

Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting

held at the Council Chamber, 32 Civic Drive, Greensborough
on Tuesday 14 October 2025 commencing at 7:00 PM.

Minutes

Carl Cowie
Chief Executive Officer

Friday 17 October 2025

Distribution: Public

Civic Drive, Greensborough
PO Box 476, Greensborough 3088
Telephone 9433 3111
Facsimile 9433 3777
Website www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au
Email nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au

Nillumbik Shire Council

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Nillumbik Shire Council

**Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held
Tuesday 14 October 2025. The meeting commenced at 7:01 PM.**

Councillors present:

Cr John Dumaresq	Wingrove Ward (Mayor)
Cr Naomi Joiner	Bunjil Ward (Deputy Mayor) (Temporary Chairperson)
Cr Grant Brooker	Blue Lake Ward (Chairperson Consultation Matters) (virtual)
Cr Kelly Joy	Edendale Ward
Cr Peter Perkins	Ellis Ward (Chairperson Planning Matters)
Cr Kim Cope	Sugarloaf Ward

Officers in attendance:

Carl Cowie	Chief Executive Officer
Claire Quinlan	Chief Operating Officer
Blaga Naumoski	Director Governance, Communications and Community Safety
Corrienne Nichols	Director Communities
Frank Vassilacos	Director Planning, Environment and Strategy
Jeremy Livingston	Director Culture and Performance
Katia Croce	Manager Governance and Property
Heath Gillett	Manager Operations Centre
David Keep	Parks and Open Space Coordinator
Danielle Henne	Open Space Project Officer

1. Welcome by the Chair**2. Acknowledgement of Country**

Acknowledgement of Country was read by the Temporary Chairperson Consultation Matters, Deputy Mayor, Cr Naomi Joiner.

3 Apologies/Leave of Absence

A request for a leave of absence has been received from Cr Kate McKay.

Committee Resolution

MOVED: Cr Kim Cope

SECONDED: Cr Kelly Joy

That the Committee (acting under delegation from Council) grants the leave of absence for Cr Kate McKay.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4 Declarations of conflict of interest

Nil

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5. Confirmation of Minutes

COM.001/25 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held Tuesday 9 September 2025

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 9 September 2025.

Committee Resolution

MOVED: Cr Peter Perkins

SECONDED: Cr Grant Brooker

That the Committee (acting under delegation from Council) confirms the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 9 September 2025 (**Attachment 1**).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Confirmation of Minutes

**COM.001/25 Confirmation of Minutes Planning and Consultation Committee
Meeting held Tuesday 9 September 2025**

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6. Officers' reports**PCC.018/25 Parks & Open Space Service Standards**

Item: Consultation Matter**Distribution:** Public**Manager:** Claire Quinlan, Chief Operating Officer**Author:** Heath Gillett, Manager Operations Centre**Summary**

The Parks & Open Space Service Standards (POSSS) is intended to provide the community with a high-level overview of the information, especially in relation to programmed works and maintenance / defect levels.

The desired outcome of the Parks & Open Space Service Standards is to see it used to articulate, communicate and educate all on what, when and how Open Space Infrastructure and Assets are managed and maintained.

This report creates transparency in relation to the Open Space budget but is not a decision-making document for capital works or policy.

The following person addressed the Committee with respect to this item:

1 Don Vincent, President, on behalf of Friends of Nillumbik.

Committee Resolution

MOVED: Cr Peter Perkins**SECONDED:** Cr Kelly Joy**That** the Committee (acting under delegation from Council):

1. Notes the Park and Open Space Service Standards (**Attachment 1**) that provide:
 - a) Definitions of programs and maintenance
 - b) Understanding of intervention levels
 - c) Transparency in regard to expectations
2. Authorises the Chief Operating Officer to develop and implement a Communication Plan to support an education and promotion campaign on the Parks and Open Space Service Standards.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Consultation Matters

PCC.018/25 Parks & Open Space Service Standards

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6. Officers' reports

PCC.019/25 Hurstbridge Dog Park Upgrade Community Consultation

Item: **Consultation Matter**

Distribution: **Public**

Manager: **Claire Quinlan, Chief Operating Officer**

Author: **Stewart Broussard, Manager Recreation and Leisure**

Summary

This report presents and considers public submissions received through community consultation regarding the Hurstbridge Dog Park Upgrade Concept Plan.

Committee Resolution

MOVED: **Cr Kelly Joy**

SECONDED: **Cr Peter Perkins**

That the Committee (acting under delegation from Council):

1. Notes the submissions received in relation to the Hurstbridge Dog Park Upgrade project draft concept plan.
2. Thanks the submitters for providing Council with feedback on this important project.
3. Considers the comments contained in the submissions.
4. Authorises officers to finalise concept plan and seek endorsement from Council at a future Council Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Consultation Matters

PCC.020/25 Victorian carded play trial for electronic gaming machines

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7. Supplementary and urgent business

Committee Resolution

MOVED: Cr Peter Perkins

SECONDED: Cr Kim Cope

That the Committee (acting under delegation from Council) in accordance with Clause 57 of the Governance Rule Meeting Procedure, admit the item of urgent business relating to the Victorian carded play trial for electronic gaming machines..

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PCC.020/25 Victorian carded play trial for electronic gaming machines

Item: Consultation Matter

Distribution: Public

Manager: Corrienne Nichols, Director Communities

Author: Nichole Johnson, Manager Community Partnerships

Summary

The Alliance for Gambling Reform and the City of Monash have withdrawn their support for the Victorian government's trial for mandatory carded play for electronic gaming machines (EGM's) and have invited Councils to support their stance.

Committee Resolution

MOVED: Cr Grant Brooker

SECONDED: Cr Peter Perkins

That the Committee (acting under delegation from Council) approves the Mayor to co-sign the Alliance of Gambling Reform and Monash joint letter to the Minister for Casino Gaming and Liquor Regulation and the Minister for Local Government, advocating for strong consumer protections and transparency.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Attachments

- 1  Letter to Ministers Co-signed with Alliance and Monash
- 2  Template letter to Members of Parliament
- 3  Example of Motion Recommendations

Discussion

1. In May 2025, the *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Pre-commitment and Carded Play) Bill 2024* was passed in Parliament.

2. Following this the Victorian Government announced a trial from May to June 2025 of mandatory pre-commitment systems known as 'carded play' for the local government areas of Monash, Greater Dandenong and Ballarat. These Councils and the broader sector were not consulted.
3. Since the initial announcement of the trial, the State Government have removed the mandatory pre-commitment and binding loss limits, the timeframes for the trial, transparency around the evaluation of the proposed trial and the inclusion of other types of technology.
4. Optional pre-commitment and cashless play is largely viewed as ineffective in addressing gambling harm.

Related Council decisions

5. The Gambling Harm Minimisation Policy 2016-2021 was adopted at the 9 February 2016 Policy and Services Committee.

Options

6. **Option 1:** Co-sign the Alliance and Monash joint letter to Ministers (**Attachment 1**) – this option strongly aligns with Council's commitment to harm minimisation and advocacy under the Gambling Harm Minimisation Policy and the Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 in supporting Council's role in promoting community health and safety. This option strengthens partnerships and demonstrates sector leadership. There is low resource requirement for this option and can be prepared within existing officer capacity. The deadline for co-signing has been extended to 20 October 2025.

Option 2: Send a separate letter to MPs and Ministers outlining Council's position based on our current policies (**Attachment 2**) – this option strongly aligns with Council's commitment to harm minimisation and advocacy under the Gambling Harm Minimisation Policy and the Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 in supporting Council's role in promoting community health and safety. This option further reinforces broad advocacy for safer regulations and equity in wellbeing outcomes and reinforces Council's specific position and alignment with its commitments. There is low resource requirement for this option and can be prepared within existing officer capacity.

Option 3: Prepare a Council motion reaffirming Council's stance and advocacy role (**Attachment 3**) – this option supports adherence to Council's Gambling Harm Minimisation Policy, Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Access Equity and Inclusion Policy. This option is consistent with Council's harm minimisation approach, transparency and community wellbeing commitments. This option reflects Council's role in educating and empowering the community and increases visibility and community awareness. There is moderate resources requirements for this option as officer coordination is required with both the Governance and Communications teams.

Option 4: Defer advocacy – this option partially aligns with Council's harm-minimisation approach but may not reflect a proactive stance in relation to current policy commitments. This option allows alignment with future policy, however, may limit immediate influence. There is no resource requirement for this option.

Council plans and policies

7. This report directly supports the achievement of the Council Plan 2025-2029 strategy:
 - Address the social determinants of health by supporting initiatives that promote safe housing, education, community connection and food environments.

8. Councils Gambling Harm Minimisation Policy recognises gambling as a public health issue and commits Council to harm minimisation, independence from gambling industry funding and supports advocacy for safer regulations.
9. The Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Identifies 'reducing harm from alcohol, drugs, vaping, tobacco and gambling' as a strategic priority, including limiting opportunities for gambling and addressing its social and economic impacts.
10. The Access Equity and Inclusion Policy Commits Council to fair and equitable access to services and the promotion of community wellbeing, including addressing gambling harm, which disproportionately affects priority populations.

Access, Equity and Inclusion

11. Applying Nillumbik's Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy to gambling harm reduction means ensuring that prevention, education and advocacy efforts are designed and delivered in ways that are inclusive, equitable and responsive to diverse community needs.
12. This includes recognising that gambling harm disproportionately affects people experiencing financial stress, social isolation, disability, or other forms of disadvantage, and that barriers such as stigma, digital exclusion and limited access to information can reduce help-seeking.

Sustainability implications

13. Not Applicable

Community engagement

14. Not Applicable

Innovation and continuous improvement

15. Not Applicable

Collaboration

16. Not Applicable

Budget considerations

17. Not Applicable

Relevant law

18. *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Pre-commitment and Carded Play) Bill 2024*

Regional, state and national plans and policies

19. Not Applicable

Conflicts of interest

20. All officers involved in the preparation of this report have made a declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

PCC.020/25 → Victorian carded play trial for electronic gaming machines
Attachment 1. → Letter to Ministers Co-signed with Alliance and Monash



C/- Our Community House
552 Victoria St, Wurundjeri Country
North Melbourne, VIC 3051
(03) 9999 7372
info@agr.org.au
www.agr.org.au
ABN: 14 829 021 950

1 October 2025

The Hon. Enver Erdogan MLC
Minister for Casino, Gaming & Liquor
Email: enver.erdogan@parliament.vic.gov.au

Copy to: The Hon. Nick Staikos
Minister for Local Government
Email: nick.staikos@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister Erdogan,

Re: Victorian EGM trials

The Alliance for Gambling Reform is joined by the undersigned Victorian Councils, spearheaded by the City of Monash in collectively sharing our concerns regarding the mandatory carded play trial announced on 21 July and the progress of the 'Landmark Reforms' announced in July 2023

Local government was generally supportive of the announced reforms to curb the year-on-year record high pokies losses across the state, including carded gambling with mandatory loss limits, noting that these reforms represent a critical step toward reducing gambling harm and restoring agency to individuals affected by it. The Alliance co-ordinated with our Leadership Council partners to provide a submission to the 'Landmark Reforms' consultation in October 2023. You can review that submission [here](#).

As one of the LGA's consistently experiencing the top ten losses, Monash Council publicly welcomed the announced plan that from September to November across all 43 in venues with gaming machines in Monash, as well as the City of Greater Dandenong and the City of Ballarat that:

"People gambling at these venues will need to use a YourPlay card to play electronic gaming machines and set loss limits – helping put the power back into the hands of patrons and prevent money laundering."

At its meeting on 26 August, Monash Council made the decision to withdraw its initial support due to the lack of mandatory and binding loss limits as a feature of the trial.

This came after the June passage of the **Gambling Legislation Amendment (Pre-commitment and Carded Play) Bill 2024** through the Legislative Council where the Minister did not commit to previously stated timelines for a full rollout of the mandatory pre-commitment reforms and introduced that other types of technology including facial recognition technology were now likely to be trialled, therefore the timeline was unknown.

The timeline provided for in the second reading of the Bill by the previous Minister, Melissa Horne, included a pilot for these changes in mid-2025 and mandatory carded play with binding pre-commitment limits implemented state-wide in late 2027. We understand that the Bill was finalised later than expected, which naturally delayed the initial trial. However, we don't accept that there is no longer a date for when the mandatory pre-commitment will be trialled, along with when mandatory pre-commitment will be rolled out across the state.

Can you please communicate the planned schedule for the statewide rollout?

PCC.020/25 - Victorian carded play trial for electronic gaming machines
Attachment 1. - Letter to Ministers Co-signed with Alliance and Monash

We are also concerned about the evaluation for the current trial, and any future trials, including a lack of transparency on what is being assessed, by who, whether that assessment will be published in full and when the Minister will respond.

Can you provide us with responses to our questions regarding the evaluation?

Finally, we are concerned that local government has not been recognised as a stakeholder through the trial and through the rollout of the 'Landmark Reforms'. This is despite the ongoing interest of councils in reducing gambling harm in their communities, and their demonstrated willingness to engage realistically with Government on the impacts to their communities.

As the level of government closest to communities, councils are well placed to provide key insights into gambling harm at a local level, as well as identify local opportunities to educate communities on changes that can give them much needed tools to limit harm caused by gambling.

The Alliance was disappointed and surprised that local councils weren't engaged ahead of the trial being finalised, and that even post the announcement, there was no attempt to engage directly with council officers and provide background information.

We believe this lack of engagement has contributed to councils' uncertainty around the trial and its efficacy and are disappointed that no growth area councils (many of which are included in the top 10 losses in the state), were earmarked to participate in the trial.

We urge you to engage directly with councils, including by meeting directly with the Alliance, together with representatives from Monash, Ballarat and Dandenong to discuss the trial and future steps as part of the rollout, and with how councils can be better engaged as a significant stakeholder.

We also hope you will engage directly with the sector on this issue in the coming months by convening an online briefing for all councils and providing greater engagement and supporting collateral so that councils understand the purpose and timelines of future reforms.

We are keen to meet with you as soon as practicable, and we are eager to continue to engage with you regarding the reforms as they progress.

Yours Sincerely



Martin Thomas
CEO
Martin.Thomas@agr.org.au



Rev Tim Costello
Chief Advocate
Tim.Costello@agr.org.au



Cr Paul Klisaris
Mayor – City of Monash

Council signatories

Dear

Re: Victorian EGM trials

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Can you please advocate to the Minister to communicate the planned schedule for the statewide rollout?

PCC.020/25 → Victorian carded play trial for electronic gaming machines
Attachment 2. → Template letter to Members of Parliament

We are also concerned about the evaluation for the current trial, and any future trials, including a lack of transparency on what is being assessed, by who, whether that assessment will be published in full and when the Minister will respond.

Can you advocate to the Minister to provide us with responses to our questions regarding the evaluation?

Finally, we are concerned that local government has not been recognised as a stakeholder through the trial and through the rollout of the 'Landmark Reforms'. This is despite the ongoing interest of councils in reducing gambling harm in their communities, and their demonstrated willingness to engage realistically with Government on the impacts to their communities.

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We believe this lack of engagement has contributed to councils' uncertainty around the trial and its efficacy and are disappointed that no growth area councils (many of which are included in the top 10 losses in the state), were earmarked to participate in the trial.

We urge you to engage directly with councils, together with representatives from Monash, Ballarat and Dandenong to discuss the trial and future steps as part of the rollout, and with how councils can be better engaged as a significant stakeholder.

We also hope you will engage directly with the sector on this issue so that councils understand the purpose and timelines of future reforms. We are eager to continue to engage with you regarding the reforms as they progress.

Yours Sincerely

PCC.020/25 → Victorian carded play trial for electronic gaming machines
Attachment 3. → Example of Motion Recommendations

Recommendations:

That Council

1. Withdraws its support for the State Government's mandatory account-based gambling trial, due to the lack of mandatory and binding loss limits as a feature of the trial
2. Continues working with the Alliance for Gambling reform and urges the State Government to reinstate a mandatory precommitment pilot, with independent evaluation and a statewide roll-out plan, alongside complementary harm-reduction measures (e.g., reduced operating hours and fewer machines in high-harm areas)
3. Advocates to the State Government to recognize Council as an equally important stakeholder as industry, ensuring its involvement in all significant decision-making processes for the trial
4. Advocates for other Councils to be included in the trial, importantly, those most impacted by gambling harm including other local government areas within the top 10 for gambling losses
5. Submits a joint letter of advocacy to State Government with other top 10 loss councils or trial site councils advocating for harm prevention to form a key part of the trial

8. Confidential reports

Nil

9. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 7.37pm.

Confirmed:

Cr Chairperson Planning Matters

Cr , Chairperson Consultation Matters