availability of mobile internet devices, have exacerbated

---

[4] The Social Costs of Gambling to Victoria 2023

5 Victorian population gambling and health study 2023 Final report, September 2024

6 Parliament of Australia (2023) You win some, you lose more. Online gambling and its impacts on those experiencing gambling harm. Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs

7 The Social Costs of Gambling to Victoria 2023

the risks of technology-based gambling, including online sports betting. Sports betting is highly accessible due to mobile phone apps and there has been a significant increase in advertising on social media. Almost 8 in 10 Victorians were exposed to gambling advertising in the last week[2].

Gambling in Knox City Council

In 2024-2025, there were $79 million gambling losses to EGMs averaging $217,000 per day. Knox residents faced greater financial losses from electronic gaming machines (EGMs) than Metropolitan Melbourne. On average, EGMs took $586.24 per adults, which is higher than the $548.12 per adult across Metropolitan Melbourne. This highlights a greater prevalence of gambling-related harm in the region.

Following a reduction in EGM expenditure because of the closure of gaming venues during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Knox has experienced an overall increase in total EGM player loss since the gaming opened in the 2021-2022 Financial Year.

Table 1: EGM losses over 10 years

Financial Year	**EGM losses across all gaming venues**
2015/16	$73.82M
2016/17	$75.06M
2017/18	$75.86M
2018/19	$73.89M
2019/20	$53.49M
2020/21	$40.31M
2021/22	$56.21M
2022/23	$78.30M
2023/24	$76.62M
2024/25	$79.24M
Total losses 2015-2025	**$682.8M**

Knox currently has 11 gaming venues (four clubs and seven hotels). Ferntree Gully has four venues, Wantirna and Wantirna South each have two venues, and Bayswater, Boronia and Rowville each have one venue.

There are several gaming venues located in close proximity to the municipality's northern, western and south-western boundaries in the Cities of Maroondah, Whitehorse, Monash and Greater Dandenong respectively. Knox's gaming venues are highly accessible with all of them located along or in close proximity to major arterials (Burwood Highway, Boronia Road, Mountain Highway and Wellington Road).

Figure 1: Locations of EGM venues in Knox City Council

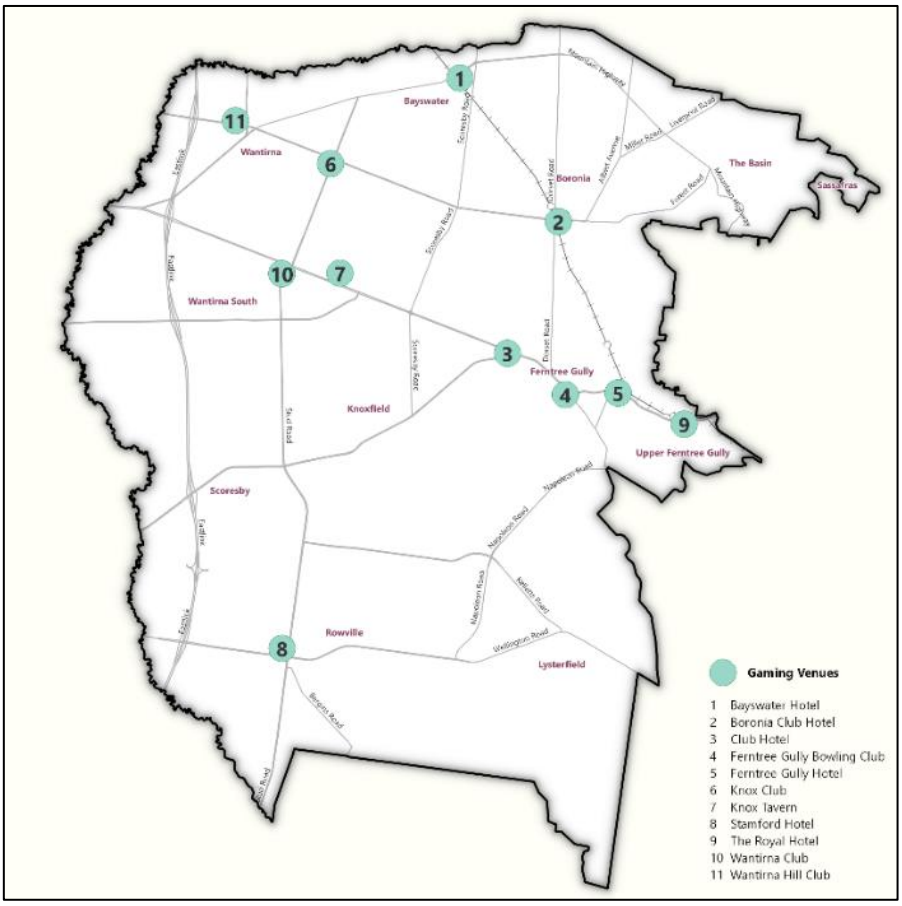
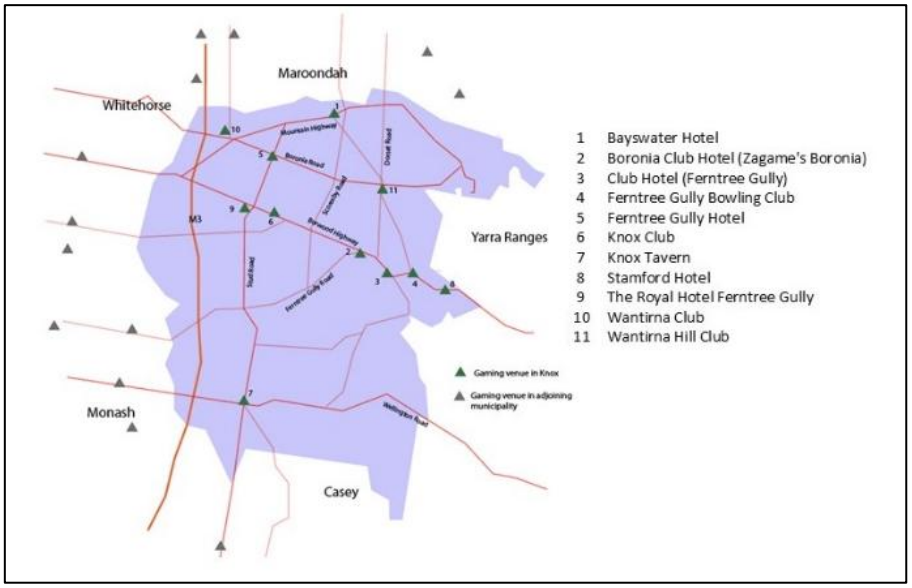


Figure 2: Venue location in relation to adjoining municipalities



Across these 11 venues there are currently 771 EGMs operating. This is the 10th highest number per LGA in Victoria in 2024[8]. The municipality is currently 451 EGMs below the municipal cap of 1,222 EGMs as per the Ministerial Order of 2017. A municipal cap is a maximum and not a benchmark. It is based on an average of 10 EGMs per 1,000 adults applied across all municipalities in Victoria not covered by a regional cap. Knox is currently operating at 63% of the legal limit.

Table 2: Knox Gaming venues EGM Numbers and Losses

Venue Name	Losses July 2024 – June 2025	Average Loss per EGM	EGM Numbers	Owned by
Club venue				
Knox Club, Wantirna	$9.24M	$92,397	100	The Knox Club
Wantirna Club	$4.69M	$48,366	97	Richmond Football Club
Wantirna Hill Club	$4.56M	$76,001	60	Vermont Football Club
Ferntree Gully Bowling Club	$946,222	$27,830	34	Ferntree Gully Bowling Club
Hotel venue				
Stamford Hotel, Rowville	$14.34M	$168,719	85	ALH Group
Boronia Club Hotel	$10.94M	$136,756	80	ELR Hotels Pty Ltd
Bayswater Hotel	$10.83M	$135,456	80	ALH Group
Knox Tavern, Wantirna South	$8.57M	$111,278	77	Supreme Knox Pty Ltd
The Royal Hotel, Ferntree Gully	$6.32M	$91,572	90	ALH Group
Club Hotel Ferntree Gully	$4.65M	$116,237	40	ALH Group
Ferntree Gully Hotel	$4.14M	$84,600	49	ALH Group

[8] VGCCC 'current gaming expenditure by LGA-monthly' May

Figure 3: Knox Gaming Venues Losses

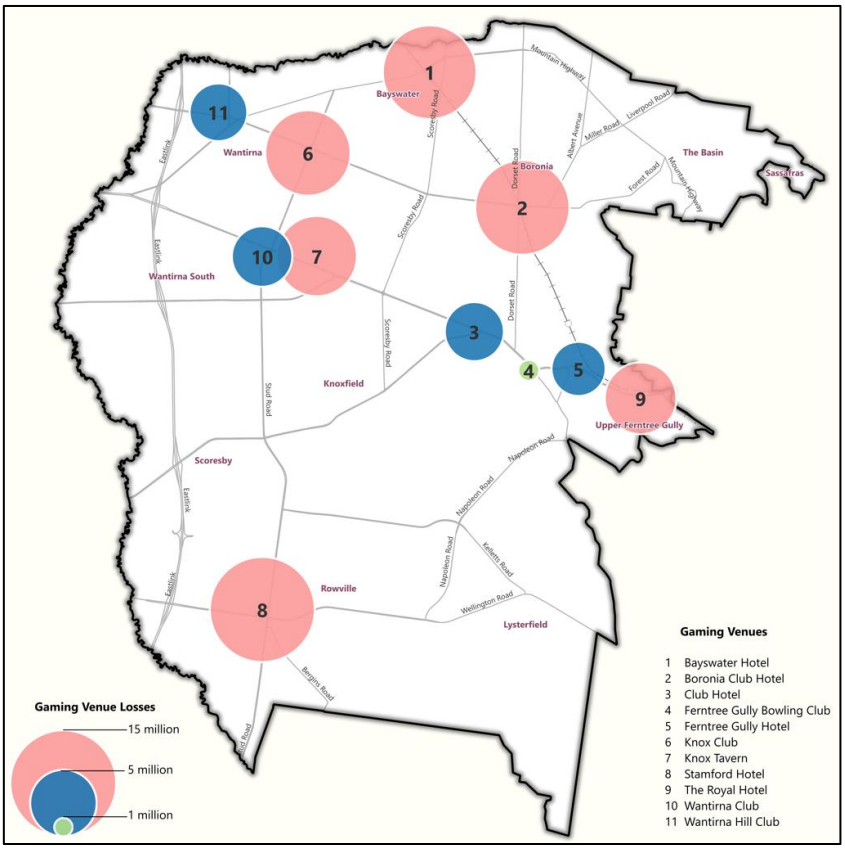
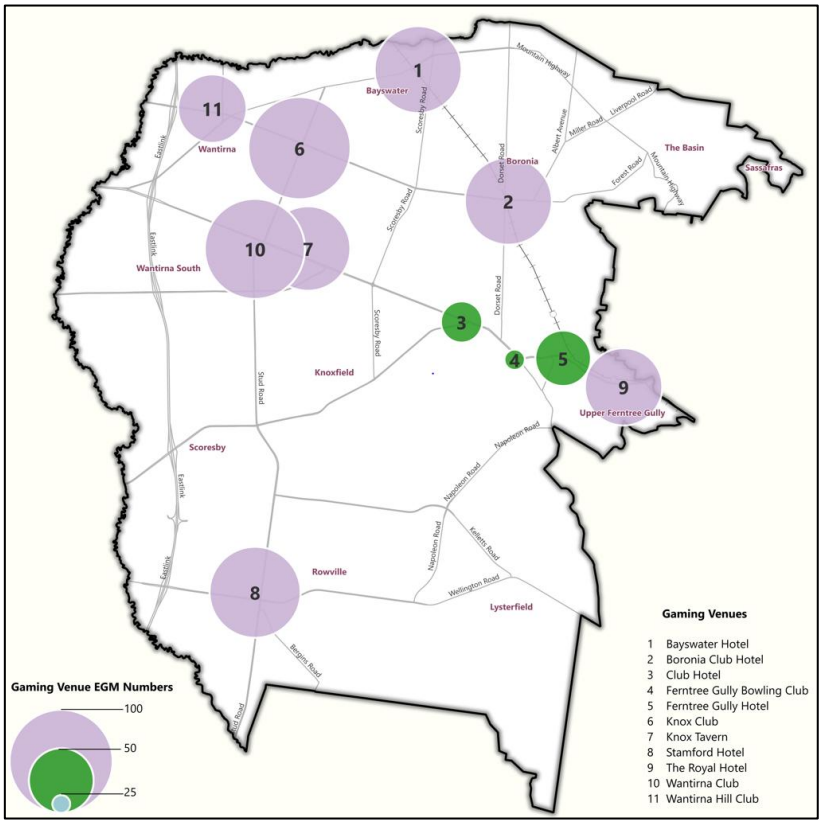


Figure 4: Knox Gaming Venues EGM Numbers



The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) measure the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage and/or advantage based on a range of Census characteristics. The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) is one of the SEIFA indexes used to show disadvantage indicators (e.g. unemployment, low incomes or education levels, single parent families, low skilled occupations, poor English proficiency).

In 2021, Knox LGA had a lower disadvantage score than Greater Melbourne, with an IRSD value of 1,042.2 compared to 1,018.0 for Greater Melbourne. A higher IRSD value indicates less disadvantage.

At the suburb level:

- Lysterfield had the least disadvantage, with an IRSD value of 1,097.2; and
- In contrast, Bayswater was the most disadvantaged suburb, with the lowest IRSD value of 1,002.5.

In Knox, EGMs are disproportionately clustered in areas of high socioeconomic disadvantage, as indicated by the SEIFA Index. These locations often have higher rates of unemployment and lower household incomes, making residents more susceptible to gambling related harm.

Figure 5: Heat map of gaming venue location and SEIFA Index

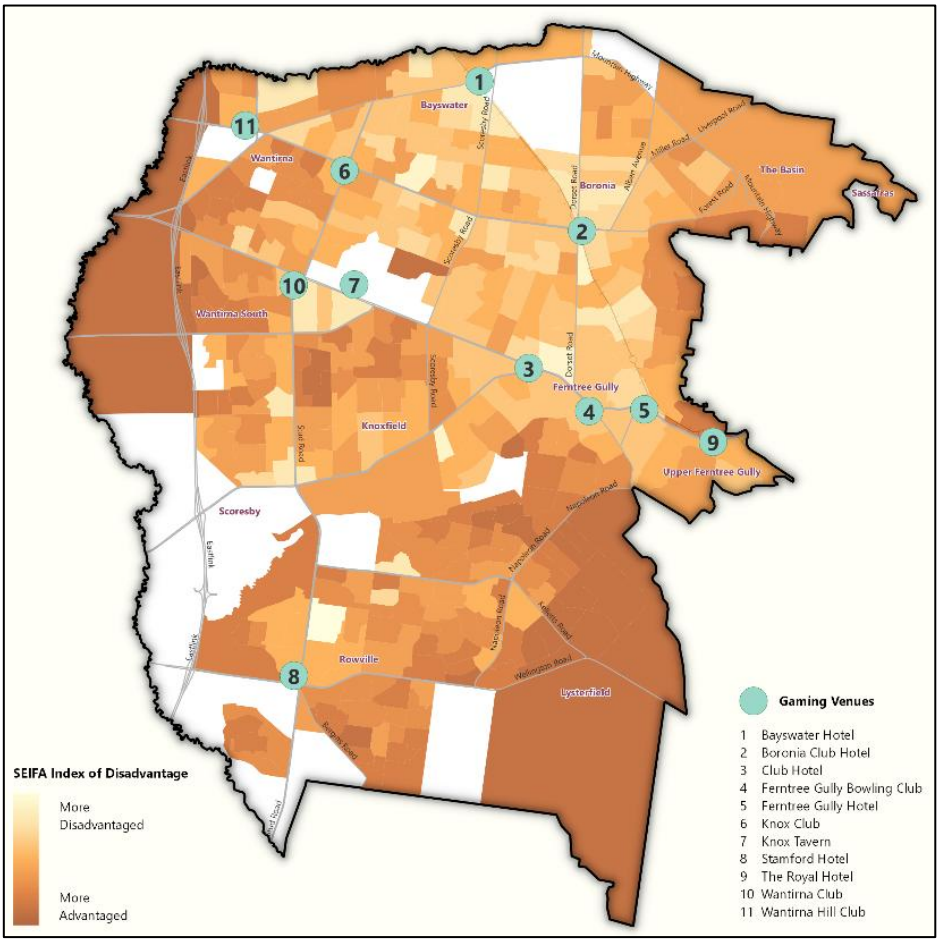
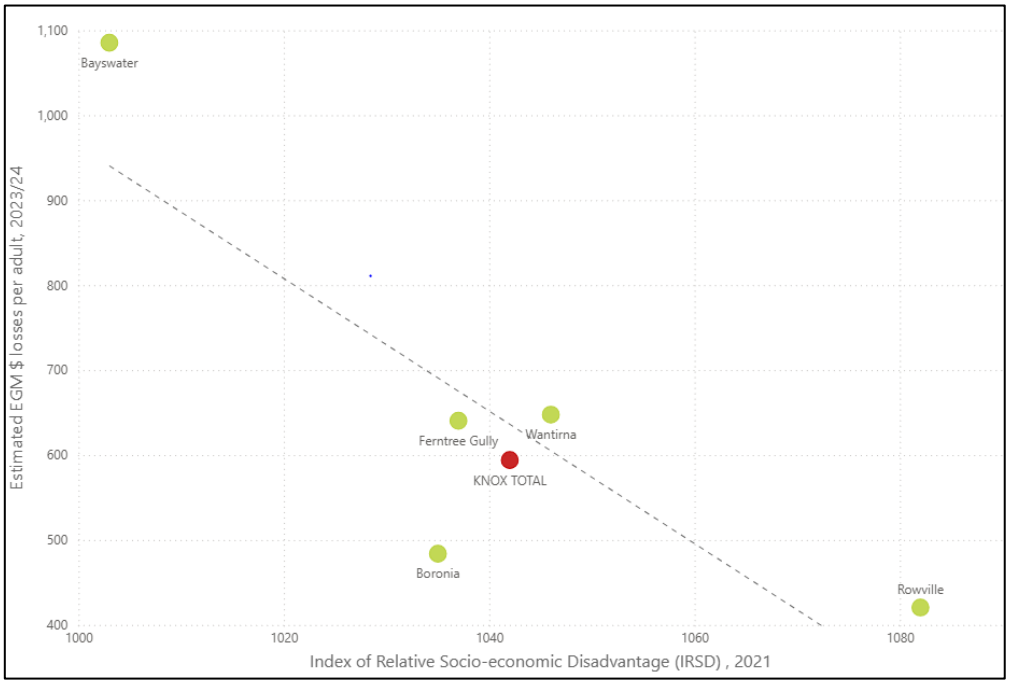


Figure 6: EGM losses per capita against SEIFA for Knox suburbs



Priority Population Groups

Women

Gambling participation rates are almost equal amongst men (70%) and women (68.3%)[9]. However, the prevalence of women's participation in gambling is steadily increasing[10] due to factors such as the increased accessibility of online gambling and social factors such as boredom and loneliness[11].

The incidence of family violence in Knox recorded 12.2 incidents per 1,000 which is higher than the rates for Metropolitan Melbourne at 11.6 per 1,000 in 2022-2023. Women tend to use EGMs for longer duration time than males[12]. The reason for this could be that gaming venues are attractive to women, particularly those experiencing family violence,[13] as they feel safe, provide what is perceived to be a cheap source of entertainment and are open for long periods when other facilities are closed.

According to the University of QLD 2025, while men have traditionally higher gambling rates, the sports betting companies are now targeting women to increase their consumer base.

---

[9] 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.

[10] Hing, N. and Breen, H. (2001) "An empirical study of sex differences in gaming machine play among club members" *International Gambling Studies* Vol 1, pp 1-8.

[11] McCarthy, S, Thomas, S, Bellringer, M and Cassidy, R (2019) *Harm Reduction Journal* Women and gambling-related harm: a narrative literature review and implications for research, policy, and practice 16.18.

[12] 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.

[13] Hing, N., O'Mullan, C., Nuske, E., Breen, H., Mainey, L., Taylor, A., … Rawat, V. (2020). *The relationship between gambling and intimate partner violence against women* (Research report, 21/2020). Sydney: ANROWS.

Men
1 in 4 men who gambled were classified as being at risk of, or experiencing, problem gambling [14].
Males are more likely than females to engage in high frequency gambling[15].
Men are significantly more likely than women to bet on sports (13.9 per cent and 2.9 per cent respectively). This has increased from 10.9 per cent of men and 2.5 per cent of women in 2014, and 9.3 per cent of men and 2.1 per cent of women in 2008[9].

Young People
Young people are impacted by gambling harm at a higher rate than those aged over 65 years, with over a quarter of those aged 18–24 years who gambled experiencing harm[12].

Online gambling is heavily promoted and easily accessible via smartphones and is designed to appeal to young people. Additionally, gambling-like elements in video games, such as loot boxes, have become increasingly prevalent, raising concerns about their addictive nature. Video games, including gaming features such as 'loot boxes' have been shown in research to have links with increased gambling and gambling harm by adolescents[16].

LGBTIQA+
Approximately 11.2% of Knox residents identify as LGBTIQA+. LGBTIQA+ people generally display lower levels of gambling behaviour and both problem gambling severity and harms.
Approximately 28% of participants were classified as problem gamblers and 68% experienced a range of gambling-related harms[17]. LGBTIQA+ people who are more likely to visit late night venues on their own will typically visit EGM venues as they are open late and are deemed to be 'safe spaces' and can be used to combat feelings of loneliness, isolation, grief and loss[18].

First Nations
Approximately 1,022 residents identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (0.6%). Young adults account for 23.1% of First Nations in Knox. There has been a 38% increase in population from 2016-2021, Knox has the 2nd largest First Nations population in the East of Melbourne.

In Victoria, about 75% of First Nations people gamble, which is about the same as the general population. Injustice from colonisation and trauma makes First Nations people 10–20 times more likely to experience gambling harm[19].

---

14 Tajin R, Quinn B, Wong C, O'Donnell K, Rowland B, Prattley J & Jenkinson R 2022, Insights #2 Report Findings from Ten to Men: The Australian longitudinal study on Male Health, 2013 – 2021, Australian Government.
15 Victorian population gambling and health study 2023 Final report, September 2024.
16 Rockloff M, Russell A, Greer N, Lole L, Hing N, & Browne M 2020, Loot boxes: Are they grooming youth for gambling? CQUniversity.
17 Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Examining risk and protective factors for the development of gambling-related harms and problems in Victorian LGBTIQ+ communities, October 2020.
18 Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Examining risk and protective factors for the development of gambling-related harms and problems in Victorian LGBTIQ+ communities, October 2020.
19 Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Reducing gambling harm in First Nations communities – a guide for health workers.

People with a Disability

In Knox, 18.5% of people had a self-reported disability and 6% of people require assistance in their day-to-day lives due to disability.

Due to cognitive impairment, people with intellectual disability may have difficulty interpreting and calculating risk, placing them at risk of gambling harm. People with lifelong disability exhibit similar characteristics to other groups at risk of gambling harm, for example low income, reduced employment, social isolation and receiving Centrelink benefits[20].

[20] Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, People with intellectual disability and their lived experiences of gambling research report, September 2020.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)
33% of Knox residents were born overseas and 29% speak a language other than English at home.

CALD communities tend to participate in gambling less than the overall population, however those who gamble may be more likely to experience problems. This can be due to different beliefs about luck and chance and issues around stigma and shame about seeking help.[21]

Older Adults
Approximately 28,425 (17.5%) people in Knox are aged 65 years and over. Research shows that older adults gamble largely due to loneliness as well as ease of access to gaming venues. Gaming venues in Australia often offer incentives targeting older people, for example discounted meals.[22]

Low Income Households
There is an estimated 430 homeless people in Knox. This is a 12% increase in homelessness in Knox from 2016. 1 in 9 residents live in a low income household (around <$500 per week).

Research has found that the lower a household's income, the greater proportion of their household disposable income is spent on gambling. Among households in the lowest quintile, 'problem gamblers' spent on average 27% of their household's disposable income on gambling, compared with households in the highest income quintile, whose 'problem gamblers' spent on average of 4%.[23]

Equity Impact Assessment
An Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken in the development of the Policy, as a result of the EIA, the following recommendations have been incorporated into the Policy and associated strategic directions:

- Introducing guiding principles to help guide decision making and ensure implementation of the Policy meets the needs of our diverse community. Proposed guiding principles are; public health approach, evidence-informed, partnerships, and intersectionality;
- When collecting data, identify and explore the existing and emerging gambling related harm experienced by specific priority population groups; and
- When developing communications tools ensure they are in appropriate formats that are relevant for priority population groups and the general community.

Benchmarking
In 2024, Council conducted a benchmarking exercise against 17 local government gambling policies to ensure Knox's Policy is evidence informed, relevant to local needs and realistic in scope.

[21] Australian Gambling Research Centre, Gambling in culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia discussion paper No. 7, October 2016.
[22] Gambling Help Queensland, Older people and gambling
[23] Australian Gambling Research Centre, Gambling activity in Australia Findings from wave 15 of the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey research report, 2017.

Three of the benchmarked policies were solely focused on EGMs while the remainder were broader gambling policies. The Councils involved in the benchmarking exercise were Banyule, Casey, Geelong, Greater Dandenong, Darebin, Glen Eira, Kingston, Macedon Ranges, Manningham, Maribyrnong, Maroondah, Melbourne, Monash, Nillumbik, Wangaratta, Whittlesea, and Wodonga.

The benchmarking exercise looked at the scope of the policy, policy framework, principles, strategic directions and approaches. The key findings were:

- Most councils are moving towards having a broader Gambling Harm Prevention Policy to recognise the harms associated with all forms of gambling;
- Most councils adopted a public health approach to preventing and minimising harm;
- It is important to include principles that can set the foundations for a strong policy, including adopting a public health approach, ensuring actions are evidence-informed, and applying a gender lens;
- Councils framed their actions around council's roles and responsibilities, including advocacy, collaboration and partnerships, capacity building, planning and regulation, and council's relationship with the gambling industry; and
- The importance of building strong collaborative partnerships in both the development and implementation of the Policy.

Consultation

In 2024, Council conducted a range of community consultation with resident and stakeholders to help inform the development of the Gambling Harm Prevention Policy. Council undertook a range of consultative activities including:

- Feedback was sought from Councils Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee, Sport and Leisure Advisory Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Active Ageing Advisory Committee, Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee, Disability Advisory Committee and Early Years Advisory Committee;
- Survey conducted for operators of EGM venues;
- Survey available through Council's 'Have Your Say' platform for the wider community; and
- Feedback sought from key services including Ngwala Willumbong, Eastern Access Community Health (EACH) and Gamblers Help.

In total, 106 responses were received and key themes that emerged included:

- The harmful effects of EGMs and online betting were identified as significant concerns across the community;
- There was concern that gambling advertising contributes to the normalisation of gambling and increases the risk of harm;
- The addictive nature of gambling, particularly EGMs and online gambling, was highlighted as a major risk factor;
- The accessibility of gambling, both online and through EGMs, was noted as a critical issue in facilitating harm;

- The impact of gambling harm on vulnerable populations, particularly children and young people, was a recurring theme; and
- There was strong support for Council taking an active role in preventing gambling harm and providing leadership in this area.

This local feedback aligns with recent research where most Australians expressed concern about the availability of gambling and its impacts on the community, believing that there are '*too many opportunities for gambling nowadays*' (77%) and that gambling is '*dangerous for family life*' (68%) and '*should be discouraged*' (59%).[24]

Definitions

Community Group(s)	A legal entity operating as a not-for-profit that provides services, support or activities to the Knox community.
Council	Means Knox City Council.
Community Benefits Statement	EGM venue operators submit an annual Community Benefit Statement confirming at least an 8.3% portion of club EGM gaming revenue supports community purposes. This enables clubs to qualify for gambling tax reductions.
Community Support Fund	A fund governed by the Gambling Regulation Act 2003. It mandates a portion of gambling revenue from hotels is collected by the Victorian government and directed back to initiatives and projects to reduce gambling harm, support families and youth as well as arts and tourism.
Electronic Gaming Machine	Computerised gambling device that displays symbols on a simulated reel. There are used in games of chance involving wagers, where the machine randomly determines the positions of symbols and a 'win' is returned as a credit in the machine. They are also referred to as EGMs, pokies, pokie machines.
Expenditure/Loss	The net amount spent/lost, or the amount wagered less the amount won, by people who gamble.
Family Violence	Family and domestic violence is any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour that occurs in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships. It is a major health and human rights issue that can affect anyone, no matter their gender, age, location, socio-economic

[24] Australian Gambling Research Centre, Gambling Participation, experience of harm and community views, research snapshot, March 2023.

	and health status, cultural background, sexual identity, abilities, ethnicity, religion or family type.
Gambling-related harm	Any initial or increased negative impact due to gambling. These impacts can be felt by individuals, families, communities or populations, including people who do not directly participate in gambling. The effects can affect resources, relationships and health and exacerbate existing inequalities.
Harm Prevention	Also known as harm reduction which aims to decrease the adverse consequences of gambling.
Net Community Benefit	A planning concept that acknowledges that a decision can be considered desirable, even when it imposes a cost on some parts of the community, provided that the total benefits outweigh the total disadvantages.
Non-gambling facilities	Alternative recreation facilities include hotels, clubs, cinemas, restaurants, bars, theatres, galleries, exhibition centres, sporting venues, libraries and neighbourhood houses.
Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission	The Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC) is Victoria's independent gambling authority responsible for licensing and compliance.
Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas	The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is developed from census data including income, education, occupation, employment, housing and family structure; and ranks regions as to the relative level of social and economic wellbeing. It defines socio-economic advantage and disadvantage in terms of people's access to material and social resources and their ability to participate in society.