

City of Boroondara

BOROONDARA GAMBLING IMPACT STUDY

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Borderlands Cooperative Ltd

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of this review were to:

- a) Assess the impact of gambling on the Boroondara community.
- b) Examine the extent to which gambling in Boroondara is considered an alternative to other forms of recreation.
- c) Identify those measures and/or strategies Council can take that can influence the impact of gambling on residents of the City.

Research Design

The research design included:

- A review of existing gambling-related data and literature;
- Initial consultations with individuals, families, businesses and council officers and staff of relevant organisations through in-depth interviews and small group discussions;
- The development and administration of a survey questionnaire based on a clustered random sample of the municipal population;
- The organisation of a series of community workshops ascertaining responses to the discussion paper and initial identification of strategic responses to the assessed impacts of gambling;
- A developmental reflective process of consultation and discussion with the 'Gambling Response Working Group' as the various pieces of information came to hand and the subsequent stages in the research process were planned;
- The participation in the study of 508 members of the Boroondara community, including 46 in groups, 25 in in-depth interviews and 437 in the household survey.

Major Outcome

The great majority of participants in the consultancy endorsed the notion that gambling and its social effects are thoroughly *public* issues and that Boroondara City Council should continue and even increase its involvement in these issues.

Overview and Summary of Findings

Problem gambling as a private or public matter and the role of Boroondara City Council

- Fifty three per cent of survey respondents did not consider gambling to be a 'private matter only' and only 31 per cent of respondents considered that it was;
- Thirty-six per cent of respondents who did gamble believed it to be a 'private matter only' as compared to only 26 per cent of those who didn't gamble;
- Sixty-one per cent of survey respondents believed that Council had a role to play in relation to gambling related issues arising in the community;
- Of those who gambled 53.4 per cent were less in favor of council intervention in gambling matters by Council as compared to non-gamblers with 65.2 per cent of these affirming the necessity for Council to play a role;
- There was a clear indication that the social impact of gambling is overwhelmingly seen as an area of proper interest and intervention for the Boroondara City Council;
- Survey respondents made a vast array of suggestions as to what the Council's role should be in relation to gambling in Boroondara, all of which have been used, along with other findings of this study and previous research, to inform the recommendations below.

Views and perceptions of gambling in general

- Community attitudes to gambling in general reflected great ambivalence, moving between concern over related moral issues and a concomitant concern not to be seen as 'moralistic' in expressing this;
- A differentiation between 'hard' and 'soft' gambling by community members was evidenced, with 'hard' gambling being considered to be more serious and including Electronic Gaming Machine (EGM) gambling, casino gambling and betting on horses and 'soft' gambling covering raffles, bingo and lotteries;
- There was some community concern that State gambling income was not always spent wisely and, in the longer term, that reliance on gambling revenue might be creating more fiscal and social problems than solutions.

Problems associated with gambling as raised in the survey were:

- Economic and financial, social, physical and emotional problems for families and communities;
- Undermining of the ethical and moral standards in the community;
- Increase in crime rates;
- Marriage and family breakdown;
- Addictive/compulsive and anti-social behaviours that can lead to self-destruction, the spending beyond means, greed and suicide;
- Impoverishment of individuals and their families least able to afford it;
- The community in general spending more than it can afford;
- Losses in small business and amenity;

- Concerns around marketing clearly designed to attract people who can least afford it;
- Over accessibility of gambling opportunities.

Benefits associated with gambling as raised in the survey were:

- Financial benefits to the community, including employment opportunities;
- Benefits to government, sporting and service clubs who use the income to cross-subsidise other services such as social functions, catering and facility improvements and to some extent, welfare services;
- Support for lonely people and provision of respite from stress;
- Focal point for attractive activities.

Views on how gambling, in general, affects individuals, families and the community

- Community perceptions reflected the view that problem gambling can be personally and socially devastating and can lead to financial stress, relationship breakdown, personal feelings of guilt, the redirection of funds from business and retail as well as to increases in various forms of criminal behaviour;
- There was concern that excessive gambling is leading to marriage and family breakdown and is having a detrimental effect on children;
- There was widespread concern about gambling industry marketing that targeted members of disadvantaged groups including those on a low income, lone persons, especially the aged, young people, migrants and people with disabilities;
- Some considered that people are gambling for social support and to deal with problems of self-esteem, isolation and depression, in the context of a deteriorating community infrastructure;
- Some members of the community considered that gambling is a vast new area of recreation that can lead to the opportunity for more social contact;
- It was reported that youth, welfare and support services, including material and financial aid, are being accessed by a greater number of people with gambling related problems than was previously the case.

Views on the impact of gambling on business, people's spending patterns, community infrastructure and the community in general

- There was a perception that businesses are suffering due to a redirection of funds to gambling, however this was by no means unequivocal or evident across the whole of the municipality;
- There was concern in the community that funds for saving and for subsistence resources are being re-directed to gambling activity and that gambling is undermining people's appreciation of the need to save on both a personal and a national level;
- There was a perception that in recent times, leisure patterns have become more consumptive, commodified (in that people increasingly pay for their leisure), more individualised and solitary and that people are decreasingly likely to make a commitment to regular participation in a club or community organisation;

- There was concern about perceived pressures placed by the State Government on local councils and constraints placed on workers in government funded agencies in relation to speaking publicly on gambling related issues;
- There was a community perception and concern that much of gambling industry advertising is misleading and socially irresponsible.

Use by respondents of gambling opportunities

- Fifty-three per cent of survey respondents indicated that they had participated in gambling activity in the last year;
- Of those who had gambled in the last year, (from daily to once every four weeks on average) 3.5 per cent had participated in on course betting, 5.2 per cent had gambled at the casino, 5.6 per cent had gambled on Electronic Gaming Machines, 7.3 per cent had participated in off course betting, 8.5 per cent had participated in raffles and 38.6 per cent had participated in Lotto, Powerball, Tattsлото, Keno, scratch tickets or instant Lotto.

Views on the effects of gambling in the City of Boroondara

- There was evidence of widespread concern about the impact of casino and EGM gambling on 'vulnerable' groups in the Boroondara community including migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, overseas students, problem gamblers, families – in particular children and partners of problem gamblers, people on low incomes, people with disabilities and young people;
- Many research participants raised the issue of problem gambling as a 'hidden' problem and the difficulties inherent in identifying it – either due to the stigma attached or because of the absence of visible signs;
- Workers in support services, including student welfare, youth and housing, material aid and financial counselling, reported difficulties in identifying problem gambling issues when they are not explicitly raised by service users;
- Twenty-one per cent of survey respondents indicated that they knew someone with a gambling problem, it could be concluded, however, that this figure would be even higher if the issue would be more transparent and openly discussed.

Migrants

- Migrants, and Chinese people in particular, living in Boroondara were identified as being more susceptible to problems with gambling;
- A key factor leading to gambling problems for migrants was identified as being an absence of social contacts and the lack of a general sense of belonging;
- Chinese people and people with languages other than English were found to experience language and cultural barriers which affect their feeling of connection with the general community;
- Loneliness and social isolation and an associated lack of confidence in meeting people for migrant students was raised as an issue leading to gambling problems;

- There were indications that many overseas students were having gambling-related difficulties and that some have been forced to return home after spending all of their funds on gambling;
- Cultural barriers to participation in community activities were found to include language barriers, lack of confidence in social settings and a lack of appropriate activities.

Young people

- There were indications that young people (over 18) in Boroondara were having problems associated with their own gambling activity. It is uncertain whether those under 18 were not experiencing difficulties or whether they were not accessing services.

People on low incomes and those living in special accommodation and rooming houses

- It emerged that many public housing tenants are experiencing difficulties with gambling;
- People with disabilities living in special accommodation often are attracted to the lure and relative anonymity of gambling opportunities like those offered by EGMs.

Impact on welfare services

- Workers involved in welfare-emergency services felt that a rising demand for services reflected a rise in gambling difficulties. Related evidence cited by support workers was the rising number of people without money only two to three days after receiving pension cheques.

Alcohol and gambling: an important personal as well as community nexus

- The nexus between alcohol and gambling emerged as an issue:
 - in terms of the implications of a lifting of licensing restrictions on the 'dry' area of Boroondara and the perceived implications this could have for the spreading of EGM venues throughout Boroondara; and
 - in terms of the effect alcohol consumption can have on the impairment of judgement when people are gambling.

Impact on Leisure and other community activities

- It was raised that the high cost and limited access to many activities in Boroondara leads to reduced participation. At the same time EGM venues achieve high patronage through their access and long hours of operation;
- Most survey respondents opposed hard gambling rather than favored it – reflecting widespread community opposition;
- There was concern regarding the adverse effects EGMs were having on the amenity of local hotels;
- Gambling was not seen as unequivocally negative, in that 53 per cent of survey participants reported that they had gambled in some form in the last year, with most engaging in 'soft' forms of gambling and only few in the 'hard' forms;
- Some respondents indicated that there were certain benefits attached to the introduction and proliferation of gambling opportunities in Boroondara;
- Widespread concern about social isolation and community fragmentation was expressed across the study.

Recommendations

General

Given the strong endorsement by the great majority of research participants that gambling and its social effects are to be considered a public matter and given the strong endorsement for Boroondara City Council's continued and increased intervention in these matters, it is recommended that Boroondara City Council:

- continues to exercise its legitimate governance roles in decision making processes related to the presence and further introduction of gambling opportunities in the Municipality.
- continues and intensifies its involvement in the planning, provision and encouragement of a diverse and appropriate array of leisure and recreational opportunities, responding to the needs and capacities of the various groups in the community, therewith also reducing the risk that vulnerable individuals will engage in potentially problematic and even addictive forms of gambling because of the lack of meaningful alternatives.

- 1 Boroondara City Council should engage in and reinforce education and awareness building efforts about the possible effects of gambling and about its recreational alternatives.**

It is recommended that Council:

- 1.1** in collaboration with Problem Gambling Services, other support services, relevant non-governmental agencies, community organisations and schools engage in:
 - 1.1.1** disseminating information about the services that are available to meet the needs of those affected by gambling problems in Boroondara;
 - 1.1.2** disseminating information about support, welfare and leisure services and organisations in the City of Boroondara, as publicised in the Boroondara Book;
 - 1.1.3** raising the awareness of the potential seriousness of gambling problems and the effect they can have on family cohesion and the care of children;
 - 1.1.4** disseminating information about the odds and likelihood of winning for different types of gambling.
 - 1.2** through appropriate and intensified use of media and other forms of dissemination, actively promote citizens' participation in alternative community activities and in other recreation and leisure options in the municipality.
- 2 Boroondara City Council should improve the infrastructure, responsiveness to local need and quality of local leisure and recreational opportunities.**

It is recommended that Council:

- 2.1** contributes to better resourcing of Neighbourhood Houses, Community Centres and other leisure facilities to provide alternative structured and unstructured forms of leisure and recreation.
- 2.2** supports and assists the development of alternative recreation and leisure opportunities to meet the needs and interests of those groups that have been demonstrated as being vulnerable to gambling related problems and/or to social isolation, including recent migrants of non-English speaking background, overseas students, those on a low income, the unemployed and early retired, women, single parents, people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues, young people and older people.
- 2.3** uses its local planning powers to maintain - if not improve - the ratio of passive and active recreation opportunities with changing local population densities.

- 2.4 maintains more unstructured opportunities for recreation for young people which are available at all times and explore the possibility, together with appropriate providers, to make cheap food available at or near such venues.
 - 2.5 develops strategies toward greater utilisation of existing venues, club sites and recreation centres.
 - 2.5 supports the development of alternative recreation and leisure opportunities that are low cost or free, require low ongoing commitment and have child care and leisure arrangements associated with them.
 - 2.6 contributes to the provision of alternative recreation and leisure services for migrants from a non-English speaking background and others in the community who are socially isolated which do not demand a great deal of English language skills and confidence in social settings.
 - 2.7 contributes to the provision of leisure services for disabled people which are cheap or free, readily accessible and involve some outreach without being intrusive.
- 3 **Boroondara City Council should contribute to the improvement of support services for people with gambling related issues and their families.**

It is recommended that Boroondara City Council collaborates with Problem Gambling Services and relevant support services in exploring the possibilities for and development of an holistic support approach for people with gambling related issues which addresses the full range of needs and issues that arise, in particular for the families of people with gambling problems.

- 4 **Boroondara city council should engage in collaborative arrangements for facilitating stable community networks and support, especially with respect to migrant communities.**

It is recommended that Council:

- 4.1 facilitates collaborative arrangements between community groups to bridge cultural gaps and to provide stable mutual support arrangements and appropriate recreational activities for migrants.
- 4.2 collaborates with culture specific organisations to address support issues for migrant groups and the Chinese community in particular.
- 4.3 explores possible community mentorship arrangements for overseas students.

5. Boroondara City Council should maintain and reinforce regulation and policing in relation to gambling activities in the municipality

5.1 *As to the location of EGMs and EGM venues*

It is recommended that Council:

- 5.1.1** exercises its power to restrict the number of EGMs and EGM venues to the territory under its jurisdiction.
- 5.1.2** develops a policy to guide Council decision making with respect to planning applications associated with EGM venues operated on Council controlled properties, incorporating options of EGM veto, EGM restriction and Codes of Conduct associated with leasing arrangements.
- 5.1.3** exercises its influence to bring about change in the application and approval process for hotels and clubs wishing to become licensed (EGM) venue operators, so that Council can exercise planning controls in the event of proposals for restricted (EGM) gambling areas of less than 25% of the total area where liquor may be consumed.
- 5.1.4** explores the possibility and desirability of redeploying the existing EGMs and EGM venues across its territory in order to limit the number of EGMs in any venue to an acceptable maximum and encourage venues to (re-) introduce diversity of recreation and leisure opportunities in its premises.
- 5.1.5** maintains the ban on EGMs within shopping centres of any kind and uses its planning powers to address secondary issues of noise and nuisance control.

5.2 *As to the location of Automatic Teller Machines*

It is recommended that Council:

- 5.2.1** exercises its influence to restrict the installation of Automatic Teller Machines in close proximity to gambling venues.
- 5.2.2** exercises its influence to introduce legislation making it illegal for financial institutions to provide credit for gambling on EGMs.

5.3 *As to the internal set-up of venues and characteristics of the Electronic Gaming Machines*

It is recommended that Council:

- 5.3.1** exercises its influence and power to regulate and enforce:
 - The disposal of EGMs throughout the venues;
 - The presence of clocks and natural light;
 - 'Time out' for patrons utilising EGMs;
 - The visible presence of warnings about the dangers of excessive gambling and of references to problem gambling services.
- 5.3.2** engages in joint actions with publicans and other venue operators to prevent gambling excesses, especially in their combination with drinking excesses (see below).
- 5.3.3** engages in developing joint strategies with venue operators to implement a code of practice that encourages more socialising activities in the venues.

5.4 *As to the regulation of gambling promotion*

It is recommended that Council exercises its influence and power to impose controls on the promotion of gambling, especially in the case of false and misleading advertising and especially when directed at vulnerable groups.

5.5 *As to controls on the combination of alcohol consumption and gambling and issues of community safety*

It is recommended that Council:

- 5.5.1** addresses strategically the link between the existence and possible change of the the dry and wet areas in its territory and the implications for the distribution and further spread of gambling opportunities, especially EGMs.
- 5.5.2** continues to monitor issues of public safety and peace around the venues with EGMs and other gambling facilities.

6 Boroondara City Council should engage in monitoring, research and planning related to gambling opportunities, their potential social effects and community involvement in recreational and leisure activities.

It is recommended that Council:

- 6.1** engages in the continuous monitoring of gambling and leisure within its territory and by the community with special emphasis on areas and groups with recognised issues and problems.

- 6.2 collaborates with neighbouring City Councils to monitor gambling – related developments in their joint border areas.
- 6.3 contributes to the development of regional responses to local government-relevant issues in relation to the distribution and consequences of (increased) gambling opportunities in the region as well as to regional recreational and leisure opportunities.
- 6.4 collaborates with the *Municipal Association of Victoria* and the *Victorian Local Governance Association* in matters of monitoring, researching and planning responses to gambling and the general recreational needs of the population.
- 6.5 engages in the monitoring of the impact/effect of gambling on both citizens (especially in lower socio-economic status areas) and on local businesses, especially retail and leisure.
- 6.6 engages in ongoing research exploring the relationship between:
- groups that have been demonstrated as being vulnerable to problem gambling (including recent migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, overseas students, those on a low income, the unemployed and early retired, women, single parents, people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues, young people and older people) and problem gambling in the City of Boroondara;
 - access to gambling opportunities and problem gambling in the City of Boroondara;
 - the experience of recent migration and problem gambling in the City of Boroondara.
- 6.7 engages in ongoing research that focuses on ‘hard’ forms of gambling, in particular on EGM and casino gambling.

INTRODUCTION

From early 1997 Council repeatedly articulated its concern over the impact of gambling on the Boroondara Community. Council instructed Council Officers to monitor developments in other communities and report back. In addition to this, there were a number of presentations to Council with the objective of providing as much information to Council as possible. As a result of a report that was presented to the 'Ordinary Council Meeting' in May 1998, Council resolved to (i) receive and note the report; (ii) consider that the influence of gaming machines on some sections of the community requires attention; and (iii) establish a working group to recommend what form of review, if any, should be undertaken by the City of Boroondara.

Following this, the Gambling Response Working Group was convened in July 1998. This group included representatives from local family support services, community development organisations, local business and a Church group as well as Councillors and Council Officers. After meeting several times and being addressed by the Coordinator for Strategic Planning and a consultant engaged by the City of Moreland, the group concluded that, although there was some information available regarding the social impact of gambling and what would appear to be vulnerable groups in the population, there were many questions that could not be answered in the local context. Thus, a recommendation was put to Council and approved in October 1998 to fund a consultant to conduct a review encompassing both an assessment of the impacts of gambling on the City of Boroondara and the development of a strategic approach to address those impacts that Council could influence. One particular emphasis was to be on the need for council to address developments in recreation and leisure patterns and to respond adequately to these. This review was to be overseen by the Gambling Response Working Group.

Consequently, Borderlands Cooperative Ltd was chosen from a number of tender applicants to conduct the review of the impact of gambling on the City of Boroondara.

Terms of reference

The terms of reference of this review were to:

- a) Assess the impact of gambling on the Boroondara community.
- b) Examine the extent to which gambling in Boroondara is considered an alternative to other forms of recreation.
- c) Identify those measures and/or strategies Council can take that can influence the impact of gambling on residents of the City.

Context of this study and content of this report

The issue of the social impact of gambling in the City of Boroondara is properly placed in the broader context of gambling as a social issue in Victoria and in Australia. Consequently, the first section of this report addresses and reports on available research and other literature relating to (problem) gambling and its prevalence and social impact. A following discussion will provide a background on recent developments in recreation and leisure in the wider Australian community and provide some initial formulations as to their implications for the City of Boroondara.

The second section elaborates on the research design and methods used in the course of this consultancy. The consultants devoted much time to ensuring that the methodology of the research would be both participative and representative and that the various methods employed would complement one another.

The latter sections of the report cover the findings arising from the research and the suggestions for strategies to address gambling related issues put forward by research participants. The report concludes with recommendations for future strategies that can be adopted by the City of Boroondara to address the issues as they have arisen over the course of the research project.

1. THE BROADER CONTEXT:

THE EMERGENCE OF PROBLEM GAMBLING IN RELATION TO OTHER FORMS OF RECREATION

1.1: Literature review: nature, prevalence and social impact of problem gambling

In Part One we review some theoretical approaches towards understanding the phenomenon of gambling and in Part Two we examine research on gambling prevalence and its social impact.

Part One: Nature and definition of problem gambling

Definitions of gambling

Gambling has been defined as 'the wager of any type of item or possession of value upon a game or event of uncertain outcome in which chance, of variable degree, determines such outcome' (Allcock, 1986, as cited by Brown and Coventry, 1997:3). Four types of activities are generally included in the definition:

- The exchange of an item of value according to the outcome of a game such as cards, roulette and Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs);
- Betting, where wagers are placed on the outcome of a race or sporting event;
- Lotteries where distribution of money occurs by random draw;
- Speculation, investing money in business ventures, insurance or stock market activities (Blaszczynski, Walker, Sagris and Dickerson, 1997:5).

Gambling that is problematic will be referred to as 'problem gambling' in the following discussion, but it should be noted that varying terms are used within different theoretical frameworks including 'pathological gambling', 'compulsive gambling' and 'excessive gambling'.

Problem gambling as a mental disorder and an addiction

Since 1980, pathological gambling has been included as a mental disorder in the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association. Its inclusion and conceptualisation as a compulsive disorder, based on diagnostic criteria modelled on those for addiction, was heavily influenced by Dr Robert Custer's work with people attending the self help group Gamblers Anonymous. (This population has subsequently been found to be atypical of problem gamblers in general, bringing the validity of the criteria into question). Dr Custer was instrumental in establishing Gamblers Anonymous, the members of which still

refer to themselves as compulsive gamblers and 'who prefer to consider their experience as similar to an irreversible illness process' (VCGA a, 1997:12).

The DSM-IV 1994 refers to problem gambling as 'pathological gambling' and classifies it as an Impulse Control Disorder. The essential feature of such disorders is the failure to resist an 'impulse, drive or temptation to perform an act that is harmful to the person or others', while the central feature of pathological gambling within this framework is the 'persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behaviour that disrupts personal, family or vocational pursuits' (VCGA a, 1997:13). In particular, one of the diagnostic criteria, that the gambler has 'jeopardised or lost a significant relationship, job or educational career opportunity because of gambling' does not comply with DSM-IV's own definition and requirement of mental disorder 'that symptoms must not be due to conflict with society' (VCGA a, 1997:15).

It is important to note that although problem gambling is posited as a pathology within this guiding framework, there is no evidence that it has a physiological basis. Rather, the diagnostic criteria point to the presence of indicators of the theoretical construct of addiction, such as: a need to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement and restlessness or irritability when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.

Following its inclusion in the DSM in 1980 and in revised versions of the DSM, gambling has been discussed as an addiction in much of the literature, particularly that from overseas. It has, however, been convincingly argued that it differs in important ways from our normal conceptualisation of addiction in that there is no external substance ingested and there is no physiological tolerance and withdrawal involved. It is further argued that if we are to cast the net too wide in our definition of addiction, then it is no longer theoretically useful in that it will inevitably include everything that we gain great enjoyment from doing and feel bad when we are not doing it.

Furthermore, the medical or disease model suggests that problem gamblers are categorically distinct in some way from social gamblers and non-gamblers, however there is no evidence which provides a strong argument in favour of this. According to Blaszczynski et al:

There are no consistent personality differences or characteristic patterns of behaviour separating subgroups of gamblers from each other except that problem gamblers spend more time and money gambling and therefore experience more difficulties (Blaszczynski et al, 1997:17).

Another issue that arises in the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling is its ability to be applied across a range of contexts, for example to women, to different cultural groups and to young people.

Psychological theories of problem gambling

There are two main theories of problem gambling at the level of individual psychology. Learning theories 'emphasise contingencies of reinforcement generated by subjective and physiological arousal associated with winning delivered on fixed interval or variable ratios...' (Blaszczynski et al, 1997:13). Within this framework gambling behaviour 'can be viewed in terms of operant conditioning as the product of two major reinforcement schedules: an intermittent positive reinforcement (when the gambler has a win) and more nearly continuous punishment (as the gambler continues to place a stake incurring a loss each time) (Blaszczynski et al, 1997:14). Cognitive theories suggest illusions of control, irrational

thinking or distorted belief systems in explaining why a person continues to gamble despite the expected economic loss.

Problem gambling as a subjectively defined issue

Many service providers in human service agencies use self definition as an operational definition of problem gambling. While such a formulation of problem gambling is arguably appropriate to an information, advice or counselling service established to meet the needs of those accessing the service and operating within frameworks that attribute legitimacy and ascendancy to the world view of these service users, it has been argued that a self definition of problem gambling is inadequate as a basis for a research program concerned with establishing an objective appraisal of the extent and the degree of problem gambling within a particular jurisdiction (VCGA, 1997 a:104, 105). Reasons given for this are:

- The problem or harm may arise from a person's misperception of their situation.
- The attribution of the 'harm' to the gambling activity may be incorrect, eg marital problems may precede the gambling activity and its related impacts.
- There may be strong socio-cultural pressures to discourage self-definition or problems arising from gambling. Class and gender may strongly interact with culture to facilitate or to make more difficult the self-disclosure of problems as a key step in self-definition of problem gambling.
- Help-seeking behaviour is a component in the process of self-definition of problem gambling and there may be geographical and other limitations on equity of access to services (VCGA, 1997 a:105).

The complexities of this type of definition are highlighted when it is not the gambler him/herself seeking professional support, but a relative or spouse who has identified that there is a gambling related problem. In this case we are no longer talking about self-definition in its normal sense. We are identifying problem gambling by its impact as experienced by a friend or family member. If we were to extend this to businesses and others in the community who feel that they are directly suffering from the effects of the activities of a problem gambler, then we are moving even further away from the usual meaning of self definition and perhaps toward an operationalisation of the VCGA (Victorian Casino and Gambling Authority) definition of problem gambling as presented below.

The VCGA definition

Problem gambling' refers to the situation when a person's gambling activity gives rise to harm to the individual player, and/or to his or her family, and may extend into the community (VCGA, 1997 a:106).

It is notable that this definition emphasises negative *impacts* or 'harm' arising from gambling, rather than aetiology ie the understanding of the origins or causation as a key to defining problem gambling. This is best understood when placed in a cultural and historical perspective. Its primary purpose is instrumental as well as theoretical: to provide a first step to the development of research methods that would assess the level of problem gambling in Victoria, one aspect of the statutory responsibility of the Victorian Casino and Gambling Authority in evaluating the social and economic impact of gaming/gambling (VCGA, 1997 a:99). In addition, the current policy and regulatory approach in Australia to health issues is

one which is broadly referred to as 'harm minimisation'; thus it is not surprising that the notion of harm would be central to a definition of problem gambling formulated to guide government sponsored research. The case was also argued that the broader intellectual context within which this definition was formed had failed to provide unequivocal and undisputed theories and definitions of problem gambling and ones which were seen to have relevance and applicability to the Australian context.

Thus, the process in which problem gambling has been defined has political and cultural as well as intellectual dimensions - in terms of what we are primed and prepared to receive from overseas in relation to the medicalisation of problem gambling, our policy and service delivery system which encompasses an harm minimisation approach and a political climate in which a high tolerance in relation to widespread gambling activity is favoured.

Individualisation of issues inherent in the term 'problem gambling'

It has been put forward that the use of the term 'problem gambler' deflects attention away from the role that broader societal structures can play in perpetuating the behaviour of gamblers and that the focus on individuals in theoretical assumptions about gambling ignores conceptions of power and structure (McMillen, 1997, as cited by Brown and Coventry, 1997:4).

While it is true that the inclusion of 'community' in the VCGA definition makes a start in creating a more socially contextual formulation of the issues for research purposes, there is still an inherent tension as the definition attempts to encompass problems related to gambling as being both individual and social - so that problem gambling, while having a potential ripple effect into the gambler's family and community, is still posited as essentially residing in the individual.

Aetiology and locus of impact in conceptualisations of problem gambling

Both aetiology and the locus of impact of problem gambling can be aligned with the levels of individual, the family and the community - or a combination of these. Thus complex interactions between causation and manifestations of problem gambling are possible and could encompass a number of the various explanations and theories of problem gambling put forward to date.

Social constructions of problem gambling

One theory that would appear to address the issue of the *aetiology* of problematic gambling at the locus of both individual and society is the deprivation-compensation approach (Cornish 1978, as cited by Brown and Coventry, 1997:4):

The Deprivation-Compensation approach

This approach also focuses on the individual but is more cognisant of the political environment in which individual choices are played out. The deprivation-compensation approach posits that members of marginalised or low socio-economic groups suffer from a variety of material and psychological deprivations which create frustration. Gambling, then, becomes the expression of these tensions and grievances and the means by which needs can be partially satisfied. Like individualist or pathologising theories, the deprivation-compensation approach to gambling has a long history. In the 1940s, Devereux (unpub.), as cited by Cornish (1978) saw tensions and ambivalences present in the gambling experience as analogous to those existing in the social structure of western industrialised capitalist democracies. Later, in the 1970s, and operating within a broad political understanding of gambling, Downes and his colleagues tested a range of theoretical propositions about gambling (anomie, alienation, working class culture, functionalism, decision-making, risk-taking, work centred leisure and home centredness) but concluded that no one theory adequately explained gambling behaviour. **Rather, the social system itself was considered to be the determining influence on gambling behaviour**' (McMillen 1996, as cited by Brown and Coventry, 1997:5).

In the Victorian and the broader Australian context, there are many political and social factors which could be seen as relevant in the burgeoning of gambling related issues for individuals, families and the community in recent years. These factors held particular relevance for the current research project on the impact of gambling in Boroondara as well as for theories of problem gambling in general:

Gambling related factors:

- The liberalisation of gambling laws in recent years to allow for a greater range of gambling activities and a much greater accessibility to gambling;
- The targeting of lower socio-economic status (SES) 'customers' in the deliberate placement of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) in lower SES areas, within the framework of a general business, market-oriented philosophy;
- The heavy promotion and advertising of gambling, with special transport to the casino being provided for people in particular sections of the population, including Chinese people, school fundraisers and the elderly;
- Legitimation processes through government endorsement and promotion of gambling and the casino in particular.

Broader contextual factors:

- A growing population of those who seem to be natural customers of the types of gambling activities which tend to lead to problem gambling (ie EGM gambling) in those who are unemployed and on low incomes and who are disadvantaged in other various ways;
- There is research evidence that many women are vulnerable to problem gambling due to feelings of isolation, loneliness and boredom;
- Migrants are also susceptible to problem gambling as it becomes increasingly difficult for new (and not so new) arrivals to achieve a feeling of belonging and fulfilment within the Australian context;
- The gambling industry in Victoria and in Australia provides for a regressive tax within a taxation regime that is already regressive. This inevitably leads to the consolidation of power and resources in the hands of fewer organisations and individuals;
- Cutbacks in public spending on recreational and social support services such as that provided through neighbourhood houses;
- At the same time as the downgrading of our social infrastructure occurs and the atomisation necessitated by many aspects of modern living, there is an ever expanding ethos of robust individualism in which individuals themselves are seen to be solely responsible for their own success or failure. This is symbolised by large projects which are highly visible and may be either publicly or privately funded and it is encapsulated and accelerated in government policies such as privatisation and a user-pays approach to social services.

Problem gambling behaviour and impacts

Considering that gambling is centrally concerned with the staking and winning of sums of money, it is not surprising that financial difficulties are central to the emergence and identification of incidences of problem gambling. The level of expenditure is one of the strongest predictors for gambling related problems (Blaszczynski et al, 1997:15) and it is noteworthy that many items of the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS), which is used to identify problem or pathological gambling, relate to the incidence of borrowing to gamble or to pay gambling debts.

Problem gamblers typically begin by gambling within their means, but as losses accrue they attempt to recover these through increased gambling, drawing on household funds and borrowings ie 'there is a gradual progression involving a re-allocation of daily living expenses to gambling, multiple credit card advances and borrowing from financial institutions and friends' (Blaszczynski and McConaghy, 1992, as cited by Blaszczynski et al, 1997:16). The subsequent financial difficulties act as a trigger to further gambling and 'chasing losses' as the gamblers come to see winning through gambling as the only means to solving their growing problems and avoiding detection.

The detrimental effects of heavy gambling can affect the individual and society in various and related ways including the acquisition of debts, the possible mortgaging or sale of the house or car and the loss of rent and food money in gambling activity. Friendships and family relationships are often severed and gamblers may find themselves in court for embezzlement or other gambling related crimes (Lesieur, 1979; Livingston, 1974; Lorenz and Shuttlesworth, 1983; Weule, 1987, as cited by Walker, 1989:188).

It has been noted that, as gambling escalates, other activities become constricted:

Social activities, family interaction and leisure pursuits diminish in frequency, quality and satisfaction as the gambler becomes increasingly detached from interpersonal interactions, isolated and encapsulated in her/his own preoccupation with thoughts of the next session of betting/gaming and where to obtain funds to fuel her/his habits (Lesieur, 1979, as cited by Blaszczyński et al, 1977:17).

Thus, in research on the impacts of problem gambling one would include impacts on local communities and other networks within which people spend time and derive their identities from and in which the ('harmful') gambler participates (or doesn't any more, or less so, as a result of gambling and the time/resources this activity takes). Issues such as participation in local events, school activities, local politics, civic/public activities and sports are often collectively referred to as 'social capital'. Finally, if 'social' impact is also to include the macro-level, especially the local and supra-local economy, the political activities people (can) engage in, issues of investment and consumption displacement or replacement, of investing in 'productive' and/or "non productive" resources and activities of civic culture, one needs to span the conceptual as well as the investigative 'net' even wider.

Part Two: Research on prevalence and the socio-economic impact of problem gambling

The following is an overview of empirical research on the prevalence of problem gambling, which utilises individualistic and medical conceptualisations of this, and research on the social impact of problem gambling which has been carried out in Australian and local contexts.

Prevalence studies

Prevalence studies conducted overseas and in Australia have utilised the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS), an instrument that has been validated against DSM-IV criteria. In some more recent surveys overseas, a ten-item DSM-IV screen has also been used and this has been incorporated in data collection procedures on those attending Break Even Counselling Services in Victoria. Obviously, both of these instruments presuppose a medical disorder/addiction model of problem gambling and as such would seem to be anomalous in the Australian context, where the *overt* focus is on a less clinical approach in policy and service delivery and the more generic term 'problem gambling' is in favour. (It has been suggested that research which appropriately explores social contextual features could obtain information on lifestyle factors, gender, family roles, cultural values and practices of the gambler (Brown and Coventry, 1997:4)).

This note of qualification having been made, it can be said that community surveys of problem gambling in different Australian states using the SOGS show that 'the at risk group of problem gamblers ranges between 1% and 3%, generally higher than the results found in the USA and Canada where access to all forms of gambling, particularly Electronic Gaming Machines is more restricted' (VCGA, 1997 a:2).

Prevalence rates in the United States utilising the SOGS, have been found to range from as low as 0.4% (in South Dakota) to as high as 2.1% (in Louisiana), with many prevalence figures centering roughly around the 1% mark (VCGA, 1997 a: 47). A national study in New Zealand in 1991 yielded a 'current' (6 months) prevalence figure of 1.2% (VCGA, 1997 a:53). In Spain there have been three population-based surveys, using the original SOGS and interviews based on the DSM-IV criteria. This study yielded estimates of problem gambling of 1-2% (VCGA, 1997 a:54).

Walker estimates that approximately four people out of a hundred will be likely to have problems that are caused by excessive spending on gambling, however only one in these four will be classified as a pathological gambler (1998:44):

The remaining three have problems which are not sufficiently severe to pass the threshold for inclusion in the pathological gambling category. However, it does not mean that they do not suffer problems which may be severe in terms of personal health or social well-being. The danger in putting someone in a category called 'pathological gambler' is that it suggests a different kind of person: one who is sick, different, and requiring help.... (Walker, 1998:44).

It should also be highlighted that the effects of problem gambling are not confined to the individual and it has been estimated that one compulsive gambler affects on average 10-15 other people (Dickerson, 1984, as cited by The Public Health Association of Australia, 1997).

There have been no prevalence studies in Australia of problem gambling among young people. Derivatives of SOGS and DSM-IV have been used overseas for this purpose, however none of the instruments used have been psychometrically developed. Generally, it is assumed (erroneously) that criteria relevant to adults are relevant to children.

Other problems with SOGS as an instrument to measure the prevalence of problem gambling are that it is not sensitive to culturally diverse contexts and that it has been validated on a predominantly male population and thus may not be valid for women; and it may be over-inclusive in the Australian context.

Prevalence and access to gambling

An important finding emerging from reviews of prevalence studies is that problem gambling may be associated with the access and availability of gambling and of specific gambling activities and that 'as legislation is altered in a jurisdiction to permit their introduction, the availability of a new gaming product may be associated with changes in measured levels of problem gambling' (VCGA, 1997 a:60).

In a review of the public health implications of her prevalence studies in the United States using a range of samples, Volberg would seem to support this proposition:

In states where legal gambling has been available for less than 10 years, less than 0.5 per cent of the adult population were classified as probable pathological gamblers. In states where legal gambling has been available for more than 20 years, approximately 1.5 per cent of the adult population was classified as probable pathological gamblers. Together these data support the long standing contention of treatment professionals and researchers that increasing the availability of gambling will contribute to an increase in the prevalence of gambling related problems in the general population (Volberg, 1994: 239).

Of particular relevance in the Victorian context is the finding that the availability of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) has been shown to have a strong association with problem gambling (VCGA, 1997 a:60).

In 1991 separate legislation to permit both a casino and EGMs was passed. This paved the way for EGMs to be installed in clubs and hotels across Victoria in 1992 and for Melbourne's Crown Casino, initially operating from a temporary site, to open in 1994. The casino moved to a permanent site in May 1997. In recent years other forms of gambling have also become available and more accessible including Internet gambling and sports betting and concerted efforts at marketing and restructuring the racing industry have been aimed at encouraging more people to bet on races.

Following legalisation, the rise in the number of EGMs in Victoria since their introduction in 1992 has been exponential, numbering 27,311 outside the casino on the 31st of December 1998. Crown Casino now has 2,500 EGMs as provided for in legislation.

Since the introduction of new forms of gambling into Victoria there has been a rapid rise in the percentage of household income per capita spent on gambling. Per capita gambling expenditure in Victoria has increased from \$309.16 in the financial year 1991/92 to \$921.00 in the year 1997/98. Much of this increase can be traced to gambling on Electronic Gaming Machines as per capita expenditure on this form increased from \$9.90 to \$493.31 in the same period (Tasmanian Gaming Commission, 1999).

Expressed as percentage of household disposable income in Victoria for the period from 1991/92 to 1997/98, gambling expenditure rose from 1.34% to 3.49%, and for gaming (gambling excluding racing) from .74% to 3.02% in the same period. Over the same time gambling expenditure as proportion of household disposable income for the whole of Australia rose from 2.08% to 3.2%. (Tasmanian Gaming Commission, 1999).

From the findings of previous research we would expect that the increase in opportunities to gamble, particularly on EGMs, and the associated increase in gambling activity would lead to a rise in gambling related problems in the community.

Social impact research

In a summary of research findings of VCGA research for the period 1996-97 it was concluded that 'while some social benefits have resulted, it appears on balance that a net adverse social impact has occurred' (VCGA, 1997 i). In the same study it was reported that disadvantaged people were over-represented as being adversely affected by gambling. These included: 'problem gamblers, people born outside Australia or of non-English speaking backgrounds, low income earners, intellectually disabled people, sole parents, the unemployed, the recently retrenched and financially dependent women'. It was also found that families and households, particularly children and partners of problem gamblers, have been significantly adversely affected (VCGA, 1997 i).

Impacts from gambling activity in both metropolitan and rural areas have been identified by a variety of manifestations for individuals and families. Common themes coming from community agencies in research on the impact of gaming venues on inner city municipalities of Melbourne included individual depression, dependence on welfare, family conflict, family breakdown and neglect of children (VCGA, 1997 b).

Research on the social and economic effects of EGMs on the cities of greater Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong and the shires of La Trobe and Baw Baw found that the reported costs were severe and included cases of financial (including business) loss and ruin, housing loss and marriage and family breakdown (VCGA, 1997 d):

For the family there was no data available to quantify the rate or extent of family costs such as marital problems, marital discord and breakdown, child and youth problems. At some point these individual and family private costs become community costs, it would appear most commonly at the point of enrolment of the problem gambler family members into the social security system. Neighbourhood impacts and workplace impacts from EGMs appear to be minimal and less significant than family and individual impacts and costs (VCGA, 1997 d).

Young people and gambling

Recent studies conducted in Australian and Victorian contexts give evidence of a high level of gambling activity amongst young people. Of 200 year 10 students surveyed as part of a study conducted in the western and northern suburbs of Melbourne, 85% were found to gamble and 62% had gambled illegally at the casino or on EGMs. Half of those who gambled had done so before the age of 12 (Hebron, 1996, as cited by Ridgway, 1999).

A survey of 114 young people from metropolitan and regional NSW, conducted as part of a research project by ACOSS, found that youth of all ages are participating in all forms of gambling and that young people are being exposed to gambling at a very young age (ACOSS, 1997, as cited by Ridgway, 1999). It was also found that influences on gambling behaviours, perception and incidences at early ages are parental and family based (ACOSS, 1997, as cited by Ridgway, 1999).

The results of a study involving a survey of 1017 school and university based adolescents in the Western suburbs of Melbourne suggested that gambling is a frequent, normative and approved activity among the young (Moore and Ohtsuka, 1977:234). Although few young people scored high on the problem gambling scale, about 3% classified themselves as problem gamblers (Moore and Ohtsuka, 1977:228):

Frequency of gambling activity was almost as high in the under 18 age group, for which commercial gambling activities are illegal, as in the older 'legalised' group. In addition, while a 3% problem gambling rate is statistically low, it represents higher levels of troublesome behaviour (and associated distress) than would be desirable in any group of people, let alone such a youthful population (Moore and Ohtsuka, 1977:231).

In another recent study conducted in the Western suburbs of Melbourne, the issue of the impact of parents' gambling on children was raised:

The negative impact on the wellbeing of the family was perceived by workers to be one of the most significant impacts of problem gambling. Children were reported to be particularly vulnerable when one or both parents gambled. There were incidents of gambling-related domestic violence reported by many types of workers, not only domestic violence workers (Brown, Johnson, Jackson and Wynn, 1999:41).

Women and social impact

A study of women and gambling in the western metropolitan region of Melbourne found that problem gambling has a number of impacts on women's emotional and physical health. Participants of focus groups reported an exacerbation of pre-existing issues such as anxiety, stress, depression or relationship difficulties as well as feelings of guilt, worthlessness and being out of control (Webster, 1997: 11). In the same study, thoughts of harm and suicide were reported by a small but significant number of women (Webster, 1997:11). Other impacts of problem gambling included social isolation, deterioration in physical health and the breakdown in relationships. Financial and related issues also emerged:

In general, the research indicates that while women gamblers have smaller debts from gambling, the consequences of excessive gambling may still be significant owing to their lower earning capacity, their lower personal spending power and the fact that, since they generally have responsibility for household expenditure, monies allocated for these purposes may be used to finance gambling (Webster, 1997:11).

Workers in the western metropolitan area reported that problem gambling compromised the ability of many women in the community to provide food and clothing for themselves and their children and in extreme cases led to eviction and homelessness (Webster, 1997:11).

In a more recent study focussing on 'issues and dilemmas for services providing mainstream support to women affected by gambling in Melbourne's Western Metropolitan Region' the issue of domestic violence as relating to problems with gambling was raised (Brown et al, 1999:30):

Workers reported having had a number of clients who had experienced domestic violence as a result of either their own gambling or that of their mother or partner. The gambler was, however, in most instances, the male partner...In gambling related cases, workers were unsure what commenced first - the gambling or the violence. Comments were made about families where abuse commenced or worsened when gambling-related financial stress occurred. Gambling was also reported as a coping mechanism used by women to deal with domestic violence (Brown et al, 1999:30).

It was proposed that immigrant women were particularly impacted by gambling-related domestic violence and that the shame of the violence and gambling inhibited women from seeking help (Brown et al, 1999:31). Related to this, self esteem was argued to be a casualty when there are gambling problems in the family:

The humiliation of having to ask for aid, be it financial, material or support, guilt at not being able to care for one's children, the sense of betrayal when a family member is stealing and the lack of trust within the family will ultimately impact on a woman's esteem and well-being (Brown et al, 1999:30).

It is worth noting that evidence emerging from this research indicated that women accessing services due to gambling problems were not confined to lower income groups (Brown et al, 1999:22).

Women and recreation

Participants of a study on gambling and women expressed the view that 'community and neighbourhood networks had increasingly broken down with the result that many women had few opportunities for social interaction with other women' (Webster, 1997:6). It was thought that cuts to services and changes to funding arrangements that had diminished women's social opportunities had created a vacuum in the community. Subsequently the emergence of new suburban gambling outlets had entered this social vacuum:

The venues were thought to be particularly accessible to women who did not have an established friendship network, since the EGMs provided a focus for activity, enabling women to be with people without necessarily having to engage with them (Webster, 1997:7).

It was also argued that the venues were attractive to women because they were located close to where they lived and had flexible hours of opening, so that they 'could fit an outing in the

midst of their domestic and child care responsibilities or at night when their husbands were home to care for the children' (Webster, 1997:7). Gambling facilities were also found to have appeal for many women due to their attractiveness, in contrast to the drabness of their surroundings and because of their 'glamour' (Webster, 1997:8).

Another study of problem gambling found that many women prefer to use EGMs at local venues because they feel safe there and have a sense of belonging - and over time they gamble to relieve boredom, loneliness and isolation (Brown and Coventry, 1997:1). Women also reported 'using gambling as a way of dealing with depression, anxiety and stress but the gambling in turn exacerbates these conditions and the cycle continues (Brown and Coventry, 1997, as cited by Brown et al, 1999:8).

The findings of a more recent study of women and gambling in the western suburbs have echoed these findings: workers participating in the research project 'highlighted the possibility that gambling has filled a void experienced by women because their social needs were not being met, which they attributed to a breakdown in community structures' (Brown et al, 1999:40).

Non-English-speaking-background communities

In a study of the impact of gaming venues on inner city municipalities it was concluded that most gambling problems and benefits for the Asian community were associated with the casino (VCGA, 1997 b). Consistent with this, a study on the effect of Crown Casino on the Asian and Indo-Chinese community found that enormous devastation was occurring, although the manner in which records were being kept hid the extent of the problem (Tenekegioglou, 1996). It was also reported that:

- The effect of dislocation from a previously strong family network and the cultural attraction of the casino are major contributing factors to the prevalence of gambling in Asian and Indo-Chinese families in Victoria;
- The aggressive nature of the various types of advertising Crown Casino distributes is very effective in luring Asian and Indo-Chinese gamblers to the Casino; and
- General support services are of virtually no use to Asian and Indo-Chinese gamblers and their families due to language and cultural barriers (though more culturally sensitive services have been funded by Department of Human Services since this report) (Tenekegioglou, 1996).

In another study it was reported that problem gambling is increasing in the Arabic community in Victoria and that families are facing disruption or separation and enduring financial hardships as a result (Efstratiou, 1997:3). Families were found to be experiencing high levels of tension and stress:

The degree of the problem depends on several factors: the amount of money spent on gambling and the proportion of income taken out of the household or personal budget; the level of secrecy in participating in certain forms of gambling; the inability of the gambler to engage in moderate forms of gambling and the devastating social and emotional effects of gambling-related problems on individuals and families (Efstratiou, 1997:3).

Similarly, a study of gambling and its impact on ethnic communities in the western suburbs of Melbourne found that gambling is a social and financial issue causing damage within each of the targeted ethnic communities and that there is concern within communities in relation to the easy access to EGMs and the casino (Efstratiou, 1997). In relation to service delivery for

those with gambling issues it was concluded that it is largely a silent issue and that fear of being victimised within their own community inhibits people from seeking help. Also of relevance to the design of support services were the conclusions that workers have a low awareness of gambling issues, that there is a need for more information in community languages in relation to gambling and that strategies need to be put into place to break down shame around gambling issues (Efstratiou, 1997).

It has been found that the stigma attached to problem gambling may particularly inhibit women from seeking assistance because of the shame they feel about their gambling (Brown et al, 1999).

For some women of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, barriers to seeking help may be compounded because of 'previous experiences such as mistrust of government services in their former country' as well as cultural expectations of women as strong nurturers and family mainstays (Brown et al, 1999).

Older people and recreation

Participation in gambling by older people increased from 70% in 1992 to 86% in 1997. Between 1995 and 1996 older gamblers were spending longer periods of gambling each week and slightly more often, though shorter periods of time were spent per session. It was found that older people gamble more because of social aspects of the activity than the goal of winning money, though there was also a perception arising in focus groups that there was more social interaction and activity on 'pokie' bus trips as compared to EGM venues where this is limited. Still, most older people felt that gambling was not an important part of their leisure. Providers, community groups and gamblers agreed that the funds used for gambling came primarily from discretionary income, though with a minority it comes from savings. For 1996 older people were found to spend less on gambling than did Victorians in general, although it represented a larger proportion of their income. Problem gambling was not seen as a particular issue for older people, though they are less likely to use support services and are less likely to recover. There was a perception expressed in focus groups that gambling has a negative effect on society. Concerns raised included the large number of EGMs, their easy access, a lack of government concern, the accessibility of the casino, increasing reliance of governments on revenue from gambling activities and the positive way that gambling was portrayed in advertisements (VCGA, 1997 f).

Indications of prevalence in social impact research

A high level of problem gambling was evident in research on the impact of gambling venues on the municipalities of Maribymong, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Darebin (VCGA, 1997 b). About 70 per cent of respondents said that they had heard of accounts of the impacts of problem gambling and 40 per cent of respondents knew someone that they would describe as a problem gambler (VCGA, 1997 b). Similarly, forty per cent of respondents in the telephone survey and over half the members of discussion groups claimed to know about gambling which related to detrimental social and/or economic consequences for one or more individuals (VCGA, 1997 b).

In the study of Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong and the shires of La Trobe and Baw Baw, 1.3% of survey respondents indicated that managing gambling had been a problem, though a tendency to under-report gambling problems should be taken into account when assessing this (VCGA, 1997 d).

Demand on agency services

Research commissioned by the VCGA in both metropolitan and rural areas gives evidence that public and community services have experienced increased demand due to the emergence of gambling related issues. In metropolitan areas of Melbourne gaming was seen to have impacted on the work of government agencies such as DSS and child protection services (VCGA, 1997 b).

Communities in Wannon, Camperdown, Sale and surrounds, with and without EGM gaming venues, experienced increased demand for government funded social services requiring a compensating increase in funding (VCGA, 1997 c). There was also an increased demand for non-government social services with traditional local community fund raising sources restricted by competition from gambling (VCGA, 1997 c).

For the areas of Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, La Trobe and Baw Baw, State agencies such as DHS, the police and Magistrates Courts, reported social and economic impacts in the form of marginally increased workloads (VCGA 1997 d). Officials in private community service agencies, such as those providing emergency relief, financial counselling and family counselling, reported major increases in workloads, not necessarily in an *increase* in number of cases, but in the *severity* of cases related to actual or suspected problem gambling (VCGA, 1997 d). There also appeared to be an increased workload for DSS which related to client gambling behaviour. (VCGA, 1997 d).

Other research has revealed that 'since the marked increase in opportunity to gamble in Victoria with the introduction of poker machines in 1992, increasing numbers of problem gamblers are presenting to financial counsellors and being referred by problem gambling counselling services' (Pentland, 1998 b).

Community perceptions of gambling impact

In a summary of VCGA research findings for the period 1996/97 it was concluded that negative community perceptions of gaming have created pressure to reduce and better manage the social impacts and costs of gambling (VCGA, 1997:i):

Negative community perceptions have been increasing since 1992. At the same time positive expectations have reduced. The research on community perceptions of gambling has noted that people surveyed tend to express satisfaction with their own gambling lives. However when asked about the harm associated with gambling the majority of respondents indicated that gambling resulted in more harm than good (VCGA, 1997 i).

Widespread community concern about the effects of gambling was also evidenced by a survey of Australians in all states commissioned by the Australian Medical Association in which 84 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that gambling is a serious problem and 82

per cent agreed or strongly agreed that gambling problems had got worse in the past four years (Australian Medical Association, 1998). People in Adelaide, Melbourne and rural Victoria were more likely to agree or strongly agree that problems had become worse over this period of time (Australian Medical Association, 1998).

Leisure and social activities

In reviewing gambling impact literature it is interesting to examine areas of research on the redirection (or non-redirection) of time and money spent on non-gambling leisure activities.

In one report it was asserted that 'the introduction of EGMs is likely to result in a redistribution of income available for other activity away from low income individuals and families', however in the same report it is stated that: 'it appears that those using EGMs in local venues are largely those who previously stayed at home' which one would suppose is an activity not requiring the highest level of funds (VCGA, 1997 b). The latter point is elaborated on:

This appears to be especially so in the case of the unemployed, women, the newly retired and elderly, NESB migrants and the disabled for whom there are very few non gambling based community social and cultural alternatives and for whom community centre services have been reduced in recent years (VCGA, 1997 b).

The proposition that EGM gambling attracts those who are already socially isolated would seem to be supported by the research finding that disruption of social systems leads to problem gambling:

Circumstances which disrupt a person's usual social networks seem to lead in some situations to a search for new social activities. Gaming venues are available in most locations and at most times of the day and night (Pentland, 1997 a).

In research on rural communities *with* EGM venues, there was some indication or perception of a redirection of activity away from other forms of leisure and recreation which was affecting employment (VCGA, 1997 c). It was reported that people in rural communities *without* EGM experienced some loss of employment opportunities to retail and leisure/entertainment venues competing against 'out of town' EGM venues (VCGA, 1997 c).

There was also evidence that club facilities in some rural areas had benefited from the introduction of EGMs. In one survey there was 'a clear perception that EGMs boost local clubs and pubs and provide additional entertainment for some' (VCGA, 1997 c). This was supported in another study of rural areas which found that:

It would appear that the social consequences for most EGM users are benign and are perceived by them most often in terms of improved social and entertainment facilities in EGM venues. These non-gambling social benefits were reported as more important to individuals than actual EGM gambling. Major neighbourhood benefits were cited - improved facilities to sporting clubs and regional returns from the CSF. (VCGA 1997 d).

In a review of community facilities resulting from the providers of gaming in Victoria other benefits to the community were cited, including use of assets and facilities, monetary donations and support to charitable/ sporting community organisations, sponsorships, subsidies and free access to services (VCGA 1997 e). Some participants in the research

recognised that gaming venues do contribute 'but questioned whether the source was appropriate having regard to the wider implications for the community' (VCGA, 1997 e). In the VCGA study in metropolitan Melbourne it emerged that in general suburban gaming venues are seen to provide more immediate benefits and costs than the casino:

The local nature of clubs and hotels enables them to be much better integrated into the lifestyle of the community, however it also brings the problems closer to home. Thus for most problems with gaming were more associated with *local* venues (VCGA, 1997 b).

Other issues

Given the high level of concern relating to the rapid introduction and promotion of new forms of gambling in recent years and its associated impacts (as evidenced by lively public debate and survey findings) it is not surprising that the issue of responsibility for problem gambling emerges in the available research. In research on the impact of gaming venues on metropolitan communities, most members of the gaming industry took the view that individual problem gambling is entirely a personal rather than a community matter. Almost all other interest groups and the community appeared to disagree (VCGA, 1997 b):

The impacts of EGM problem gambling must then be repaired by those individuals and groups, as family members, neighbours, businesses, churches and community organisations. It is hardly surprising then that non industry groups and individuals want community based responses and see that this is difficult for a state government so reliant on gaming revenue (VCGA, 1997 b).

Difficulties for agencies in collecting data on gambling related issues amongst service users has also emerged as an issue: '...Most people presenting for financial assistance will not cite gambling as the reason for their financial difficulty, due to the stigma attached and the fear that confession will result in a refusal of assistance'. However, in one Tasmanian study, it was determined that approximately 38% of people asking for food at a particular agency were there because of gambling' (Interchurch Gambling Taskforce, 1998:34).

It has also been argued in a more local context that people presenting to material aid and financial services may be under reporting their gambling problems:

Gambling research (G-Line 1995) indicates that a majority of gamblers seeking help indicate that they have financial problems associated with their gambling. However, to date, it seems that a very small number of these problem gamblers are presenting to financial counsellors disclosing gambling as part of their financial problem. Additionally, the number of referrals from Breakeven to financial counsellors is much lower than would have been expected. The reasons for this are complex and require further exploration (Pentland, 1997 a).

An issue for emergency relief providers is that they suspect that many people now presenting for assistance to their agencies have a gambling problem, but this is not disclosed and they are unsure how to address this...(Pentland, 1997 a).

Furthermore it is arguable that bankruptcies caused by gambling problems will be under reported due to the fact that it may be an offence under Section 271 of the Bankruptcy Act 1966 for a bankrupt to have materially contributed to their insolvency by gambling.

These propositions are consistent with the research conclusion that 'it would appear that in most instances the negatives associated with the introduction of EGMs outweigh the

positives, and that many of the social costs are either *hidden* or less apparent generally (VCGA, 1997 c).

Economic impact research: Employment and gambling

Research commissioned by the VCGA into the effect of gambling on employment in Victoria between 1992 and 1996 found that new gambling in Victoria increased employment by 34,700 in that period and that the impact of new gaming activities was to reduce the unemployment rate by 1% in the year 95/96 (VCGA, 1997 g). Other key findings were that:

- The large increase partly reflects construction industry employment for the casino and gaming venues;
- Gaming industry employment rose by 250% (8,291) mainly reflecting the introduction of EGMs and the temporary casino in 1994;
- Direct new gaming employment displaced employment in other traditional gambling sectors; and
- There was a decline in traditional gambling employment by 12.4% (408 persons) (VCGA, 1997g).

Economic impact research: Retail and redistributive effects

A key finding of a report on the impact of gaming on the Victorian retail sector, in particular examining trends between 1990 and 1996, was that increased gambling expenditure along with expenditure on other retail goods and other services contributed to a significant decline in net savings:

The long run impacts of increased gambling activity may be...severe. In previous recessions in Australia, lower savings have supported household expenditure and retail sales than would otherwise have been the case. To the extent that increased gambling expenditure has been financed by lower savings, part of the cushion to consumption expenditure in the next recession has been removed (VCGA, 1997 h).

However this finding needs to be treated with some caution in that the aggregate analyses employed may not have been sensitive to local trends or changes in expenditure patterns. It is also possible that the sums of money spent on gambling that are sufficient to cause dire hardship for those on government benefits and low incomes will not always figure in the economic models employed for analytical purposes. An obvious question remains with the above analysis as to where the savings for gambling expenditure are meant to have come from, given that gambling losses are predominantly incurred by those on the lowest incomes who do not have huge savings to draw on.

In a study of metropolitan Melbourne possible redistributive effects are highlighted: 'there does seem to be evidence of important distributional effects among businesses and within households' (VCGA, 1997 b). In the same report it is also noted that 'offsetting any short term gains there may be leakages of economic activity from the region if tax, pub and gaming operator income is repatriated elsewhere and like transfers into the area don't occur from somewhere else (VCGA, 1997 b).

Telephone surveys of Wannon, Camperdown, Sale and surrounds tapped a perception/experience in the community that the introduction of EGMs has led to increased bankruptcies and a lowering in spending in the retail sector (VCGA, 1997 c). Though those

living in communities with EGMs reported some increase in domestic tourism due to the attraction of patrons to EGM venues, it was also noted that there is a potential loss of expenditure due to payment of gaming taxes to the state government, payment of EGM acquisition costs and subsequent maintenance costs to 'out of town' suppliers and the potential export of profits from venue operation to 'out of town' owners (VCGA, 1997 c). People from the same survey area who were part of communities without EGM venues reported a loss of gaming expenditure to 'out of town' venues and associated retail and leisure enterprises (VCGA, 1997 c).

Economic impact research: Regressive taxation and individual and community impacts

Of major concern is research evidence of redistributive effects from those on lower incomes to those on higher incomes. As a proportion of income, taxation of EGM use is highly regressive; much higher proportions of personal and household income are gambled and taxed by low income respondents than by high income respondents, although the pattern is not linear (VCGA, 1997 d).

This is consistent with the finding of a study of current gambling taxation in Australia that it is regressive and discriminates against those on a lower income. This is especially onerous given that there is not a progressive taxation regime in place to counteract this:

Surveys of gambling spending show over 80% of gambling spending is by heavy gamblers. Up to a third of Australia's \$3.5 billion gambling taxes may be from a mere 200,000 gambling 'addicts' and their families. Such gamblers lose thousands of dollars a year each on gambling, with thirty cents in every dollar to public revenue. They are disproportionately in low-income households. As casinos and gaming machines become more accessible to lower income groups, the regressivity of gambling taxation worsens (Smith, 1998:9).

As argued by Smith, the regressivity of gambling taxation may not only impact on individuals and households, but could extend to whole communities where people on low incomes live and work:

A low income suburb with a significant population of heavy gamblers might well experience a very economically damaging drain on consumer spending to gambling operations and state government revenues, while the diversion of consumption towards gambling could produce dramatic effects on local businesses if this doubly regressive, doubly concentrated effect does operate. Such an effect may not be apparent from aggregate data (Smith, 1998:58).

This point is of particular relevance in metropolitan Melbourne, where the greater the proportion of low income earners and the unemployment rate for a particular municipality, the greater the EGM density is likely to be, which may be due to the strategic placement of EGMs according to the maximisation of return coupled with the pattern of EGM expenditure by low income earners (Livingston, 1998:2).

Conclusion

This overview has hopefully served as a backdrop against which to analyse and better understand the specific findings pertaining to the City and diverse communities of Boroondara. We'll now move to a section which discusses some recent findings about recreation and leisure and changing patterns in their utilisation. This section will provide some preliminary and suggestive conclusions about implications for the City of Boroondara as it attempts to constructively respond to the social impact of gambling on its citizens and the community as a whole.

1. 2: Developments in recreation and leisure services and their utilisation in relation to gambling

Introduction

Whilst gambling is considered as one type of recreation amongst many, that are available to people, this section seeks to raise issues by reflecting on broad social and economic changes taking place in society and within the local community and relating them to recreation and leisure. Whilst it is based on relevant and accessible literature, most of the developments described here are sufficiently known so as not to warrant a more formal literature review. They also derive from one of the consultants' (B. McKenna) long-standing involvement in municipal leisure planning.

Broad leisure patterns related to the local context

Leisure patterns have always had a close relationship to the kind of opportunities available and the awareness of these. To an extent, the recreation patterns of any community are shaped by the facilities provided and the promotion of these rather than simply by the demands of the public. Australian communities have thus developed a pattern of public recreation which centres largely upon beaches, parks and reserves, libraries, sporting fields and indoor sports centres. This has been accompanied by the private sector provision of entertainment services such as shops, cinemas, cafes, restaurants and hotels. In addition and somewhat below the surface, there is an immense proliferation of clubs and organisations and a great diversity of home-based recreation.

Probably the greatest global shift in recreation patterns is the way in which economic demands have become the primary organising principle. Recreation services have generally been forced to adopt commercial models of practice and, increasingly, recreation has become a commodity which is packaged and sold. Whether or not one approves of the rather momentous shift in gambling provision, the key problem for recreation managers and entrepreneurs is that people have less money and time to expend on other forms of recreation.

Less attention is being devoted to actual participation in the highly competitive outdoor sports in favour of greater involvement in night time and indoor sports. At the same time, more people are television spectators and less are actually participating. New patterns in recreation are often based on new and emerging technologies. Although computers, with games, multimedia and the Internet, are increasingly popular, we have yet to see the full impact of this. Again, many people are being diverted from other pursuits by these new technologies.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics:

For the most part, the relative amounts of time spent by men and women on the major activity groups (labour force, household, personal, education, community, social and leisure pursuits) did not differ much according to whether they lived in capital cities or rest-of-state urban or rural regions. The only notable exception to this was the relative amount of time spent on labour force activities by men and women. While the ratio of time spent on labour force activities by men and women in capital cities was 2 to 1 in favour of males, this ratio was 2.3 to 1 in other urban areas and 3 to 1 in rural areas (ABS, 1994:41).

In general this tends to mean that women in urban areas spend significantly less time on household and community activities, particularly domestic activities, child-care, purchasing goods and services and more time in the labour force. Both sexes maintain a similar pattern in social and leisure activities, i.e. active and passive, social life and entertainment (ABS, 1994:42). In general, this means that males and females spend approximately 20% of their day time on social and leisure activities during weekdays and around 30% (for women) and 33% (for men) of day time on the same activities on weekends (ABS, 1994:10).

There is widespread public interest in and concern about health issues. Regrettably, the predominant response of the leisure industry has been to develop and promote 'fitness' centres. These are based on the false assumption that fitness and health are synonymous. An increasing number of people are realising that good health demands a very different approach to simply increasing fitness.

The last 20 years have provided a much greater range of leisure options but a much smaller change in the total number of hours spent in participation, thus, roughly the same number of person-hours have been dispersed over a wider range of options and because recreation is a major area of private sector investment, increasing attention has been given to competitive marketing facilities and services. Most recently this has meant a high investment in marketing gambling as a leisure (entertainment) option. This is now changing even more as hours of participation are decreasing, yet the demand for increasing diversity still continues.

Deregulation has meant shopping hours are being extended into evenings and weekends; an increasing amount of time might have once been devoted to other recreation activities but is now spent on visiting shopping strips or centres. The effects of these changes are yet to be fully realised in many local areas but they clearly provide excellent marketing and promotional opportunities to gambling operators in close proximity to shopping centres.

Leisure trends related to the local context

In thinking about leisure trends, one must commence with the broad socio-economic and environmental issues which impact upon all aspects of lifestyle. Australian society is experiencing the most dramatic changes of any time this century and urban communities, as part of the whole, are continuing to change through urban consolidation and development, a return of people for the CBD and inner urban areas and ever growing mobility through use of private vehicles catered for by massive investments in freeways and private transport. Tourism is becoming more important as a component of local economies, whilst, at the same time, services have been reduced (in particular State Government services) in the moves to 'small government'. Technology is still having an impact on the workforce and there is increasing awareness of environmental degradation based on unsustainable industries, land

and water uses. Consequently, predictions about future directions can only be made with small degrees of confidence; now, more than any time this century, the best planning decisions will be those which provide the greatest scope for future flexibility.

Broad economic change

The biggest changes relate to the trend toward 'economic rationalism' and the associated focus upon new patterns of managerialism. This has brought about a number of changes with obvious implications for leisure services. Many people are finding their work life is unpredictable; they face the constant threat of fluctuating incomes, unemployment, casualisation, re-structuring of work conditions and the like. They often have a lower level of discretionary income than previously and this may well decline even further. The insecurity people are feeling could be contributing to the willingness to take greater (gambling) risks with incomes that are becoming more inadequate for those on the lowest incomes (Mackay, 1993).

The structure of local industry and nature of employment is changing; the number of blue collar workers and the range of production industries are declining, whilst white collar workers and service industries are increasing. Some service industries, such as the finance sector, are going through dramatic restructure, down-sizing, redundancies and re-deployment to new areas of service. More skill and/or higher qualifications are being demanded. At the same time, there is extensive de-skilling of the labour force as more sectors of employment are impacted upon by automation and modular or completed goods and products designed and constructed in larger factories located in other areas. Thus, work in many local areas is often becoming less satisfying and less genuinely productive.

Governments seem no longer able to fund the levels of service which the community had come to expect; private sector financial strategies are being adopted by the public sector and services are constantly shifting and changing in the struggle to adapt to change. This varies from one local authority to another, but local government, in particular, is undergoing massive changes, partly as a result of the amalgamation processes that have already occurred but much more through the continuing effect of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering Legislation. Some local Councils are still coming to terms with the change and this process will continue for some time yet.

All of this serves to create an environment of uncertainty and stress. The fact that Australia now has one of the highest suicide rates in the world represents one 'tip of the iceberg' of social indicators. Australians have traditionally rated their leisure and, in particular, their social life, more highly than any other country but this is now under threat with the seemingly universal pressure for economic productivity. Obviously, one response to this would be to provide a better range of opportunities for relaxation and stress release. The paradox is that 'leisure industries' are also increasingly expected to be economically profitable, or at least self-sufficient.

Broad social change

There are various other changes which are occurring concurrently and add a further dimension to the dilemmas of leisure planning. Boroondara, like many other Australian communities is ageing due to longer life expectancy, low birth rates and high quality aged services. These factors have their own impact upon the economic climate but also shift the priorities in community service provision. Households are changing in character; young people are more likely to either live at home with their parents or live in a group or single-person households.

Continuing change in the place of women in society has a wide range of impacts. It probably reinforces the uncertainty felt by men about their own roles. It has certainly led to major changes in family structure and functioning and resulted in major changes in public behaviour, including the recreation patterns of many women.

There has been a growing public interest in and concern about environmental quality, ranging from essentially local issues such as streetscapes, parks and waterways, to global issues about energy consumption, pollution of the ocean and potential global warming.

All of these changes, of which the above are only some examples, represent both resources and problems. They have fuelled a massive diversification of, and increased interest in, leisure activities. Many of the traditional patterns of recreation are no longer relevant, and even newer patterns are rapidly being replaced by others.

Practical implications and key issues for leisure services

In managing leisure services, Council faces a greater challenge than ever before. It must steer a middle course between meeting the great diversity of community needs, many of which demand service provisions which should, and often can only, be provided from the public purse and, at the same time, exercising cost restraint and maximising income from leisure services. Continuing and unpredictable change means that capital investment must provide for both high quality of provision and flexibility.

Council needs to focus its recreation strategy and therefore its response to the increase in gambling activity of all kinds on the consequences of these trends to people, their leisure time, behavioural problems and lifestyle. Continual change to leisure services could mean greater efforts in leisure education, for example in retirement planning and addressing the issue of social isolation that results from an elderly person losing a life partner and turning to gambling to replace social interaction. Strategies could be focused on patterns of behaviour related to leisure choices, including making positive recreation choices that contribute to social interaction, family life, personal health and happiness. Leisure development strategies could look to educating private enterprise about social responsibility in the same way as was required of publicans to prevent excessive drinking, and by way of joint actions to correct the excesses that can occur in many new leisure opportunities.

Contextual issues

The shape and nature of Boroondara requires careful consideration of the equity and fairness of focusing recreation resources on one or more activities in the city (i.e. sport, parks, swimming pools, libraries etc.) against the probability that a major proportion of the population will use leisure resources in and around Boroondara because of the diversity of private resources and the range of other recreation-gambling options and venues available beyond Boroondara.

Economic fluctuations may require leisure resources to be devoted to promoting alternative commercial recreation services to assist individual-family-community recovery from negative gambling impacts and generate opportunities for alternative recreation developments in the medium to long term.

The form of consultation with the community regarding recreation facilities, to consider the options and ensure 'rationalisation' does not mean ever higher quality gambling venues which displace other recreation options, needs consideration. Equal consideration needs to be given to the issue of negotiating with gambling entrepreneurs on social responsibilities and for sponsoring recreation developments or ongoing provision thereof.

Of special importance is the issue of licensing in the City of Boroondara given its division into a 'dry' and 'wet' area. The following summary of a previous survey commissioned by Council illustrates and focuses this point.

1.3: City of Boroondara: some specific features of the local area

The wet/dry issue

Licensing Survey Report prepared for the City of Boroondara by AGB McNair, 1996.

The majority of respondents stated that they would not support the complete removal of dry area controls (p.3).

The majority of respondents (51%) stated that they preferred to visit restaurants that were *both licensed and BYO*, while almost one third stated that they preferred to visit restaurants that were *BYO only* (p.2).

Just over two thirds of respondents stated that they would support a change to the existing dry area controls which made it simpler for restaurants (but not hotels) in the area to become licensed (p.3).

The provision of recreation and leisure in the city

Leisure Facilities Strategy Report prepared for the City of Boroondara by Michael King and Associates, Leisure and Tourism Planners (1997)

Points and extracts of particular relevance to the present study:

Leisure trends identified included the following

The City has a high number of people in full time work and the average weekly hours worked by these people is increasing, resulting for some in less available non-committed time for recreation (p.ii).

Noticeable decreases in voluntary support for clubs and organisations with many clubs reporting reduced numbers of people prepared to do voluntary work (p.ii).

Participation trends identified included:

Most people recreate close to home, at infrequent times and are involved in non-organised, non-competitive activities (p.ii).

The main leisure features and constraints identified in the City included the:

Cost of activities (p.iv).

Survey respondents supported:

- Recycle and improve existing facilities
- Greater sharing and joint use of facilities
- Providing concessions for children and special needs groups using council recreation facilities
- Facility use should be maximised before any new facility development is considered
- Expansion of cycle and walking paths in the city (p.iv).

Leisure facilities strategy framework

The 'main trends affecting the strategy recommendations' included:

- There is a slow reduction in participation in competitive and traditional sports, with people becoming increasingly unwilling to commit themselves to play 'for a whole season' or available to play and train a number of days a week.
- Due to time constraints, people are cutting back some of their leisure and recreation activities and are more demanding about those which remain...
- With increased age longevity and larger numbers of fit, healthy older people, the demand for exercise, and for conveniently located facilities will increase (p.iv).

Recommendations included:

Access

- That council recognise that a range of people are constrained to participate in use of recreation facilities and that concessions and support services for such groups be considered to assist their participation.
- That council monitor user profile data at a range of recreation facilities to test disadvantaged or special needs groups use of such facilities on an ongoing basis and that future service targets support such groups use and access to recreation facilities (p.xiv).

Rates of participation

- Residents...indicated that they have a very high participation rate in leisure activities with (88.2%) of the respondents indicating that they had taken part in a leisure activity in the past twelve months. This is extremely high for such an ageing community.
- The respondent age participation rates indicate that younger age profiles were less active. People aged 10-29 years recorded activity rates on average (4%) less than the City's average. People in this age category indicated lack of time, school and education commitments and 'not interested' as the main reasons they were not more active (p.35).

Funding priorities

The highest priority for future funding by survey respondents was given to the following groups:

- People restricted to their homes 28.8%
- Older adults 18.3%
- People with disabilities 13.2%
- Youth 11.8% (p.39).

Statements highly supported by residents included that:

- Council should improve or recycle existing facilities
- Council should subsidise charges or make concessions for children and special needs groups using council facilities
- Council should provide recreation programs for disadvantaged groups
- Council should support and resource community groups to assist them in providing recreation opportunities
- Council should provide rental assistance for community groups and organisations to use the Camberwell Centre and the Hawthorn Town Hall (p.40).

2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

2.1: Research design

The tasks of assessing the 'impacts of gambling on the City of Boroondara' and of developing a 'strategic approach to address those impacts that Council can influence, as suggested in the brief for this consultancy, both require a theoretical/ conceptual framework which allows for the discernment of the various levels on which such impact can be said to occur. Briefly, impacts can occur on an individual level; they can affect the family context; the business community directly associated with or affected by gambling; the local community and its support services; and, finally, the community at large, in terms of social, economic and cultural factors.

In addition, both the public discussion in Victoria during the past few years and the relevant literature have amply demonstrated that the notion of gambling itself is controversial, ranging from considering it a modern form of addiction, symptomatic of a deeper societal-personal malaise, to those who point out that gambling has been around 'forever' and that this activity thus constitutes a 'normal' form of leisure in any society (with possibly some harmful and excessive side-effects for some individuals).

Accordingly, our approach was to consult people at the various levels mentioned: individuals affected by, or engaged in gambling; families directly or indirectly affected by gambling; local businesses either affected by providing gambling facilities or by the arrival of such facilities in their local area; Council staff and staff of non-governmental organisations providing leisure and recreational services, as well as commercial providers of such services; the networks of community support for gamblers and their families and the general community in which gambling occurs.

The following methods have been employed to provide an adequate mixture of information, the triangulation of which provides a reliable and solid base for integration and recommendations for Council responses.

'Triangulation' is a widely known and accepted approach to combining the results of various distinct research techniques and to complementarily integrate their respective strengths and compensate for their respective weaknesses. The two sampling approaches utilised can be said to complement one another as well: the 'snowballing' approach relying on expert knowledge and on existing networks and associations and the randomised survey relying on representativeness and offering the advantage of tapping into the population at large.

1. Review of existing gambling-related data and literature as well as contextual information relevant to the task.

Included social impact research commissioned by the VCGA and various governmental and non-governmental bodies, literature on the definition, aetiology and prevalence of problem gambling, demographic and contextual information on the City of Boroondara, especially in relation to recreational and leisure services and their usage (see Chapter 1).

2 Initial consultations with individuals, families, businesses and Council Officers and staff of relevant organisations through in-depth interviews and small group discussions.

Included exploration of the relevant general and specific issues and identified perceived impacts on both the general community and on special groups of the Boroondara community.

3 Development of a 10-15 page discussion paper.

With related and relevant statistical material, including information about demographics, recent developments in leisure and recreational patterns amongst the population of Boroondara and in selected localities. This was to serve as a preliminary assessment of the impact of gambling on the community and as a framework for wider community consultation.

4 Circulation and promotion of the discussion paper as a basis for targeted community consultations.

The target groups for dissemination were identified throughout the previous steps.

5 Development and administration of a survey questionnaire based on a clustered random sample of the municipal population, testing some of the identified issues emerging from previous steps.

The survey attempted to identify the breadth of awareness and concern amongst the general population in Boroondara in order to corroborate the information gained from the expert informants consulted before and afterwards. It also attempted to assess the similarity or otherwise of the local population's relationship to gambling and comparison of its potential impact with the respective findings of other research.

6 Organisation of a series of community workshops ascertaining responses to the discussion paper and initial identification of strategic responses to the assessed impacts of gambling

The main method used was focus groups organised amongst the various previously identified interest groups, notably recreation and leisure providers, community support services, Council staff and interested community members.

7 Drafting and dissemination of a preliminary strategic options paper and eliciting of final commentary

2.2 Detailed outline of methods employed

In the following section the method is outlined for each part of the study.

A Initial consultations: Focus groups

Procedure

A list of individuals and organisations to approach for participation in focus groups was largely drawn from suggestions made by the Gambling Response Working Group and the Boroondara Community Directory. Recruitment was through initial phone calls and letters of invitation. In most cases each person was also followed up with a phone call to confirm attendance. The facilitator began each focus group discussion with a brief outline of the study. Participants were then asked to introduce themselves and to relate something about their work or their connection to the City of Boroondara. Group discussions were guided by a thematic set of open questions, beginning with broader issues and narrowing down to issues directly related to the City of Boroondara. Issues were explored and views expressed by participants were recorded on butcher's paper.

Focus group participants

Three focus groups were attended by nine people in total. Participants included two representatives of sporting clubs (one of these having EGMs), the manager of a recreation centre, three representatives of social support organisations, a local solicitor, a worker from a community based organisation and a church minister.

Questions for discussion:

The following questions were used to guide discussion:

- What is your relation to gambling? What do you generally think of gambling? (General views and perceptions)
- Have you got any ideas about whether gambling is affecting people? (General impacts on individuals, families and groups)
- Let's talk about gambling impact on other kinds of issues and themes like business, leisure, spending patterns and activities in the community...(General impacts on the community)
- What other things have happened at the same time, ie that could also be impacting on the community? (Other forces impacting on the community)

Each theme in the discussion was then re-visited in terms specific to Boroondara:

- Have you seen the effects of gambling in Boroondara? (Specific views)
- Are there things you know that have happened to people, businesses, organisations, recreation providers etc in Boroondara? (Specific impacts)
- What other things have happened in Boroondara at the same time? (Other forces impacting on Boroondara)
- What do you think the City of Boroondara should be doing? If not the city, what should others be doing? (Intervention proposals)
- What sort of questions would you ask in a questionnaire about gambling impacts? (Ideas for the survey instrument)

B Initial consultations: In-depth interviews

The interviews complemented the focus groups as part of the community consultation program to inform the process and findings of the study.

Interview participants

Preliminary consultations included 11 interviews with community representatives from the areas of business (two traders' associations), leisure and community support, welfare and family support. Although one hotel (without gambling facilities) was represented, proprietors and managers from various hotels and clubs with gambling facilities - after numerous attempts by researchers - declined to participate in an interview as part of this project.

Topics and questions for discussion

The same questions were put forward in the interviews as for the focus groups (listed above under A).

C Survey of households in the City of Boroondara

Procedure

Respondents to the community survey were randomly chosen from within four zones that included 3 sub-areas (streets) to ensure a good geographic spread and a representative cross section of the whole community. Each household chosen received questionnaires from survey administrators who explained the reasons for the study and encouraged completion of the form. Less than a quarter of all households approached didn't complete the questionnaire. Some households could not be contacted despite repeated visits by survey administrators.

The sampling process was designed to achieve a proper random sample of the whole population by using a cluster sampling method that ensured a geographic spread of respondents according to a total of 12 sub-areas defined during the project. Specifically, each interviewer/administrator was given responsibility for 150 survey forms to distribute to households in 12 randomly selected streets. Some administrators were residents and some were students/graduates on placement at Borderlands Cooperative for their fieldwork experience.

The interviewers requested persons over the age of eighteen, with birth dates closest to the 1st of August who were capable of filling in the form, to complete the survey. The survey forms were delivered on one day and picked up a few days later by arrangement with residents. A briefing session was held for interviewers and a step by step guide was provided to assist the administration process. The starting point for the interviewing was a specific house. The number and street name of the house was recorded on record sheets during the visits. The survey was to be explained as being totally confidential and that only the computer processor would see individual returns. Respondents were not required to have their name or address on the form.

Interviewers were asked to indicate to residents that it was important that Council receive their views to assist in identifying the impact of gambling in Boroondara. The purpose of the survey was to be explained as '... to collect residents' views on the impact of gambling on the City of Boroondara ...'. A covering letter from Brent McKenna was provided that explained the survey to residents. The reasons for total refusals were recorded and the next house in the Street was approached.

Interviewers were also asked to explain the following: the contents of the survey form, that space was provided to add personal points of view, how the surveys were to be filled in, and that surveys could be left to be picked up. Questionnaires were to be evenly distributed to both sides of the street and a contact name and number was to be given in the event of respondents needing further assistance in completing the form.

Profile of respondents to survey

The total sample of forms processed was 437 following distribution of around 600 forms. This represents a response rate of almost three quarters (73%) of forms delivered. The actual numbers received back from the 12 survey areas, bounded by 4 zones, are provided in the table below:

Table 1: Zone Samples

Zone 1 - NE Zone	101
Zone 2 - NW Zone	103
Zone 3 - East Mid Zone	116
Zone 4 - South West Zone	117
TOTAL	437

Respondent households' age profile

Comparison of the sample of respondents with the total population, according to Census 96, indicates that families with children were slightly more likely to complete the questionnaire than older aged people.

Table 2: Respondent (Res.) Households' Age : Total Population in Boroondara

Age Brackets	RES. H/HOLDS' AGE PROFILE: Number	TOTAL POPULATION Number	RES. H/HOLDS' AGE PROFILE %	TOTAL POPULATION %
0 to 4	48	7767	6.4	5.4
5 to 9	58	8493	7.8	5.9
10 to 14	52	8866	7.0	6.2
15 to 19	74	10506	9.9	7.3
20 to 24	55	12067	7.4	8.4
25 to 29	47	10690	6.3	7.4
30 to 34	43	9730	5.8	6.8
35 to 44	106	21621	14.2	15.0
45 to 54	104	19775	13.9	13.8
55 to 64	72	11430	9.6	7.9
65+	87	22689	11.7	15.9
TOTAL	746	143634	100	100

Respondents' household size

Respondent households were very similar in size to the total population with four and five + person households being of exactly the same proportion as the total population and little variation in proportion compared to the other household sizes.

Table 3: Respondent Household Size: Total Population in Boroondara

Household Size	RESPONDENTS' HOUSEHOLDS	TOTAL POPULATION
1	14	17
2	33	35
3	15	17
4	19	19
5+	12	12
Blank	7	

Car ownership

Respondent households had a similar car ownership figure to the total population, (i.e. 86% compared to 89%); respondent households with one car were slightly under-represented whilst those with none or 2 cars were slightly over-represented.

Table 4: Respondent Car Ownership: Total Population in Boroondara

Number of Vehicles	RESPONDENTS' HOUSEHOLDS	TOTAL POPULATION
None	14	11
1	31	38
2	42	35
3	8	8
4+	5	8

Regions of birth

Respondent households had a good cross section of regions of birth consistent with the total population indicated by comparison with Census 96 figures. The slight under-representation of Australia as a region of birth for respondents could be explained by the proportion of blank responses which was around 5%, in addition to the slight over-representation of Europe (and the former USSR) as a birthplace.

Table 5: Respondent Cultural Profile: Total Population in Boroondara

Region of Birth	RES. H/HOLDS' %	TOTAL POP.: %
Australia	70.0	72.2
Rest of Oceania	1.0	1.6
Europe & Former USSR	14.0	11.8
Middle East & North Africa	1.0	0.7
Southern and South East Asia	5.0	4.4
North East Asia	2.0	3.7
North, South & Central America	1.0	1.0
Africa	0.0	0.7

In conclusion, the sample profile demonstrates that respondents to the questionnaire were statistically representative of the whole population according to Census 96. The statistically significant differences between the respondent profile and the whole population suggest that, in interpreting the results, there is only a slight bias towards single person households, in addition to a slight bias towards older aged people (i.e. 65+) in using and applying the data and information obtained from the survey.

The survey questionnaire

The survey form was designed according to the project requirements to assess (see Attachment 1):

- Respondent's participation in gambling;
- The impact of gambling on leisure and recreation;
- The impact of gambling on social and community activities;
- The impact of gambling on spending;
- The level of satisfaction / dissatisfaction with gambling; and
- Some broader strategic issues related to problems, benefits and Council's role.

Closed questions used comprehensive sets of closed answers and a 'Likert type' rating scale on satisfaction / dissatisfaction. A few open-ended questions sought statements from respondents about what gambling does for them, why they were satisfied or dissatisfied with gambling and some explanations about problems or benefits, whilst some questions simply sought expanded answers related to the preceding closed questions.

The completed survey forms were scanned using optical character and mark recognition (OCR/OMR) software. Data were checked for quality and accuracy of recognition according to a cell by cell process that allows error, multiple and blank response checking. After processing and quality checking, frequency tables were created from the data base to enable measures of gambling impacts consistent with Council's brief and discussions with the Steering Committee. Further analysis was undertaken through cross tabulations with the classification data (respondent profile), to gain greater depth of understanding about gambling impacts on specific sectors of the population.

The open-ended answers have been collated and analysed for thematic saturation and have been integrated, partly verbatim and partly thematically paraphrased, in the Findings of this report.

D Community workshops and interviews

Procedure

Members of the Boroondara community were invited to participate in one of seven community workshops held across the municipality in the week beginning 19th of April. These were held at the following locations:

10am, 19 th April.....	Phyllis Hore Room, Kew Library
1pm, 20 th April.....	Evergreen Senior Citizens' Centre, Balwyn
7.30pm, 20 th April.....	Borderlands, Camberwell
10.30am, 21 st April.....	Hawthorn Library
1pm, 21 st April.....	Craig Family Centre, Ashburton
7.30pm, 21 st April.....	Borderlands, Camberwell
10.30am, 22 nd April.....	Theatrette, Camberwell Library

Promotion of the community workshops included the following activities:

Mail out of letters of invitation and fliers for display and distribution:

Community organisations and groups, welfare and family support, Trader's Associations, churches, schools, clubs and hotels	140
Chinese Community Problem Gambling Action Group	22 (inc. mail-out of 20 discussion papers)
Borderlands members and associates living in Boroondara	69
Discussion papers and invitations to enquire about workshops to participants of initial consultation phase	22
2 nd mail-out (of evening workshop fliers) to Chinese Community Problem Gambling Action Group	22
2 nd mail-out (of evening workshop fliers) to Traders' Associations in Boroondara	20
2 nd mail-out (of evening fliers) to selected community organisations	7
2 nd mail-out (of evening fliers) to family support agencies	6
2 nd mail-out (of evening fliers) to Student Welfare officers at tertiary institutions	2

Other forms of promotion

- Copies of letters and fliers to the City of Boroondara for promotion and distribution purposes;
- Posters and fliers to workshop venues;
- Advertisement in the Boroondara Bulletin;
- Display and distribution of fliers at Borderlands Cooperative; and
- Display of fliers on 3 supermarket notice boards, and posting at 3 community organisations (not included in above mail-out).

Phone contact was also made with numerous workers and organisation representatives in order to engage support and encourage attendance for the community workshops. These included workers in the fields of emergency relief, mental health, intellectual disability, youth services, student counselling, housing, aged support, migrant issues, leisure and recreation. All contacts suggested over various meetings with the City of Boroondara Gambling Response Working Group were engaged during this or earlier phases of the study.

During the period when the workshops were being promoted, various people who were residents and/or affiliates of organisations in Boroondara made contact with Borderlands, expressing a wish to participate in the study as well as a concomitant regret that they were not able to attend any of the workshops as advertised. These people were interviewed over the phone or in person and the valuable information and perspectives arising from this process have been combined as part of this report.

Workshop participants

Given the widespread publicity for the workshops, attendance was somewhat disappointing. Four of them were not attended at all. These were the community workshops held at Kew Library, Hawthorn Library, Craig Family Centre and the first evening session arranged at Borderlands in Camberwell. In all, nine people participated in the remaining workshops held at Evergreen Senior Citizens' Centre, the Theatrette adjoining Camberwell Library and the second session scheduled at Borderlands. However, the researchers were gratified by the richness and diversity of the contributions of those who were able to participate and the depth of their interest and thought around issues relating to gambling and recreation in the community. The workshop participants included five local residents, a resident from outside the City of Boroondara with an interest in gambling issues, a representative of the Federation of Chinese Associations, a worker with the Council for the Ageing and a student counsellor.

Interview participants

Fourteen people were interviewed or joined in discussion on issues related to gambling and recreation in Boroondara as part of this phase of the research project. They included a member of a local social support club, three youth workers, four local residents, one student counsellor, two housing/tenant workers, a local police sergeant, a worker with aged support and a person with a pecuniary interest in the EGM industry.

Additional information

Support Group Participants

A support group for migrant women meeting regularly at a local venue discussed the impact of gambling issues for the total of one of their sessions, after this subject was introduced by the facilitator. The group comprised fourteen women, twelve of these having a first language other than English. The cultural backgrounds of these women included: Korean, Indonesian, Sri Lankan, New Zealand, Chinese, Polish, Hungarian and Bosnian.

Canterbury Conversations

A group of local citizens meeting monthly to discuss issues of general importance in the context of changing economic, political and social issues facing society. A discussion was held, based on the preliminary findings on the 26th of April.

Topics and questions for community workshops and interviews

Workshop facilitators used three main questions to generate and guide discussion:

- Gambling and its effects and impacts and the relationship of these with recreation and leisure; What are the issues?
- What should be done about these issues, if anything?;
- What should Boroondara City Council do, if anything, in response to whatever the issues/ impacts are which have been discussed previously - especially in relation to its recreation/ leisure policies and programs. (What strategies should the City of Boroondara develop?)

A discussion document drawing on the issues raised and findings of previous stages of the research project was also used to generate community discussion.

Concluding comments

Altogether, 508 people participated in the research process: 46 in groups, 25 in interviews and 437 in the survey. In addition, the regular meetings with the Gambling Response Working Group provided a vital background against which the successive sets of preliminary data and their analysis could be discussed and further steps towards collecting information could be planned. The variety of investigative methods used, as well as the participatory nature of the enquiry process, certainly have been the prime guarantors of the quality of the consultancy and its findings.

3. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this section we will provide an extensive summary of the findings of the consultancy. We will, as previously indicated, triangulate the results of the various methods and techniques used and we will, when and if necessary and appropriate, relate some of our findings with evidence from the literature as discussed before.

We use the original interview/ discussion structure employed in interviews and focus groups to organise the data, to then focus on responses about the locus of gambling in the context of leisure and recreation and the role - if any - that Boroondara City Council should play in responding strategically to the impact of gambling on the various levels previously identified.

The final and fourth chapter will then present recommendations as to the response Council could provide to the impact of gambling on the City and its citizens.

3.1 General ideas about gambling and its impact

A Views and perceptions of gambling in general

1. The moral argument: A mixed response

Great equivocation was evidenced in the responses of those consulted during the initial consultations. Many of the interviewees took care to explain that they were not against gambling on moral grounds or that, although they didn't gamble themselves, gambling was a matter of free choice for others. Some ambiguity and ambivalence was, however, evidenced in the responses to following questions from these interviewees, as they proceeded to express cumulative understandings that gambling is having adverse effects on some individuals and in the community. For some of the respondents, the overall sentiment expressed was that, while gambling was not an intrinsically immoral activity, there were grave questions around the ethics and morality of its current manifestations in Victoria generally and for the local community. For others, there was a conflation of the concepts 'moral' and 'moralistic', whereby a philosophical position on gambling based on moral criteria was seen to be 'moralistic' (or an instance of 'wowsersism') and therefore lacking in legitimacy, whilst they went on to express further opinions which were clearly based on value judgements.

The facilitator of a migrant womens' support group was taken aback by how clear and emphatic group members were that gambling is bad for society. In particular, the casino was seen as anti-social and unsavoury: 'Interaction is with money and not people'. Members of one cultural group expressed that 'the interaction with money in a public place is evil'. During the discussion, a strong focus on family values emerged and the casino was presented as antithetical to these as well as to strong and important cultural networks. Generally, the casino

was not seen as beneficial to individuals and somehow in contrast to 'honesty and telling the truth'. Participants of the discussion put forward that they 'wouldn't trust the casino culture'.

Gambling culture was also put forward as part of the Americanisation of our culture and as a corrupting influence. Fears were expressed by the same group that 'culture in Melbourne embraces things that cause crime and give out destructive subliminal messages'. One woman chose Australia for settlement: 'She wanted her family to be safe and start a new life. She saw Australia as being fresh, as an innocent land. She worries that there is a class system here as evidenced by public and private schools - that there is inequality. For her, the casino represents America and crime and she expressed that she would never go there.

According to one community interviewee, the placement of EGMs in low income areas and the targeting by the gambling industry of those who have less money and less options is immoral; and:

'Gambling problems affect relationships, families and the closeness between human beings. Gambling takes people away from each other as people lie to cover their gambling'.

2. The difference between 'hard' and 'soft' gambling

General views on gambling as presented in focus groups were summed up by the observation that there was felt to be 'hard' and 'soft' gambling. Examples of hard gambling were considered to be the casino, poker machines and betting on horses whilst examples of soft gambling were considered to be raffles, bingo and lotteries. There certainly was more tolerance for the 'soft' forms of gambling, especially those upon which many organisations relied for part of their income; the 'hard' forms of gambling were regularly identified as the more hazardous and addictive.

3. The spread of gambling opportunity and involvement in Victoria

Participants of focus groups, in particular, generally held the view that state gambling income was not always spent wisely and, in the longer term, gambling as a source of income might be creating more fiscal and social problems for them than providing solutions to the community (thus presenting a moral argument against gambling policy as it is currently being played out in Victoria). This was partly due to an expectation of declining long term popularity and partly due to the perception of overall negative social impacts of gambling compared to positive social impacts. A view was expressed that Victoria had gone from one extreme to another, i.e. from a 'wowser' state to a gambling addicted state in a very short time.

B Views on how gambling affects individuals, families and certain groups in the community

While it was noted that gambling is a vast new area of recreation that can lead to the opportunity for more social contact, it was also highlighted that problem gambling can be devastating and can lead to financial stress, marriage and relationship breakdown, personal feelings of guilt, the redirection of funds from business and retail as well as to an increase in crime.

1. Impact on individuals

Social impacts on individuals, as raised in initial consultations, were indicated as being destructive and unhealthy. Adverse impacts were said to manifest as: gambling away life savings, having mental breakdowns, pain and suffering to family and friends and violence in some circumstances. It was felt that such negative impacts often lead to denial, secretive behaviour, lies about needing loans for business ventures and a loss of self esteem.

In focus groups, concern was expressed about marketing that targeted lone persons, young people, older people, low income groups (specifically those on pensions and living in boarding houses) and other disadvantaged people.

Interviewees also argued that, in the context of the deterioration of community infrastructure, people are gambling for social support and to deal with problems of self esteem, isolation and depression.

Other points as raised in community workshops were: the psychological reasons and effects of gambling: ('How much is 'known' about those?'); and that people do not appear to be enjoying their gambling activity, for example gamblers at the casino and women gambling on EGMs in local venues.

As a general point, one interviewee put forward that there are more pressures on people in our society than there used to be and a concomitant increase in the availability of gambling options.

2. Impact on families

Migrant women participating in a group discussion expressed being proud of their family and their family support role and that they perceived gambling culture as being threatening to this. 'You are focused on family values and family safety. You do not trust anything you don't understand. There is a question about what the purpose of the casino is. Obviously, as it is private it is for profit, but why is the government involved? For the government to be involved in something anti-family is dangerous'.

A general impact of gambling proposed during initial consultations was the declining levels of trust in the community. For example, family members were thought to suffer as the result

of significant monetary losses or declining levels of family discretionary income, and less time being devoted to family gatherings and joint activities – which, in turn, often leads to family breakdown. It was put forward that, sometimes, members of families steal from other members to feed their gambling habit.

Other concerns about the impact of gambling on families raised in community workshops and interviews were:

- Marriage breakdown, people feeling as if their lives mean nothing, funds leaving the family household, children suffering;
- Women deeply concerned across a wide geographical area of metropolitan Melbourne; and
- Child welfare concerns as young mothers were said to be leaving children in the car at the casino.

Noted in initial consultations was the perception that there are much greater demands on family finances than there used to be.

3. Impact on certain groups

One youth worker reported that: 'We are seeing more young people affected by their own gambling. They are mainly 18 and over and are using poker machines...There is a ritual - when children turn 18 they celebrate and have a drink. They go to the pokies to have a thrill: 'I'm allowed to go and bet now''. In view of previous research, showing high levels of gambling activity amongst people *under* 18, it is uncertain whether this is a true reflection of patterns of gambling activity amongst young people or whether support services for people with gambling issues are not proving to be appealing or accessible.

C Views on the impact of gambling on business, spending patterns, community infrastructure (especially leisure activities) and community as a whole

1. Business

A perception was put forward in one workshop that business is suffering due to the introduction of new forms of gambling in recent years, the furniture business in particular. An interviewee was also of the opinion that:

'Gambling will have an effect on local shops as residents are chucking away money on poker machines. The money has to come from somewhere. Every cent on gambling is a cent redirected from business.'

The 'supply/demand' rationale was discussed in one community workshop as one which always seems to underpin arguments for the further introduction of and increase in gambling opportunities.

When asked about general trends and changes affecting the community many people spoke of economic issues:

- Increase in bankruptcies;
- Global recession;
- The economy has become volatile. Some businesses have felt the change and others have not. This affects the business of leisure as people use it less;
- A lot of unemployment leading people to doing more solitary things; and
- An increase in hidden unemployment.

2. Spending patterns

Some concerns were raised in community workshops around the effect of increased gambling activity in the community on savings. In particular, a question was raised about the effect of gambling on the aged: 'How much of the gambling expenses are coming from their savings or from their subsistence resources?'

A general concern was raised in one community workshop that, as a nation, we are not 'saving' enough. The question was asked: 'How does gambling undermine our appreciation of the need to save both on a personal and a national level?' The level of Australian debt is now as high as it was in the mid 80s. Participants discussed that there are many reports of private bankruptcies because of gambling debts.

When asked about general changes affecting the Australian community one interviewee noted that there is a much higher use of credit cards than there used to be. Another noted that the trend toward short term employment contracts is leading to insecurity and less home buying, although most admitted that 'trends' are hard to decipher because of their complexity.

3. Community infrastructure including leisure opportunities

Perceptions emerged in focus groups and interviews that changes in contemporary lifestyles have had a profound influence on leisure patterns and social and recreation need. As the people in employment are working longer hours and in many families both parents are working, there is less time for leisure activities, particularly those requiring a commitment to a club or to regular practice sessions and matches. People were also said to have less time for family life and for community contact in groups and were more likely to shop throughout the weekend with seven-day-a-week trading hours. It was noted that both tennis and bowling clubs are declining in membership and that this has led to some mergers in the general area. In this context, it was proposed that there is a changed culture in which people are focusing on themselves as individuals rather than the community and that this favours one-session and individual styles of recreation.

According to participants of the focus groups, less attention is being devoted to participation in the group and social competitive sports in favour of greater involvement in night time and indoor sports. It was also proposed that more people are television spectators and less are participating in sporting activities.

Many of those consulted expressed the opinion that people were following individual styles of recreation due to a lack of options rather than out of choice and that people were gambling because they are lonely and have nowhere else to go. It was thought that increasingly recreation and leisure are becoming privatised and that this is leading to the availability of less options as access is reduced by financial constraints. Women, the elderly, people with psychiatric disabilities, unemployed people and migrants were singled out as having a particular need for more social and recreational outlets that are appropriate and accessible.

When asked about important changes to the community and not directly related to gambling many research participants spoke of greater moves to privatisation, acceleration of the user-pays system, wherein the individual is conceptualised as a customer and an increase in the contracting-out of services in the human service area. Also raised were a perceived silencing of the community voice and the lack of hospital support facilities for people with psychiatric disabilities, in particular for those wishing to obtain support *to prevent* (and not *after*) having a breakdown. A higher level of drug use was also nominated as an important change to the community. Interestingly, one interviewee proposed that people have shorter concentration spans and a concomitant increasing wish for immediate gratification - hence leading to an increase in the use of EGMs.

In summary, the responses gained from the various investigations condense to the following points:

- Leisure patterns have become more consumptive (referring to the activity of 'consuming' rather than 'engaging in');
- Leisure patterns have become more commodified (in that people increasingly pay for their leisure);
- Leisure patterns have become more individualised and solitary rather than communal and people are less inclined to make a commitment to a club or sport team;
- There has also been a combination of a lack of alternative leisure choices, particularly in terms of accessibility for those on low income and from different cultural backgrounds, and changes in the pressures of work life and philosophical and ideological approaches to leisure as played out in different sections of the population. This refers to the range of leisure activities being offered as well as to the activities that people are choosing to participate in.

4. Impact on the community as a whole

Specific issues around the impact of gambling on the community as a whole were raised in community workshops:

- The pressures of the State Government on local councils;
- The perception that crisis agencies can't tell anything about how 'they're really going' because they know that they are funded by gambling money and would lose their contracts if they are open; as well, there's the need to be confidential vis a vis of their clients;
- Concern at what is seen as misleading gambling advertising.

Concluding comment

The above data decidedly reflect a wariness amongst research participants about the modalities within which as well as the massive scale upon which gambling has been introduced in Victoria and its partly documented/experienced, partly assumed impact on people and communities. The results certainly are congruent with the essence of reports referred to before in the literature review (ChapterOne). They also serve to illustrate the high level of awareness about developments in society at large amongst our respondents.

3.2: Focus on Boroondara: Gambling and its effects on the local community

A Some factual information on the availability of gambling opportunities in the City of Boroondara

1 Location and number of EGMs in Boroondara and the wet/dry situation

The City of Boroondara is characterised by a division into a 'wet' area, where liquor licenses are issued to hotels, clubs and restaurants and a 'dry' area where liquor licenses cannot be legally issued.

There are 256 EGMs in the City of Boroondara in four hotels and two clubs, all of which are on the west side of Burke Road in the 'wet' area. (The legislative requirement that a hotel or club applying to the VCGA to become a licensed operator demonstrates that they have a liquor license, precludes the establishment of EGMs in the 'dry' area). The ratio of EGMs per 1,000 of the adult population is 2.3. (See Attachment 2 for list of clubs and hotels with EGMs in the City of Boroondara and Attachment 3 for a map of Boroondara showing EGM locations). The ratio of EGMs per 1,000 of adult population when callibrated for the 'wet' area only (Hawthorn and Kew) is 5.4.

2 The population of the City of Boroondara: age, socio-economic status, migrants

Migrant groups:

In 1996, just over 27% of the population of Boroondara were born outside Australia. This compares with 32.7% for the Melbourne metropolitan area (City of Boroondara, 1998).

The five major birthplace countries of residents in Boroondara excluding Australia are U.K., Greece, Italy, Malaysia and New Zealand (representing 10% of all people in Boroondara) (ABS, 1996).

The five major non-English speaking birthplace countries are Greece, Italy, Malaysia, China and Hong Kong (representing 7% of all people in Boroondara).

Greek, Italian, Cantonese, Mandarin and German are the five languages other than English which are most commonly spoken at home.

Age

The City of Boroondara has an older population profile than the MSD with 12% of the enumerated total being 70 or more years compared with 8% for the MSD. Conversely, the City of Boroondara has a smaller proportion of children and teenagers than the MSD – 21.6%

compared with 24.4% (City of Boroondara, 1998). (Please refer to page 48 for a full description of age range and concentration in the City of Boroondara).

Socio-economic status

The City of Boroondara continues to have a substantially higher proportion of households on relatively high gross incomes ((Boroondara Social Profile, 1998). However a focus on aggregate data for the whole municipality masks the fact that there are demonstrably a number of areas of socio-economic disadvantage in the City of Boroondara, as measured by the SEIFA Index (an index of socio-economic disadvantage compiled by the Australian Bureau of statistics). (See Attachment 4)

B Use by respondents of gambling opportunities

Two hundred and thirty two (53%) of 437 survey respondents indicated that they had participated in designated types of gambling in the last year. To obtain some sense of the *kinds* of gambling activity respondents engaged in, we offered the following options as well as a set of frequencies for each specific activity. Frequencies included 'daily', '2-3 times each week', 'weekly to 2 weekly' and 'every 2 to 4 weeks'. Since we only obtained very small numbers in most cases except Lotto e.t.c. we have created the following table showing percentages of those gambling in the various activities between 'daily' and up to 'every 2 to 4 weeks'.

Table: 6: Participation in specific types of gambling between 'daily' and 'every 2 to 4 weeks'

Type of gambling	Percentage who gambled between 'daily' and 'every 2 to 4 weeks'
Raffles (including fund raising) or bingo	5
Informal card games for money not at the casino	0
Oncourse betting (e.g. horse racing, trotting, the dogs)	1
Poker or Electronic Gaming Machines	4
Offcourse betting: TAB, Footy betting, soccer pools, Keno at hotel	4
Any gambling activities at the Casino	3
Lotto, Powerball, Tattsлото, Keno, scratch tickets, instant lotto etc.	27
Internet gambling	0
Other foms of gambling	0

To provide some degree of comparison, according to Walker, in any given year, as much as 80 per cent of the population will have gambled in one way or another (1998:38).

A study of small rural communities found that, overall, 37% of respondents had participated in EGM gambling not at the casino in the past 12 months (VCGA, 1998 c:188). Sixty-eight per cent of a survey population in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Baw Baw, La Trobe reported that they had 'ever used an EGM' (VCGA, 1997 d:54). In a study of inner city municipalities, about 62% of respondents indicated that they had ever used EGMs and 13% had used them in the last two weeks (VCGA 1997 b:2).

Some caution should be exercised in interpreting self-report data on gambling patterns, as 'it has been well established that individuals under-report their gambling expenditure by approximately 100 per cent' (VCGA b, 1997:46). However, research conducted by Dr Doughney of the Workplace Studies Centre, Victoria University of Technology, for a consortium of local government organisations, in which Australian Bureau of Statistics 'Household Expenditure Survey' (HES) data is compared to the actual EGM expenditure as compiled in 'Australian Gambling Statistics' 1972-73 to 1997-98, shows evidence of an average under-reporting of gambling expenditure of about 900 per cent. As a result of his work in this area, Dr Doughney has concluded that under-reporting is an endemic problem in any survey method to find out the extent of people's gambling behaviour. The same issue was raised in a submission by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to the Productivity Commission in 1998 in which it was stated that there is a significant degree of under-reporting of gambling activity in HES and that 'the problems with accurate reporting of gambling expenses in HES are an international problem, not just restricted to Australia'.

The table below shows the proportion of those who reported gambling in the last year, who participated in specific types of gambling activity between 'daily' and 'every 2 to 4 weeks'.

Table: 7: Participation in specific types of gambling by those having gambled during the last year – between 'daily' and 'every 2 to 4 weeks'

Type of Gambling	Percentage who gambled between 'daily' and 'every 2 to 4 weeks'
Raffles (including fund raising) or bingo	8.5
Oncourse betting (e.g. horse racing, trotting, the dogs)	3.5
Poker or Electronic Gaming Machines	5.6
Offcourse betting: TAB, Footy betting, soccer pools, Keno at hotel	7.3
Any gambling activities at the Casino	5.2
Lotto, Powerball, Tattsлото, Keno, scratch tickets, instant lotto	38.6

Impact of gambling on respondents' leisure and recreation activities

The closed responses in the survey as to what general recreation and leisure activities gambling had replaced, indicated that activities most likely, if at all, to be replaced were 'reading', chosen by 4 per cent of respondents, 'sport and outdoor activity', 'games/hobbies/arts/crafts', 'audio/visual media, e.g. watching television', and 'talking (including over the phone)' all of which were chosen by 3 per cent of respondents who

engaged in gambling. These figures tend to suggest a relatively even spread of gambling impacts on the leisure and recreation options available to people.

Impact of gambling on respondents' social and community activities

The closed responses in the survey on what social and community activities were most likely to be replaced by gambling, if any, were 'visiting entertainment/cultural venues', attendance at sports events', 'religious activities', 'family activities/events' and 'other' social and community activities, all of which were chosen by 2 per cent of respondents. These figures tend to suggest that respondents perceived that there was a minimal impact of gambling on their social and community activities.

Interestingly, there was an almost even three-way split in the proportions of respondents who answered yes (39%) or no (29%) or who left the question blank (32%) in terms of being able to estimate the financial cost of gambling. Further to this, almost three quarters (73%) of respondents indicated that gambling had not replaced other types of spending. Of those who said it had replaced other types of spending, the largest proportion (5%) indicated that 'savings' had been replaced, with 2% indicating three different options which were 'domestic costs', 'purchasing goods' and 'other recreation and leisure activities'.

Numbers of respondents reporting that they gambled on EGMs at the casino or on other varieties of 'hard' gambling regularly (between 'daily' and 'every 2 to 4 weeks') were too small to allow for meaningful cross tabulations with survey responses relating to the displacement of spending money and time for recreation or socialising.

Gambling activity in the 'wet' and 'dry' areas

In total, 51.6 per cent of survey respondents living in the 'wet' area and 54.2 per cent of people living in the dry area reported that they had gambled in the last year.

It was somewhat surprising that the number of respondents gambling regularly on EGMs in the dry area (approximately 5 per cent) was greater than that of those gambling on EGMs in the wet area (approximately 3 per cent) though the numbers were too small to draw any robust conclusions. This was consistent with information given to the researchers throughout the course of the study that many residents (public housing tenants in particular) are travelling outside Boroondara to gamble on EGMs – in particular to one venue with 105 EGMs which is situated on a road (Warrigal) marking the municipality's eastern border.

C Views on the effects of gambling in Boroondara

1. The hidden nature of gambling

What is commonly referred to as the 'hidden' nature of gambling problems can be seen as arising from one or more of several factors, all of which are arguably relevant to the present study and the findings that have emerged:

- 'Problem gambling' has not been identified as a concept in the minds of those whose gambling may be leading to difficulties, and of those around these people and in the general community;
- 'Problem gambling' exists as a concept in the minds of those whose gambling is leading to difficulties, however they do not identify it as an issue for themselves in particular (i.e. when they get their 'big win' everything will be sorted out); and
- 'Problem gambling' is identified as an issue by the gambler, but due to the associated shame and stigma (and maybe the need to obtain some service without 'prejudice') they are not open in discussing or identifying this. The type of silence that ensues can spread to the family and whole communities.

Several of the interviewees discussed the 'hidden' nature of gambling problems either due to the stigma attached or because of the absence of visible signs, as in the case of conditions such as drug addiction. Some service providers or managers in community agencies expressed a feeling that a rise in demand on services *might* be related to gambling issues, however they had no way of substantiating this, especially as such information is not routinely gathered through data collection processes. Material aid and financial counselling were types of services thought to be accessed by people with gambling related issues. A couple of interviewees also reported hearing about business downturn brought on by the spreading of gambling problems.

Workers in the areas of student welfare, youth and housing, discussed the difficulty of identifying gambling problems when they are not explicitly raised by service users. For example, sometimes university financial counsellors consider that gambling may be an issue when there are unexplained gaps in a student's budget. There have also been cases where overseas students have been forced to return home due to financial difficulties, however, it was uncertain whether or not these incidences occurred due to gambling activity. It has been noticed that many overseas students living in student residences go out to gamble, but again, those who have observed this have been unable to ascertain whether this is purely recreational or whether it is problematic.

According to one youth worker, young people do not always tell why they have run out of funds and are more likely to spin a story around what they think is acceptable to a worker - especially when requesting financial support. It appears that gambling problems are not something that young people readily talk about, as occurring in their own case or in their family. Related to this, families can vary in their style of approach to problem gambling issues: it may be a forbidden topic, it may be discussed openly or it may be a 'non-topic', of too little consequence to discuss.

To the closed question in the survey: 'Do you personally know of anybody with a gambling problem?' one fifth (21%) indicated they did know someone with a gambling problem. This

compares with a study on the impact of EGMs on inner city municipalities (with a higher ratio of EGMs per head of population than in Boroondara) in which 40% of respondents to a telephone survey knew someone they would describe as a problem gambler and 70% had heard accounts of the impact of problem gambling. In the same study, over half the members of discussion groups knew someone with a gambling problem (VCGA b, 1997).

Given the, by now, well documented issue of the hidden nature of problem gambling in this and previous studies, one could conclude that this figure would be higher if the issue was more transparent and openly discussed.

Community consultations included three brief interviews with members of the Boroondara community who reported not seeing evidence of any impact of gambling in the City of Boroondara. One of these was a worker in a support service for the aged where the users of this service were not mobile for the purpose of travelling freely outside their homes. Another was a Senior Sergeant Police Officer who considered that gambling would be having an adverse impact on some people, however this was likely to be more the case in the western suburbs where many more people have 'got nothing' and would 'try to get out of the quagmire' through gambling as part of a 'get rich quick syndrome'. One local resident rang the research office after reading an advertisement in the Boroondara Bulletin to register his view that he had 'no issue with gambling' and to express concern that only the views of those with an unfavourable comments about the impact of gambling would be collected as part of the research process. (His fears were allayed when the research design, including the household survey, was outlined).

2. The perceived problems and benefits of gambling

The closed survey question: 'Are you aware of any problems or benefits in the community' yielded a majority of affirmative responses (57%), whilst only 28% indicated that they were not. The following open question: 'What problems and benefits from gambling in the community are you aware of?' sought to gauge respondents' overall reaction to the positive and negative impacts of gambling. A summary of the numerous responses follows which will, in turn, be followed by the more detailed responses from interviews and group discussions.

Gambling problems were identified by respondents ranging from practical concerns to more metaphysical ideas. These problems included: causing economic and financial, social, physical and emotional problems for families and communities, through to undermining the ethical and moral standards in communities and society. For example, one respondent wrote it '... Leads to many crimes, theft, family breakdown, cheating, (and) lying ...', whilst others suggested that the crime rate increases, marriages breakdown, lives are ruined and people are spending all their wages without regard for the problems.

Five themes emerged from the written comments on problems; these were: **personalised problems** (usually expressed from the viewpoint of someone who knew a gambler), **family oriented problems**, **social problems**, **welfare oriented problems**, and a small minority who expressed issues with the **lack of accessibility** to gaming machines and pokies either in the negative or in the positive.

Taking these in order, a personalised problem was written about as '... The problem I know of is destruction of personal life (previous partner a gambling addict) ...' and in another case

'... My father was a gambler; I can see the effect it can have on a marriage and family life. I don't think there are any benefits ...'. Beyond these personal observations most personalised comments suggested gambling can become addictive, compulsive, habitual and anti-social and can lead to self destruction, greed and suicide because '... Some people don't know when to stop ...'. Extending on these comments one respondent wrote '... Some people become pre-occupied with it to the extent that other life interests and provision of essentials are ignored ...' and '... Gambling can create a habit of spending beyond personal means and offers unrealistic expectations of gain ...'.

Family oriented problems included: neglect, indebtedness, marriage breakdown, and children left alone while parents gamble. One respondent described what he or she called "The family cycle" as '... - gambling - drinking - family arguments over lack of money - back to gambling - degrades society ...'. Others felt it was contributing to a '... Breakdown of family structure ...' and yet another '... Economic distress - both individual and group ...'.

Written commentary on social problems occasionally had an economic dimension such as '... loss to businesses as people spend more money on gambling and can no longer afford to purchase goods they may have bought ...' but were more likely to be consistent with this statement '... Deprivation and destruction to individuals and whole families. The effects on the community and society can be felt for generations. Gambling has no place in building a healthy well adjusted community ...' and '... The community in general (is) spending more than they should or can afford and the "addict" is encouraged to use illegal/immoral ways to obtain money for gambling ...'.

Welfare oriented problems were felt to arise from gambling as growing phenomena in terms of '... Some cases placing an unwarranted strain on charitable organisations ...' but more importantly gambling '... Exploits the poor / uneducated ...', '... Badly affects people who can least afford it ...' and leads to an '... Increase in poverty, bankruptcy, (and) crime ...' thereby creating greater needs for welfare. Gambling was felt to cause increased poverty in that '... People spend their living expenses on gambling ...' and '... Social welfare recipients spend their income on gambling and then don't have money for food etc. ...'. This comment seemed to sum up the whole welfare oriented viewpoint; gambling '... Impoverishes those and their families least able to afford it; increases crime; leads to losses to other small business and to local amenity ...'.

Some respondents thought the marketing of gambling was clearly designed to '... Attract people who can least afford it. (And) Adds another costly, social problem in the community. (And) Lowers the general moral and ethical standards of the community ...' whilst others concluded '... People (were) gambling money that should be used for food and clothing and children ...' and '... People who cannot control their gambling lose money they cannot afford ...' leading to demands like '... stop all these suburban pokies, they're nothing but trouble ...'.

The problem of over-accessibility was expressed by a small number of respondents who wrote '... It's becoming difficult to find a venue without some form of gambling activity ...' whilst one respondent wrote about under-accessibility '... There are never enough pokies to go round ...'.

The overwhelming benefit was felt to be financial with some employment, leisure and recreational benefits. Those who benefit financially, apart from gambling service providers and operators, were felt to be government, sporting and service clubs (such as the Hawthorn Football Club and the RSL), who use the income to cross-subsidise other services such as

social functions, catering and facility improvements and, to some extent, welfare services. In general, when respondents wrote about benefits, they would write something like '... It brings happiness and entertainment to the community and helps government funding ...'

The recreation and leisure benefits tended to concentrate on the negative benefit vis a vis '... the person I know that gambles is elderly and therefore has a weekly interest ...' whilst others suggested that it '... Helps the lonely ...' or '... provides entertainment and relaxation from stress ...'. Welfare aspects of recreation benefits had respondents suggesting a small minority '... could be set for life ...' or would gain a '... personal sense of hope ...'. Paradoxically, one respondent noted against this question '... Some people have made a lot of money ...' which seemed more likely to be referring to the operators and providers of gambling services rather than people in need.

Clearly gambling was seen to provide '... benefits to outlets providing gambling, that is increased patronage and spending ...' but it was also seen to provide benefits such as '... funds, taxes for community expenditure; (and a) focal point for more attractive activities, for example restaurants, cinemas ...'. Whilst it was recognised that '... Crown attracts some tourist dollars ...', the recreation dimension seemed more important to most in that it '... gives you something different to do ...'. The question of benefits seemed to generate ideas on the ethical aspects of gambling and had respondents suggesting '... Tax this sector of society for social consequences ...' and ensure '... Revenue (is) used for community projects ...' or to make a '... financial contribution to (social) causes ...'.

3. Impact of gambling on migrants and overseas students

Migrants were described as being particularly susceptible to problems with gambling, though this was not confined to any particular migrant group or related to their length of stay in Australia. Settlement difficulties which were said to exacerbate and lead to the acceleration of problem gambling included feeling a loss of dignity as compared to the status migrants may have felt in their country of origin; a lack of feeling of involvement in the Australian community, a feeling of responsibility and guilt for their lack of success and, in the absence of social contacts, the absence of a general sense of belonging. It was reported that some overseas students have gambled all of their funds and have had to return home without completing their studies. In particular, an unacceptable level of gambling related problems was identified in the Chinese community of Boroondara and surrounding areas.

Problem gambling was said to affect migrants in a variety of ways, including damage to health in the form of higher blood pressure and an exacerbation of smoking and drinking. Emotional health was also said to be adversely affected as gamblers became more depressed and 'hooked onto the problem physically, socially and emotionally'. Typically, relationships were thought to be affected as the trust between partners is damaged.

It was put forward in interviews and workshops that Chinese people and people with Languages Other Than English (LOTE) experience language and cultural barriers which affect their feeling of connection with the general community. It was proposed that the situation is worse for older people who are more isolated and less integrated. Gambling was said to be used as an escape from problems for more introverted migrants, often leading to the beginning of gambling difficulties.

Loneliness and social isolation and an associated lack of confidence in meeting people by migrant students was raised as an issue leading many to turn to gambling to fill the void: 'Loneliness can take a student away from their study - and it could be that those with the most serious problems are not accessing counselling'.

According to one counsellor: 'lots of undergraduate students are having problems with gambling'. Many international students have problems with gambling, mainly 18, 19 and 20 year olds. They are lonely and gamble with other students and often they have no parents here and are very young. When they get hooked there are problems with school fees and rent. One student in particular was forced to sell his/her flat to repay gambling debts'.

Other points and perceptions raised were that:

- EGMs are a bigger problem than the casino for many migrants;
- More men are seeking help because of pressure by their partners than in the past;
- There needs to be more support for the family and friends of gamblers; and, perhaps surprisingly:
- Sometimes machines are adopted as a partner, a mistress or a child.

4. Young people and gambling

One worker who gives support to young people between the ages of 12 and 25 had found that the ones with problems were 18 and over, coinciding with the legal age at which young people can enter licensed hotels. Apparently the ones with gambling problems have presented themselves for material aid or food vouchers. In most material aid programs workers do not need to interrogate people to obtain information to guide the delivery of services, thus they may not be able to locate gambling as a problem even when it is leading to financial difficulties. However, in this particular service, material aid was only issued to young people already participating in the program and questions were able to be asked as part of a more holistic support orientation. Workers were therefore in a position to ask more probing questions and more likely to identify a gambling problem when this was present. This raises points of interest around the identification of gambling problems by service providers and organisations in the context of different service delivery regimes.

It was conjectured that computer games are a 'practical notion' that young people have grown up with. Concern was expressed that there may be a natural progression from activities in a pinball parlour to activities in a venue with EGMs, as the activities are very similar in nature.

Another youth worker offered that young people are at risk of developing addictive behaviours. They often present with a range of issues affecting many others around them. Youth gambling problems were said to present to the service in two ways: by a young person affected by their parents' gambling and by a parent affected by their child's gambling.

It was noted that Breakeven Eastern have two relatively new specialist youth workers, who are currently carrying out research into young people and gambling in the eastern suburbs. This was applauded as adult services are not always suitable for young people. In particular, services for young people are characterised by an outreach approach whereby workers travel to where the young people are and engage them on their own territory.

5. People on low incomes and those living in special accommodation and rooming houses

A worker associated with rooming houses expressed not being directly aware of tenants who habitually gamble, except in one case where it was a well managed recreation pastime. However, uncertainty around identification of gambling as a problem was raised in a housing context. Often tenants were said to leave their accommodation in rental arrears and, in a noticeable proportion of cases, these same tenants were receiving regular mail from Crown Casino, causing the worker to contemplate on a possible relationship between these two events.

The effect of gambling on (and attraction of gambling for) low income people was raised as an issue in workshops and interviews. According to one worker, there are a lot of problems related to gambling amongst public tenants (who are often on a low income, due to the nature of the eligibility criteria for public housing). One local resident was of the opinion that:

‘The council has a huge responsibility...It is outrageous that EGMs are placed in lower income areas. It is just not on. This is within the council’s parameters and council should be regulating this. They should be regulating the number of EGMs in Boroondara. I find it shocking that EGMs are placed in lower economic areas. It is up to the council to protect its citizens and especially to see that people don’t get exploited for example when lower economic areas being infested by EGMs.’

6. Impact on welfare services

In focus groups there was a view expressed that local welfare services were bearing the brunt of negative impacts. As much local gambling seemed to be occurring beyond the boundaries of Boroondara and there was a very low local social acceptability of gambling, a situation was said to exist in which recognition and acceptance that gambling was having an impact on Boroondara’s community was hampered. It was felt that many local people were travelling to gambling venues, were addicted to gambling and/or were excessive gamblers, however much of the gambling problem was also said to occur as a daytime activity and therefore less visible to many people.

To some extent this view was confirmed by people involved in welfare - emergency relief services, in that they felt that a rising demand for food cooperative credits might be the result of people losing money on gambling. Related evidence cited by participants who were involved in welfare and support services was the rising number of people without money two to three days after receiving pension cheques.

7. Alcohol and gambling: an important personal as well as community nexus

The nexus between alcohol and gambling was raised in several workshops and interviews:

- in terms of the implications of a lifting of licensing restrictions on the ‘dry’ area of Boroondara and the perceived implications this could have for the spreading of EGM venues throughout Boroondara; and

- in terms of the effect alcohol consumption can have on the impairment of judgement when people are gambling.

Concern was also expressed about the possibility of the 'dry' area becoming a 'wet' area in terms of the effect this would have on the amenity of the area. One workshop participant expressed concern that licensed restaurants might be allowed to have EGMs if restrictions are lifted in the dry area. Another expressed the following opinion:

'I am interested in the connection between gambling and alcohol. People get sloshed and their judgement could fail while gambling. Once you are drunk you lose your judgement so that you don't even know that you are drunk. There shouldn't be gambling where there is alcohol. There shouldn't be alcohol where there is gambling...When people gamble when they are off their faces they gamble their lives, their wives, their children and their family homes away. It can wreck families, home lives or put people in jail - from the combination of alcohol and poker machines. I nearly got hooked myself after a \$25 voucher. I was manipulated by the machine e.g. I won a few and lost a few and the lights of the machine encourage you to gamble. Pubs with EGMs are not a wholesome combination and do not make for a wholesome area.'

The following was also offered on the issue of whether or not to maintain a dry area in the City of Boroondara:

'We should keep the dry area. At closing time in wet areas of Boroondara there is a lot of abusive behaviour as youths loiter and have nowhere to go. There should be some part of Melbourne where there is no alcohol, that is congenial to families. We should not be licensing restaurants as this would just be a name for a tavern which is a name for a hotel. Alcohol leads to anti-social behaviour. Camberwell is quite a clean suburb, but it is becoming a dirtier suburb with parking problems due to hotels. Drinking in Burke Rd has led to unwholesome behaviour. At 2 am on Friday and Saturday nights there are fights and vandalism and abusive behaviour by some of the youths loitering...I have lived in 16 areas in Melbourne and the dry parts of Boroondara are a paradise, being quiet and suitable for families. Box Hill is a nice area - it will only remain so if it remains a dry area. It is a peaceful place to live for families.'

8. Provision of leisure facilities and the impact of gambling on leisure activities

It was put forward by one local resident that the Kew area is discriminated against in terms of the distribution of leisure and recreation facilities across the City of Boroondara:

'There is a shortage of facilities in Kew. Here in Kew, East Kew there are no facilities or activities. There are leisure activities in Ashburton, Balwyn, Camberwell and Hawthorn. The last two suburbs have a town hall. I have no car and since we lost the town hall in Kew we have missed out as there is no equivalent facility here. You can have seminars in Hawthorn and Camberwell, however Nth Balwyn, Kew and East Kew have missed out in the merger...Kew Neighbourhood House has a group that meets re panic disorders. It is outgrowing the house. It would be good if we had a hall that could get divided and that we could rent out for weddings and concerts for senior citizens.'

The issue of access in terms of cost and hours of operation was also raised by a community workshop participant:

'There are many activities in Boroondara, but they have limited hours and access. In contrast, gambling venues are everywhere and have long operating hours. Neighbourhood houses are good when they are open, but often money is asked for up front. They are also often under-staffed and have limited hours of operation. The Casino offers many inducements such as good lunches and the opportunity to work up points and get free meals.'

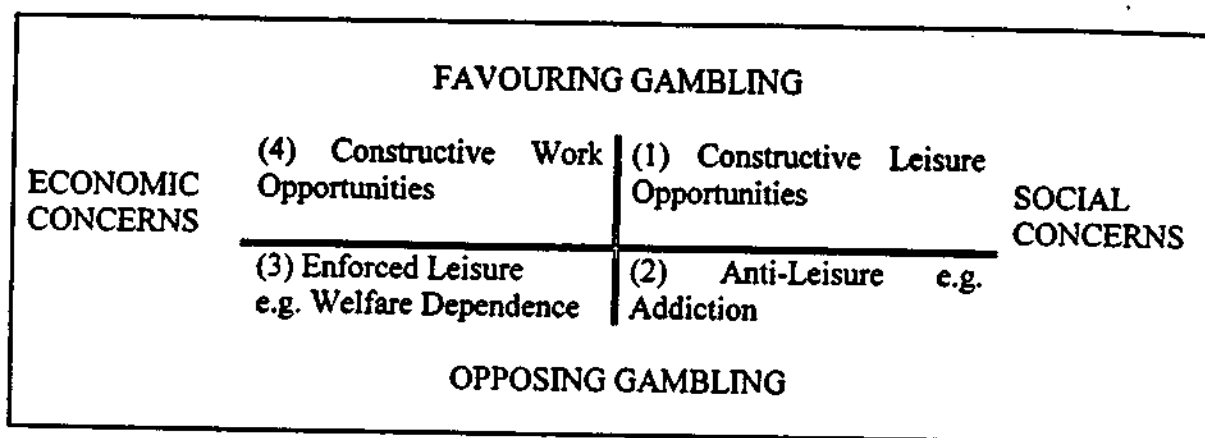
One local resident was concerned that the amenity of a local hotel had been adversely affected by the introduction of EGMs into its premises:

'...The amenity of this hotel has been adversely affected by the introduction of EGMs. The public bar has been pushed into a small area which is very smoky. In contrast the area with EGMs is spacious and has cleaner air. The hotel is noisy and smoky - clouded and crowded health wise. There used to be a nice public bar. This area has been cut to less than half. It is incredibly hazardous, especially as I am asthmatic. It is amazing what has been done for them on the other side in terms of space, free coffee etc. I am fed up with the machines. What used to be a pleasant area is not a place you can enjoy anymore.'

In addition to the above, leisure and recreation was discussed extensively in all workshops and interviews in the context of 'strategies' to address gambling and social support issues in the City of Boroondara. An account of suggestions put forward in this context is given in the last chapter of this Report.

The final question of the survey inviting general comment elicited a wide range of extended views. These views are broadly categorised in four quadrants of a '**Leisure Analysis of Gambling Impacts Model**' created by two defined axes (see diagram below). An "X" axis would have 'favour' and 'oppose' gambling at either end whilst a "Y" axis would have 'economic concerns' and 'social concerns' at either end. Starting from quadrant [1] (in the top right hand corner), a set of comments related to gambling as creating 'constructive leisure opportunities'. In quadrant [2] a set of comments related to gambling as based on 'anti-leisure'. In quadrant [3] a set of comments related to gambling as 'enforced leisure'. In quadrant [4] a set of comments related to gambling as creating 'constructive work opportunities'. Respondents who were completely ambivalent could be located at the point on which these two axes intersect. Typical of ambivalent respondents was a comment '... I have seen no adverse impact of gambling on Boroondara ...'

Diagram 1: Leisure Analysis of Gambling Impacts Model



By far the greatest number of final comments opposed gambling rather than favoured it. The comments chosen to illustrate answers to this final section try to avoid similar commentary to that already highlighted by focussing on respondents' general views, conclusions, solutions and proposals.

Respondents who believed in **constructive leisure opportunities** might favour gambling whilst being concerned about social impacts. One wrote '... Boroondara would benefit more from a relaxation of alcohol restrictions to encourage far more active "cafe" lifestyle and atmosphere to encourage young adults to seek social entertainment closer to home ...'. Welfare aspects of this viewpoint were illustrated by the comment '... More educational activities for people to gear their interest to other things apart from gambling ...'. Another comment was '... I am not interested in gambling at all but worry about the pubs which used to provide a venue for music groups to perform and young people to listen, have now been taken over by pokies; this is not good for the community at all. What used to be a very congenial hotel on the corner of Riversdale and Auburn Roads was turned into a pokies hall by the TAB. To me, this represents a loss to the local community ...'.

On the "freedom of choice leisure perspective", one respondent wrote '... I believe in people's right to choose but I think that not enough education about the pitfalls of undue gambling has been developed. More research needs to be developed in why people are gambling. When should education begin on how to advise people about gambling? Gambling can become an enormous social problem. State government does very little in this area as everywhere else - money always seems to come before anything else in Victoria - they make a token effort. (I am) Pleased to see Council actively seeking feedback from the community ...'. In conclusion to this perspective one respondent wrote '... At least legalised gambling brings problems / benefits out of obscurity so that it can potentially be controlled ...'.

But there were also optimists; one wrote '... Provided that people are well informed with problems that can occur and how to identify them then all that can be done is to provide a safety net ...'.

Respondents who believed *gambling was anti-leisure* opposed gambling and were also concerned about social impacts. One respondent who represented this perspective wrote '... educating people into wanting more out of life is the way ...' then completed the comment '... Note though, gambling addiction like any addiction is just a poor substitute for real living ...'. Another respondent accepted the inevitability of people accessing gambling opportunities and wrote '... I think people who go to gambling venues should have to register and when they have been there for, say 4 hours, they should be asked to leave. There needs to be more public

awareness of gambling addiction so family members or friends can identify clues that someone has a gambling problem. Also need to make people aware of assistance and support services available for those with a gambling addiction ...'

This perspective was also pessimistic about gambling impacts as in '... What more can I say; the Casino is situated where anyone can go and nearly every suburb has one or more pokies, (it) is made very easy for them to ruin their lives as well as their loved ones and especially the children who have to witness arguing, violence and parents divorcing ...' and another wrote '... Don't push it as a recreation. Smoking was meant to be recreational too!!! Now look ...'.

Respondents who believed gambling was *enforced leisure* opposed gambling and were also concerned about economic impacts. One respondent opined '... pokies seem to be a means of redistributing wealth from the gullible poor to the rich ...', whilst another wrote '... gambling affects family life, employment, crime rate, every aspect of family, social and community life. It destroys many lives; money is not put to proper use ...' so, as another put it, '... I would like to see a service where a gambler receives counselling one to one - confidential time spent with a qualified person who is also interested in results ...'.

Whilst this latter point tended to suggest public intervention, there was also a respondent who represented private counselling along similar lines '... As a registered psychologist I have many clients who come to me for help with gambling addictions or in relation to family members who have gambling problems. It seems ludicrous to me that money is spent to set up gambling opportunities and then more money is spent on dealing with the consequences of gambling, e.g. family breakdown, domestic violence, increased crime/burglaries (to get cash), neglected children, unemployment, social and personal disintegration ...'.

The overall "enforced leisure" view seemed to be represented by this comment '... Gambling is very accessible in our society and vulnerable people can be lured by the glitz and possibility of winning. As a society, more emphasis on family values and less on material gain will benefit the community in the long run ...' leading to a conclusion that '... if Council initiates any additional gambling venues these should go only to community organisations, i.e. Rotary, sporting groups, RSL etc. ...'.

Respondents who believed in *constructive work opportunities* might favour gambling whilst being concerned about economic impacts. These respondents were less inclined towards supporting intervention; one wrote '... There are clubs in Boroondara already - if there are to be more - that's fine by me. Gives work for many people; can be enjoyable for the majority ...'. This perspective was more likely to support the "free market" approach and devalue Council's capacity to deal with social issues, such as the impact of gambling on the community; another wrote '... I'm not sure of any current impact of gambling on Boroondara. I'm confused how the Council feels it has any right, duty or business in issues as complex as gambling - surely it is a State / federal matter. Get back to your job of local services to a community and let others deal with issues that are beyond (the) local Council's mandate ...' It has to be pointed out, though, that such comments were in an absolute minority.

Conclusion

Again, it can be concluded that there is a great deal of concern amongst citizens and 'experts' in the City of Boroondara about gambling and its various effects on the community as a whole and on various groups and issues of relevance to the functioning of the community. This does *not* mean that gambling was unequivocally seen as negative (especially given the fact that 53% did participate in various forms of it, though many not in the 'hard' variety) and some respondents did indicate that there were certain benefits attached to the introduction and proliferation of gambling opportunities. However indications of widespread concern did emerge. As a rather poignant example, a case account of a family which became a victim of excessive gambling by one of its members may serve to illustrate and integrate various elements discussed above. This account is a summary of a two hour telephone conversation with one of the researchers in the consultancy:

One woman with dependent children was forced to leave her husband who had a gambling problem – and subsequently move several times. She reported that the impact of the relationship breakdown was devastating and her partner lied and cheated and ultimately became violent. 'The betrayal was so deep'. By her account, her partner had a complete loss of integrity and a loss of self and a sense of what constitutes responsibility. After leaving her husband and in her subsequent moves necessitated by his violent behaviour, she lost her job and career, her local community, her faith community and all of her support networks. At the time of the interview she was on anti-depressants and suffering from grief at various levels brought on by the loss of all that she had left behind. In addition, her children had suffered from emotional instability and had become suicidal at different points in time. She reported that support services had proved to be grossly inadequate and 'only interested in cleaning up the mess' (rather than providing support in a proactive, preventive sense). Other service issues were that 'there is nothing for middle class people', that all services are means tested even though the partner is a gambler and the ostensible income is illusory and that the system (including the legal system) focuses on advocacy for the problem gambler and not the family members who have become victims of the gambler's behaviour. This respondent spoke of the prime importance of the relationship in effective service delivery – the affirmation of one human being genuinely wishing to help and support another. This was expressed with heart-felt conviction in the context of her experience with a problem gambling partner as 'socially isolating' and 'disempowering': 'Society is not a kind and gentle place. It is a jungle. The community is absolutely split to pieces'.

This rather depressing case can be contextualised by some final comments provided by some of our informants illustrating the changing community and societal context in which the introduction of increased gambling opportunities and their effects on citizens' needs to be comprehended.

- There has been a great deal of company downsizing over the past 20 years – but in the last five or six years this has had more of an effect on the neighbourhood;
- There are more people on government benefits in recent years;
- A larger number of residents are on anti-depressants;
- There is much more forced early retirement;
- In general, people are requiring more financial and medical assistance.

Given such context, the higher availability of gambling opportunities may just constitute the last factor disturbing the precarious balance in which individuals, families and communities find themselves tip into the negative and destructive.

3.3: Convergence of issues and findings arising from previous research and from the current study

Research on the social impact of gambling

The researchers were impressed by the many areas in which there was a convergence of issues and findings between previous research on the impact of gambling on local areas and the current study.

There was overwhelming evidence that people born outside Australia or of non-English speaking backgrounds were susceptible to adverse social impacts of gambling. Furthermore, findings pertinent to service uptake by migrants mirrored closely those of previous research – pointing to cultural barriers and mistrust of (government) services by many migrants. Also congruent with past research were widely expressed concerns around other ‘vulnerable’ groups which emerged in the current study. These included families – particularly children and partners of problem gamblers, people on low incomes, people with disabilities and young people. Information also emerged indicating that middle class people and families can also be adversely affected by gambling related issues and have genuine support needs to be addressed in service delivery frameworks.

The theme of problem gambling as a ‘hidden’ or ‘silent’ issue, largely due to an associated stigma, is constant throughout all local research on the social impact of gambling including this study. This presents various challenges for information and data collection – particularly at an agency level – for needs analyses of identified vulnerable populations, for program design and delivery and for future research on the social impact of gambling. To reiterate the conclusion of a previous study, the ‘hidden’ nature of problem gambling on an individual level will inevitably mean that many of the *social* costs are either hidden or less apparent generally (VCGA, 1997 c).

Widespread concerns about social isolation and community fragmentation are pervasive themes across all recent local research on gambling impact, generally perceived as being a cause (though eventually an effect as well) of increased gambling activity. Related concerns centre almost exclusively on the recently introduced forms of gambling – EGM and casino gambling, participation in which has risen exponentially over the last five to seven years.

Although it was not universally the case in this study, widespread negative perceptions of the introduction into Victoria and the community of new forms of gambling and their individual and social impact were evidenced. This has been the finding of other local gambling impact research and seems to reflect fairly constant and robust community attitudes, especially given the high level of gambling promotion which markets new forms of gambling within a total entertainment framework.

Previous research on the impact of gaming venues on inner city municipalities indicating that members of interest groups (other than the gambling industry) and the community hold the view that problem gambling is a community rather than a private matter, was overwhelmingly supported by the responses of participants in this study.

Research on leisure and recreation trends

Similarly, there were no surprises emerging from the present study in relation to past research on trends in recreation and leisure. Consistent themes are that leisure patterns have become more consumptive (rather than participatory) and commodified, more individualised and solitary and that there is a decreasing tendency by people in the community to commit regular time to clubs and community organisations. The impact of the penetration of gambling as a leisure activity in this area, thus merits concerted attention, especially on a local level.

Community cohesion

Overall, an overwhelming picture of social isolation and community fragmentation emerges from the current study and the growing body of local research on the social impact of gambling. The atomising effects of many aspects of modern living has been well documented (Mackay, 1993) and was evidenced in the review of leisure and recreation trends and in the information that emerged throughout this project. There is evidently a pressing need for the building and facilitating of stable community relationships and networks and the engendering in the community of a (renewed) sense of belonging and connectedness.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

We have divided this last chapter into an organised set of recommendations as they have been suggested to us by various research participants and another list of recommendations which are the final result of the entire process of consultation for this report.

4.1 Recommendations proposed by research participants

Introduction

Opinions expressed in public about the nature of gambling seem clearly divided between those who consider it a *private* matter in which governments would have no role to play (except in the broadest regulatory and enabling sense) and those who see it as a matter of concern for the entire community and thus eminently to be dealt with by governments. We put this question, therefore, to the respondents of our various investigative approaches asking them to expand on what they thought the City of Boroondara should “do” as a response to the expansion of gambling opportunities and the reported problems arising from this.

Whilst there was some confusion amongst research participants as to what the Council’s usual role and responsibility is – and more importantly still, to what is within its current power and jurisdiction – respondents did offer a vast array of broad as well as minute suggestions which we have attempted to organise under the categories of: Prevention and Support; Leisure Infrastructure Improvement; Regulation and Policing; and Monitoring, Research and Planning.

Finally and importantly, it was put forward by many of the research participants that the Council should be commended for responding to the issues related to gambling and recreation/leisure and it was encouraged to persevere by all means at its disposal.

The following views and feedback of research participants were put forward in discussing strategies to be put in place regarding gambling in Boroondara.

A Gambling as a private or public matter and the general consequence for council intervention.

Asked whether ‘gambling is a private matter only’ 53% of our survey participants responded negatively and whilst 17% left the question blank, only 31% considered it to be solely a private matter. When correlated with those respondents who *did* gamble, a greater proportion (36%) did believe it to be a ‘private matter only’ as compared to those who didn’t gamble (26%).

In the following question, 61% of our survey sample respondents did believe that the Council had a role to play with, again, those gambling being less in favour (53.4%) as compared to non-gamblers with 65.2%, affirming the necessity for Council to play a role.

As those providing a positive answer to the question about the desirability of Council intervention greatly expanded upon this suggested role, we devoted the next few pages to an analysis of their responses, whereas those opting for non-intervention in the survey elaborated on their position as follows.

The non interventionists implied that Council's role should be maintained and improved within traditional areas of responsibility; these respondents tended towards the view that gambling was a personal choice, based on taking personal risks that led to private and personal consequences. If any government intervention was required some argued for intervention by the State Government, but the majority of non interventionists tended towards the view that it was generally not an issue in which government should intervene.

The strength of this viewpoint is summed up by '... We have our freedom of choice and besides there is no such thing as a "gambling addiction"! therefore, as another put it, gambling '... is none of Council's business ...'. Approaching real hostility to intervention, one respondent wrote '... If people choose to gamble their life away - let them ...' whilst another wrote '... If gambling leads to criminal activity let the police handle it ...' and yet another '... there will always be people who want to gamble, I don't think anything will stop them. I think there are more important issues for the Council to tackle ...'. The non interventionist stance might conclude with this comment '... People need to be responsible for their own actions ...'.

A very different picture emerges from the survey respondents who *did* believe that Council had a role to play. We integrate their suggestions with those provided by research participants in workshops, interviews and focus groups.

B Prevention and support

Education and awareness raising

- Publicise the seriousness of gambling problems and how gambling difficulties can affect family breakdown and the care of children;
- Education at school and community level regarding the odds and likelihood of winning for different types of gambling;
- Education of GPs and service providers to raise their awareness of problem gambling issues;
- Youth worker: school education and community education, integrate into general school curriculum (eg in maths - how much could you win?), peer support and education, train present youth services in gambling counselling and awareness, the advert 'if it's no fun, walk away' may actually promote gambling - telephone number for services on ads;
- Education as prevention to let people know of the seriousness of gambling problems; and
- A local resource book to inform about how to get somewhere local for support;
- To provide support to the community - educational programs and assistance with funding counselling services to people with problems ...'. The reasons for the role were identified

as problem gambling that included: addiction, financial hardship, family breakdown, lack of education about risks and pitfalls, especially in relation to young people. In general, it was argued that '... Any level of government or community organisation that must respond to financial hardship, family dislocation, education etc. has a role to play ...'.

The issue of awareness of services for problem gambling was addressed in the survey:

Most respondents left this question blank with a number writing comments like '... Do not personally know of any ...'. Only a small proportion of respondents could actually name a gambling service. Those who could, usually mentioned only one service; the whole list created was: GA or Gamblers Anonymous (mentioned most often by respondents), Break Even, Gambling Help or Quit 1800 phone line '... as seen on television advertisements and on billboards ...', the Salvation Army (who one respondent thought '... could probably help ...'), self help groups, '... churches do a wonderful service in helping families affected by gambling ...', Crown Casino help service, CAB, Yellow or White pages, Government Services, Brotherhood, Boroondara services booklet, and private counselling (which raises the issue of how many are being counselled at this point in time, that is public counselling services and private counselling services). The low level of knowledge of services to assist those with gambling related issues is consistent with the study on the effect of EGMs on inner urban communities, where a low level of services was also evidenced (VCGA B: 44).

Education and awareness raising for special at risk groups

- Peer education for young people;
- Consultancy from Breakeven counselling services for schools, churches and 'elder groups';
- More culturally relevant community education regarding gambling issues, especially with the Chinese community;
- Chinese people need very active education re gambling issues. There needs to be massive education re how gambling difficulties affect family breakdown and the care of children;
- Need to have peer education for young people to promote responsible gambling/ concept of winning;
- If schools, churches and elder groups invite Breakeven counsellors to come and talk they would be happy to do this, however the counsellors need to be invited;
- There is a difficulty with counselling as a solution as Chinese people look to more pragmatic solutions;
- provide established youth services with professional development - secondary consultation, employ people to work with youth in Boroondara.

Support services and systems for people with problems

- Raising awareness of support services available;
- The promotion of alternative recreation and leisure options;
- It was noted by a youth worker that counselling can be intimidating for young people;

- 'The problem won't go away with counselling and education alone as these are funded from money from the gambling industry i.e. it won't solve the whole problem';
- A Council role as a resourcer and counsellor relates to the point made by one respondent to the survey: '... if the Council advocates gambling it also has a responsibility to offer help to those who are adversely affected by its presence ...' because, as another respondent put it, '... gambling is not only a private matter if it results in higher demand for welfare and higher crime ...'; and
- A Council role as networker was recognised by some survey respondents when they suggested '... Helping the support systems for people with problems ...' because even though it might be '... a private matter ... when financially affecting a family the gambler will need some form of help ...' therefore Council needs to '... give a lead on (the) futility of gambling ...' and the 'alternatives' to gambling.

C (Leisure) infrastructure improvement

Basic strategies

- Recreation centres are very competitive - could widen programming, not just support;
- Develop strategies to help venues who 'lost' their pokies (because of low revenue) to get back into other forms of leisure provision (or even be more proactive?);
- Community gardens are good;
- Neighbourhood centres are too far apart. More funds from the CSF should be allocated to neighbourhood houses. We need to have more centres where there are large gaps;
- A few survey respondents took the view that Council had a role in '... provision of other activities, leisure facilities ...' as an alternative to gambling, whilst other respondents focussed on Council's responsibility.

Leisure needs and special groups

Migrants and leisure issues

- Leisure/recreation is a good way to stop some of the gambling problems. The students that come to see me are lonely, isolated - especially during long weekend;
- Many migrants distrust neighbourhood houses as they associate them with the government. There is a fear of being 'located'. They need to feel safe and...Migrants can be affected by torture and trauma issues. (This emphasis on the human relationship as central to service delivery echoes the views of a local resident suffering from family breakdown, dislocation and associated grief);
- Participants in the migrant women's support group thought that there should be more places like the community house or places that are not centred around drinking and gambling. There needs to be a focus on food, the sharing of food and the sharing of ideas;
- There is lack of information for migrants regarding where to go for social purposes and a fear of coming forward;
- International students don't understand the need to go out and enjoy themselves, they only see a need to study and this can lead to loneliness;

- Young adults are lonely and isolated - country, overseas and mature. Yugoslavian, Greek, Indo-chinese home experiences are different and this can be isolating;
- Chinese people experience language/cultural difficulties. They need a place where they don't have to talk, but belong anyway - in an atmosphere of leisure and entertainment. NESB people don't expose themselves to the greater community;
- The council needs to provide alternatives where people don't have to talk e.g. a play. This applies to many ethnic groups;
- The situation is worse for older people who are more isolated and less integrated. Need to target middle aged and older people. Younger people are more integrated;
- The Council should be offering more recreational opportunities e.g. sports competitions, activities that integrate people with no pressure. If people are part of a group it is easier to explore activities whereas they might feel shy and intimidated when they are alone. Tai chi and dancing are good options for 'less talk' activities;
- Need more leisure organised by the council e.g. can use the Kew aquatic Centre, the Evergreen Centre, the disused bowling club at the back of Camberwell Grammar;
- People need the feeling of being accepted. Chinese people are feeling very sensitive to racist issues. Pauline Hanson's views are still influential in concerning many Chinese people about racist attitudes toward them;
- Need to mix ethnic groups/ clubs around activities such as food and cooking competitions. The sharing of food is good for bridging gaps;
- Need a lot of promotion of local activities, through the Evergreen Club, Neighbourhood Houses. The word can be spread through existing networks;
- Migrant recreation needs to address shyness e.g. free film night. This would be socially undemanding, you don't have to engage, it would have the same numbing out function as EGMs. It should be a happy film;
- Promotion of leisure and recreation and family activities e.g. lion dancing, through the local paper and 'What's On?' In the Progress Press; and
- The council can collaborate with the Federation of Chinese Associations to address support issues for the Chinese community.

Leisure and social diversity

- There can always be more recreation/ leisure targeted at people with special needs. Kew House has taken the initiative which is great;
- A lot of people need somewhere to drop in as well as structured activities. People on lower incomes might want companionship or friendship. Kew House has a weekly lunch. Not all houses have this;
- Council already has a good awareness of social diversity e.g. social housing policy. Boroondara is perceived as an area of affluence, however there is an amazing percentage of rental housing - substantially at the lower end of the spectrum. Many people with disabilities rent in the area due to the presence of VATMI as local employers. Thus we still have a lot of rooming houses within the city. Services are set up to support these people. Services need to be cheap or free, readily accessible and involve outreach (though this can be offensive or marginalising if too proactive);
- In general, services in Boroondara are supportive of young people, however there is a need for unstructured activities and recreation for young people such as skating and basketball rings. Kids need every opportunity for unstructured activity or they will do drugs or gambling.

Desired characteristics of leisure services

- It was proposed that leisure and recreational opportunities which are accessible to people on lower incomes and to people known to be vulnerable to problem gambling, should be created and/or discounts given to low-income people and pensioners;
- Need to keep costs of recreation low - especially for students and elderly people e.g. 50 cents or a dollar;
- It was put forward that services need to be accessible in terms of being low cost or free, culturally appropriate, requiring low ongoing commitment and associated with child-care.

Special interests and specific suggestions

- My suggestion is that we use the land of the old bowling club in Kew for some tall premises. We could then have a facility for seminars and guest speakers;
- This is the year of older persons. I would love to put something on in the Kew, Boroondara area. There are a lot of pensioners and college people in the area. The Phyllis Hore room is too small. If we had a hall we could put on performance items and invite other people;
- The Deepdene track is very good and is used by many mothers and children. It provides a recreation area for a large part of the population. The walking track and bike tracks are great. There is a children's area. We need to increase promotion of this;
- Lack of recreational facilities in Deepdene;
- There are unused bowling centres e.g. Surrey Hills and East Camberwell, Deepdene and Balwyn which could be used for local recreational purposes.

Some existing resources can address recreation needs

- Greater promotion of local recreation opportunities;
- Greater utilisation of existing venues, clubs, sites and recreation centres.

Community groups and collaborative arrangements

- Community groups (including migrant groups) to work with the Council in devising and implementing strategies;
- Community groups to work with each other in bridging cultural gaps; and
- Networking by Council with the Chinese Community Problem Gambling Action Group and the Federation of Chinese Associations.

Leisure needs and special groups

- Women, migrants, those on low income, people with psychiatric disabilities, people with intellectual disabilities, youth, international students and elderly people (with the use of an outreach approach where appropriate) were identified as groups with special needs. The mixing of ethnic groups and clubs around joint (undemanding) activities.

D Regulation and policing

Location and number of EGMs and EGM venues

- Restrictions on the number of EGMs and EGM venues;
- Bar on EGMs within shopping centres;
- In contrast to the two suggestions above, one interviewee with a pecuniary interest in the EGM industry argued that to minimise the 'addictive' component of gambling, or at least to manage it, there needs to be an increase in the number of EGM operators (and an elimination of the current EGM duopoly), a reduction in the number of EGMs allowed per venue – to 40 and a lift on the current cap on EGMs in Victoria. It was argued that these combined measures would reduce the "addictive" component of EGM gambling as venues would be forced through increased competition to offer more recreational and social activities. It was also argued that the current system which allows high concentration of EGMs in venues increases the likelihood of addiction as jackpots are larger and gamblers are more likely to see others win and to be encouraged by this.

Location of ATMs

- Restriction on Automatic Teller Machines in close proximity to gambling venues.

Internal venue set-up and machine characteristics

- Dispersal of EGMs throughout the venue;
- Presence of clocks and natural light;
- Joint actions with publicans to prevent gambling excesses;
- Enforcement of time out on EGMs; and
- Code (not voluntary) as regulatory mechanism that encourages more socialising.

Greater regulation over the promotion of gambling

- Need a balance in the media in relation to gambling. Need to look at the social impact in balance with media promotion and advertising;

Controls on the combination of alcohol consumption and gambling

- Local referendum about the wet/dry issue with something about the spread of 'pokies' attached;
- Restrictions on the combination of alcohol consumption and gambling;
- Ban on machines anywhere there is gambling;
- Maintenance of the dry area;

- Limit the number of pokies and the spread of them in the Municipality as well as per venue. Support Council in their move to prevent the spread into shopping strips etc.;
- Possible controls over the 'offers' figuring on the Seniors card. (Recently it was discovered that a multitude of gaming opportunities had been offered on the Card and none of the venues had subscribed to the card system as is usually required, although months later this was corrected);
- The Council should remain firm in restricting EGM venues and numbers;
- Regulations are necessary, not just guidelines which everyone interprets as they wish;
- Close all hotels, night clubs. Stop issuing licenses for pubs. The ones that are open have closing times of 10 PM;
- Ban machines anywhere there is alcohol;
- Keep the dry area;
- Limit the spread of pokies in pubs (and probably the spread of pubs themselves?);
- Have enforced breaks on EGMs so that people have to leave machines after 1 or 2 hours;
- Local government should use indirect planning controls to undermine the establishment of more gambling venues e.g. EPA/ noise pollution, nuisance etc.;
- One research participant suggested that it was necessary to increase the police presence around hotels. Some issues around counselling as a strategy to address gambling difficulties were also raised across interviews and workshops.

Roles for Council

One interviewee was of the opinion that: 'The person with problem gambling uses many services and systems that are government funded - therefore it is a community issue - We are paying for this person to do all of this'.

The roles of Council in relation to gambling as proposed in the survey responses

Various roles for Council were proposed in the survey. Council as **law maker and enforcer** was based on various views including 'outlawing pokies' through to the idea that Council had a "duty of care" to residents and visitors to ensure people were not unnecessarily exposed to gambling when shopping or recreating. Many respondents expressed a view similar to '... I think pokies should be severely limited or outlawed ...' and '... There are enough gambling venues in Victoria, no need to introduce them into Boroondara ...' and Council should '... control gambling ...', if not '... control (the) number of venues and hours of operation so that people don't gamble 24 hours a day ...'.

These "law maker and enforcer" views were echoed by many respondents and were often linked to the other interventionist roles covered below. Some respondents were '... Against the issuing of pokie machines in the hotels and clubs ...' and others argued for Council to '... Reduce outlets (because) it (gambling) is too easy to get to and there is far too much advertising ...'. If Council could not do this then it should '... Limit outlets to larger clubs ...'. Some respondents took the view that '... Gambling should be discussed openly and Council should heavily tax all gambling ...' because '... Gambling can be addictive ...' and '... The temptation is very strong to overspend ...' so '... Council should curtail opportunities for excessive gambling ...' emphasised by a plea for '... no Casinos! ...' and '... Gaming venues should be reduced not increased especially in suburban areas where they are simply unnecessary ...'.

The strength of a Council law maker and enforcer role is summed up by the comment '... The Council can make the area a gambling free zone ...' but the more pragmatic stance was probably summed by this extended comment '... Keep tight control, where it is within your jurisdiction, over the number and size of venues and types of gambling offered. Council should be in control of all electronic gaming machines in the area ...' which is not to undervalue the views of other respondents who argued '... Any action by public authorities to reduce gambling facilities would benefit the community ...'.

A Council role as **regulator and "watch dog"** was expanded in views that suggested '... careful regulation to ensure problems such as loss of local amenity and safety do not increase/occur ...'. As a regulator Council could also '... limit the number of gambling facilities available and access to them ...' and '... ensure some form of regulatory controls on site ...'. Controls suggested included: opening/closing times, forms of advertising, being very selective with planning permits, controlling local TABs and hotels with poker machines, limiting the number of machines and venues and access to alcohol, and monitoring operators so that '... facilities are fair and reasonable, that is, not a license to exploit / print money ...'.

Council's role as **lobbyist** was covered by fewer comments and included '... being responsive to community pressure if that pressure is significant ...' and '... enlisting enough support to change government regulation ...' along with '... providing and advertising accessible support groups and lobbying Victorian Government to do the same ...'.

E Monitoring, research and planning

- It was suggested that there be continuous monitoring of gambling and leisure on all levels;
- There's a need to create and assure greater transparency in key issues related to gambling and the establishment of the gambling industry in the municipality. A system that creates greater transparency needs to be put in place, including the monitoring of the impact/effect of gambling on both citizens (especially in poorer areas but really everywhere given the hidden nature of the phenomenon; but also on certain groups of citizens, e.g. older people) and on local businesses, especially retail and leisure. Participants were aware that the principle of 'commercial in confidence' operates against such transparency and Council should develop a strategy against such overly exclusive interpretation of that principle;
- The Council needs to monitor the views of residents e.g. through surveys through the local paper.

That Council has a role as **social planner** was also covered by a few *comments by survey respondents* that included '... Council should be looking at the whole picture, the whole community ...' in addition to '... It is up to the Council to find one (a role) ...' because gambling '... becomes everyone's problem if it gets out of control ...' and the community needs '... information in relation to help if gambling gets out of control ...'.

Conclusion

This remarkably wide and rather well informed array of suggestions clearly reflects concerns expressed in many of the works reviewed in the first chapter of this report. The consultants have derived – in consultation with members of the Gambling Response Working Group and with outside experts and on the basis of relevant literature, their own set of recommendations which concludes this report.

4.2 Recommendations proposed by consultants

General

Given the strong endorsement by the great majority of research participants that gambling and its social effects are to be considered a public matter and given the strong endorsement for Boroondara City Council's continued and increased intervention in these matters, it is recommended that Boroondara City Council:

- continues to exercise its legitimate governance roles in decision making processes related to the presence and further introduction of gambling opportunities in the Municipality.
 - continues and intensifies its involvement in the planning, provision and encouragement of a diverse and appropriate array of leisure and recreational opportunities, responding to the needs and capacities of the various groups in the community, therewith also reducing the risk that vulnerable individuals will engage in potentially problematic and even addictive forms of gambling because of the lack of meaningful alternatives.
- 1 Boroondara City Council should engage in and reinforce education and awareness building efforts about the possible effects of gambling and about its recreational alternatives.**

It is recommended that Council:

- 1.1** in collaboration with Problem Gambling Services, other support services, relevant non-governmental agencies, community organisations and schools engage in:
 - 1.1.1** disseminating information about the services that are available to meet the needs of those affected by gambling problems in Boroondara;
 - 1.1.2** disseminating information about support, welfare and leisure services and organisations in the City of Boroondara, as publicised in the Boroondara Book;
 - 1.1.3** raising the awareness of the potential seriousness of gambling problems and the effect they can have on family cohesion and the care of children;
 - 1.1.4** disseminating information about the odds and likelihood of winning for different types of gambling.
- 1.2** through appropriate and intensified use of media and other forms of dissemination, actively promote citizens' participation in alternative community activities and in other recreation and leisure options in the municipality.

2 Boroondara City Council should improve the infrastructure, responsiveness to local need and quality of local leisure and recreational opportunities.

It is recommended that Council:

- 2.1 contributes to better resourcing of Neighbourhood Houses, Community Centres and other leisure facilities to provide alternative structured and unstructured forms of leisure and recreation.
- 2.2 supports and assists the development of alternative recreation and leisure opportunities to meet the needs and interests of those groups that have been demonstrated as being vulnerable to gambling related problems and/or to social isolation, including recent migrants of non-English speaking background, overseas students, those on a low income, the unemployed and early retired, women, single parents, people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues, young people and older people.
- 2.3 uses its local planning powers to maintain - if not improve - the ratio of passive and active recreation opportunities with changing local population densities.
- 2.4 maintains more unstructured opportunities for recreation for young people which are available at all times and explore the possibility, together with appropriate providers, to make cheap food available at or near such venues.
- 2.5 develops strategies toward greater utilisation of existing venues, club sites and recreation centres.
- 2.5 supports the development of alternative recreation and leisure opportunities that are low cost or free, require low ongoing commitment and have child care and leisure arrangements associated with them.
- 2.6 contributes to the provision of alternative recreation and leisure services for migrants from a non-English speaking background and others in the community who are socially isolated which do not demand a great deal of English language skills and confidence in social settings.
- 2.7 contributes to the provision of leisure services for disabled people which are cheap or free, readily accessible and involve some outreach without being intrusive.

- 3 Boroondara City Council should contribute to the improvement of support services for people with gambling related issues and their families.**

It is recommended that Boroondara City Council collaborates with Problem Gambling Services and relevant support services in exploring the possibilities for and development of an holistic support approach for people with gambling related issues which addresses the full range of needs and issues that arise, in particular for the families of people with gambling problems.

- 4 Boroondara city council should engage in collaborative arrangements for facilitating stable community networks and support, especially with respect to migrant communities.**

It is recommended that Council:

- 4.1 facilitates collaborative arrangements between community groups to bridge cultural gaps and to provide stable mutual support arrangements and appropriate recreational activities for migrants.**
- 4.2 collaborates with culture specific organisations to address support issues for migrant groups and the Chinese community in particular.**
- 4.3 explores possible community mentorship arrangements for overseas students.**

- 5. Boroondara City Council should maintain and reinforce regulation and policing in relation to gambling activities in the municipality**

5.1 *As to the location of EGMs and EGM venues*

It is recommended that Council:

- 5.1.1 exercises its power to restrict the number of EGMs and EGM venues to the territory under its jurisdiction.**
- 5.1.2 develops a policy to guide Council decision making with respect to planning applications associated with EGM venues operated on Council controlled properties, incorporating options of EGM veto, EGM restriction and Codes of Conduct associated with leasing arrangements.**
- 5.1.3 exercises its influence to bring about change in the application and approval process for hotels and clubs wishing to become licensed (EGM) venue operators, so that Council can exercise planning controls in the event of proposals for restricted (EGM) gambling areas of less than 25% of the total area where liquor may be consumed.**

- 5.1.4** explores the possibility and desirability of redeploying the existing EGMs and EGM venues across its territory in order to limit the number of EGMs in any venue to an acceptable maximum and encourage venues to (re-) introduce diversity of recreation and leisure opportunities in its premises.
- 5.1.5** maintains the ban on EGMs within shopping centres of any kind and uses its planning powers to address secondary issues of noise and nuisance control.

5.2 *As to the location of Automatic Teller Machines*

It is recommended that Council:

- 5.2.1** exercises its influence to restrict the installation of Automatic Teller Machines in close proximity to gambling venues.
- 5.2.2** exercises its influence to introduce legislation making it illegal for financial institutions to provide credit for gambling on EGMs.

5.3 *As to the internal set-up of venues and characteristics of the Electronic Gaming Machines*

It is recommended that Council:

- 5.3.1** exercises its influence and power to regulate and enforce:
- The disposal of EGMs throughout the venues;
 - The presence of clocks and natural light;
 - 'Time out' for patrons utilising EGMs;
 - The visible presence of warnings about the dangers of excessive gambling and of references to problem gambling services.
- 5.3.2** engages in joint actions with publicans and other venue operators to prevent gambling excesses, especially in their combination with drinking excesses (see below).
- 5.3.3** engages in developing joint strategies with venue operators to implement a code of practice that encourages more socialising activities in the venues.

5.4 *As to the regulation of gambling promotion*

It is recommended that Council exercises its influence and power to impose controls on the promotion of gambling, especially in the case of false and misleading advertising and especially when directed at vulnerable groups.

5.5 As to controls on the combination of alcohol consumption and gambling and issues of community safety

It is recommended that Council:

5.5.1 addresses strategically the link between the existence and possible change of the the dry and wet areas in its territory and the implications for the distribution and further spread of gambling opportunities, especially EGMs.

5.5.2 continues to monitor issues of public safety and peace around the venues with EGMs and other gambling facilities.

6 Boroondara City Council should engage in monitoring, research and planning related to gambling opportunities, their potential social effects and community involvement in recreational and leisure activities.

It is recommended that Council:

6.1 engages in the continuous monitoring of gambling and leisure within its territory and by the community with special emphasis on areas and groups with recognised issues and problems.

6.2 collaborates with neighbouring City Councils to monitor gambling – related developments in their joint border areas.

6.3 contributes to the development of regional responses to local government-relevant issues in relation to the distribution and consequences of (increased) gambling opportunities in the region as well as to regional recreational and leisure opportunities.

6.4 collaborates with the *Municipal Association of Victoria* and the *Victorian Local Governance Association* in matters of monitoring, researching and planning responses to gambling and the general recreational needs of the population.

6.5 engages in the monitoring of the impact/effect of gambling on both citizens (especially in lower socio-economic status areas) and on local businesses, especially retail and leisure.

6.6 engages in ongoing research exploring the relationship between:

- groups that have been demonstrated as being vulnerable to problem gambling (including recent migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, overseas students, those on a low income, the unemployed and early retired, women, single parents, people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues, young people and older people) and problem gambling in the City of Boroondara;
- access to gambling opportunities and problem gambling in the City of Boroondara;
- the experience of recent migration and problem gambling in the City of Boroondara.

6.7 engages in ongoing research that focuses on ‘hard’ forms of gambling, in particular on EGM and casino gambling.

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ATTACHMENT 1

Residents' Survey

GAMBLING IMPACT STUDY - 1999

CITY OF BOROONDARA

Completing this survey makes a vital contribution to the planning of an appropriate role by Council in relation to the impact of gambling on Boroondara. The survey form will be processed using computer based optical mark recognition. To assist with this processing please respond to each statement by darkening a circle as follows:

Like this ●

Not this



Please return the form to the resident who visits you in the next few days.

1. YOUR PARTICIPATION IN GAMBLING

Have you participated in any of these types of gambling in the last year?

Yes ○ No ○

If Yes, how often ...

	Daily	2-3 times each week	Weekly to 2 weekly	Every 2 to 4 weeks	Monthly to never
Raffles (including fund raising) or bingo	○	○	○	○	○
Informal card games for money not at Casino	○	○	○	○	○
Oncourse betting (e.g. horse racing, trotting, the dogs)	○	○	○	○	○
Poker or electronic gaming machines at hotels, clubs etc. but not Casino	○	○	○	○	○
Off course betting: TAB, Footy betting, soccer pools, Keno at hotel	○	○	○	○	○
Any gambling activities at the Casino	○	○	○	○	○
Lotto, Powerball, Tattsлото, Keno, scratch tickets, Instant lotto etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Internet gambling	○	○	○	○	○
Other forms of gambling	○	○	○	○	○

Please estimate the number of hours you spend on all forms of gambling each week:

Hours

Indicate factors that attract you to these types of gambling activities ...

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Free/cheap food/drinks | <input type="radio"/> | Respite from home life | <input type="radio"/> |
| Lifetime interest | <input type="radio"/> | Friendly/warm & welcoming | <input type="radio"/> |
| Chance to win | <input type="radio"/> | Opening times | <input type="radio"/> |
| Glamorous/attractive surroundings | <input type="radio"/> | Personal interest | <input type="radio"/> |
| Services are good | <input type="radio"/> | Feelings of safety | <input type="radio"/> |
| Close to home/ease of access | <input type="radio"/> | Other interests not accessible | <input type="radio"/> |
| Low cost/cheap food | <input type="radio"/> | Company & chance to socialise | <input type="radio"/> |
| Open membership | <input type="radio"/> | Release of stress/depression | <input type="radio"/> |

2. IMPACT OF GAMBLING ON YOUR LEISURE AND RECREATION

What does gambling do for you?

Can you indicate which other general *recreation* or *leisure* activities your gambling involvement has replaced, if any, in relation to the time you previously devoted to them?

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Sport and outdoor activity | <input type="radio"/> | Talking (including on the phone) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Games/hobbies/arts/crafts | <input type="radio"/> | Writing/reading own correspondence | <input type="radio"/> |
| Reading | <input type="radio"/> | Recreation travel | <input type="radio"/> |
| Audio/visual media, e.g. watching television | <input type="radio"/> | Other free time activities | <input type="radio"/> |
| Attendance at recreation courses | <input type="radio"/> | None | <input type="radio"/> |

3. IMPACT OF GAMBLING ON YOUR SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Can you indicate which general *social* and *community* activities your gambling involvement has replaced, if any, in relation to time you previously devoted to them?

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Socialising & community activities | <input type="radio"/> | Voluntary community work | <input type="radio"/> |
| Visiting entertainment/cultural venues | <input type="radio"/> | Family activities/events | <input type="radio"/> |
| Attendance at sports events | <input type="radio"/> | Negative social activities | <input type="radio"/> |
| Religious activities | <input type="radio"/> | Associated travel to social activities | <input type="radio"/> |
| None | <input type="radio"/> | Other | <input type="radio"/> |

Can you estimate the weekly financial cost of gambling to you? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please provide your estimate of how much you win or lose on gambling each week:

Weekly Winnings \$

OR

- Weekly Losses \$

Has your spending on gambling replaced other types of spending? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, what types of spending is your gambling most likely to be replacing?

Employment related	<input type="radio"/>	Purchasing services	<input type="radio"/>
Education related	<input type="radio"/>	Personal care	<input type="radio"/>
Domestic costs	<input type="radio"/>	Social activities	<input type="radio"/>
Care of dependents (e.g. children)	<input type="radio"/>	Other recreation & leisure activities	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing goods	<input type="radio"/>	Donations & costs of voluntary work	<input type="radio"/>
Savings	<input type="radio"/>	Other	<input type="radio"/>

4. YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION WITH GAMBLING

On the whole how would you rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with gambling?

Very Satisfied	<input type="radio"/>	Dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>
Satisfied	<input type="radio"/>	Very Dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	Don't know/no response	<input type="radio"/>

Why are you satisfied/dissatisfied with gambling?

Some people think that gambling brings problems while others think it brings benefits to the community. Are you aware of any problems or benefits in the community?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, what problems or benefits do you know of?

Do you think gambling is a private matter only? Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you think Council has a role to play in relation to gambling? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please expand on that answer ...

Do you personally know of anybody with a gambling problem? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please name any services you know of that are provided for people with a gambling problem?

5. RESPONDENT PROFILE

We need some personal details to assist our assessment of the representativeness of the sample of people we have surveyed. You should note that these details remain completely confidential.

How long have you lived in Boroondara?

Less than 2 years	2 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you male or female?

Male

Female

☐

☐

And what age bracket do you fit into?

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65-74

75+

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

How many people live in your household?

1

2

3

4

5+

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

And what are their age brackets? (Complete more than one as necessary)

0-4

5-9

10-14

15-19

20-24

25-29

30-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65+ years

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

Does your household own a vehicle? If "Yes", how many vehicles does your household own?

Yes

☐

No

☐

1

2

3

4

5+

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

What range does your personal pre-tax annual income fit into?

\$0-

\$20,000

\$20,001-

\$25,000

\$25,001-

\$30,000

\$30,001-

\$35,000

\$35,001-

\$40,000

\$40,001-

\$45,000

\$45,001-

\$50,000

Over

\$50,001

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

What is your region of birth?

(Regions listed according to ABS Standard Classifications for 1997 to enable comparison with Census)

Australia

(Rest of)
Oceania &
Antarctica

Europe
(inc UK)
former
USSR

Middle
East & N.
Africa

S.E. Asia

N.E. Asia

Southern
Asia

North
America

Sth & C.
America
Caribbean

Africa
(excl N.
Africa)

At Sea,
Other

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

If you have any other comments on gambling and its impact on Boroondara, please use the space below or attach an additional sheet:

Thank you for your assistance.

Please return the completed form to the person who delivered it to you.

Results will be reported in Council's Newspaper.

ATTACHMENT 2



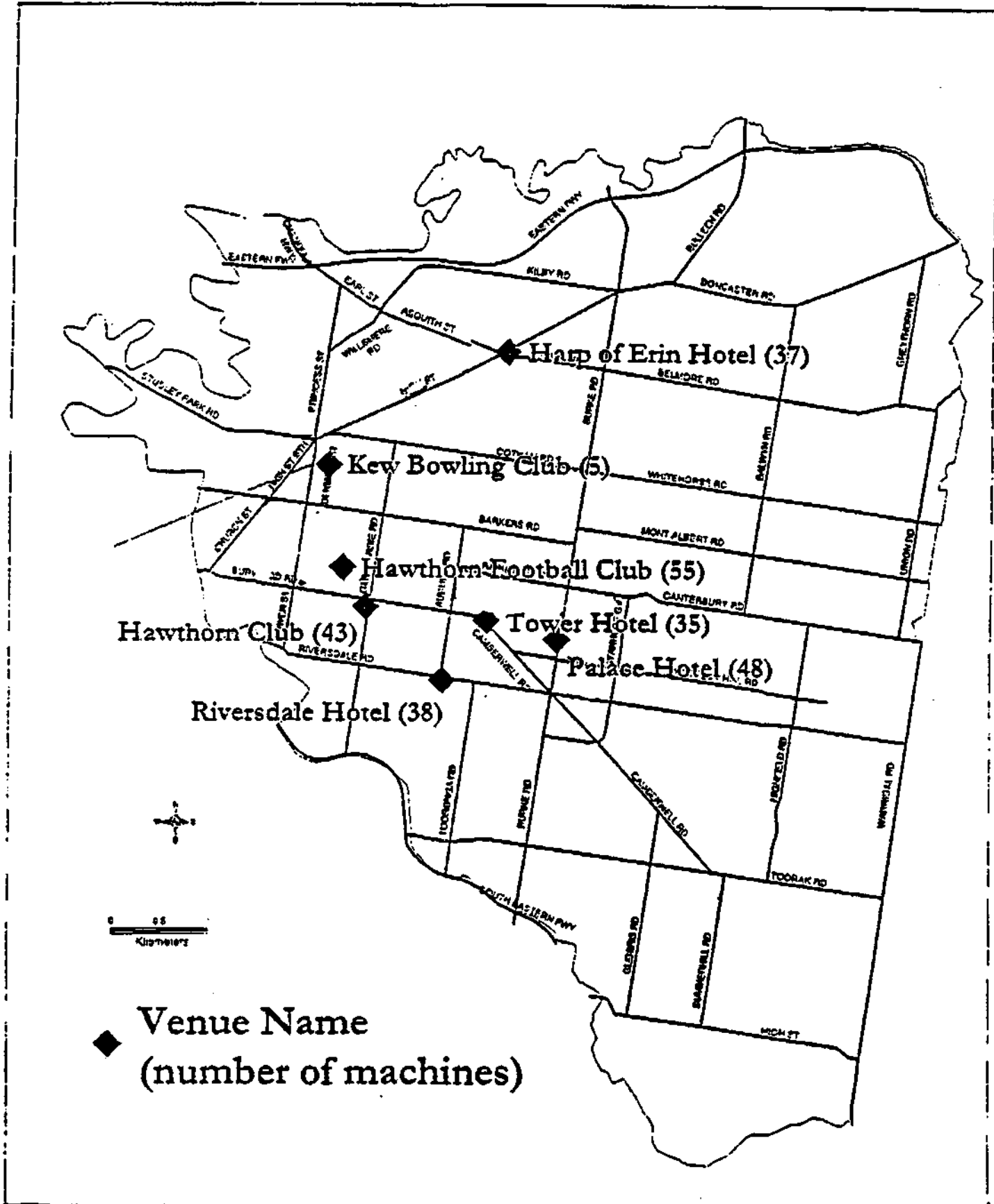
Venues

Venue	Address	Operator	EGM Type	Region	Local Government Area	Date Opened
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Harp Of Erin Hotel</u>	636 High Street East Kew	Tabcorp	37	Hotel Metropolitan	City of Boroondara	09/06/94 12:00:00 AM
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Riversdale Hotel</u>	277 Auburn Road Hawthorn	Tabcorp	38	Hotel Metropolitan	City of Boroondara	22/07/93
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Palace Hotel</u> (Hawthorn) / (Camberwell)	893 Burke Road Camberwell	Tattersalls	48	Hotel Metropolitan	City of Boroondara	06/10/94 12:00:00 AM
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Hawthorn Football Social Club</u>	37 Linda Crescent Hawthorn	Tabcorp	55	Club Metropolitan	City of Boroondara	31/07/92
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tower Hotel</u>	686 Burwood Road East Hawthorn	Tabcorp	35	Hotel Metropolitan	City of Boroondara	06/08/95 12:00:00 AM
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Hawthorn Club</u>	627 Glenferrie Road Hawthorn	Tabcorp	43	Club Metropolitan	City of Boroondara	05/06/94 12:00:00 AM

6 Documents found.

ATTACHMENT 3

Locations of Electronic Gaming Machine Venues

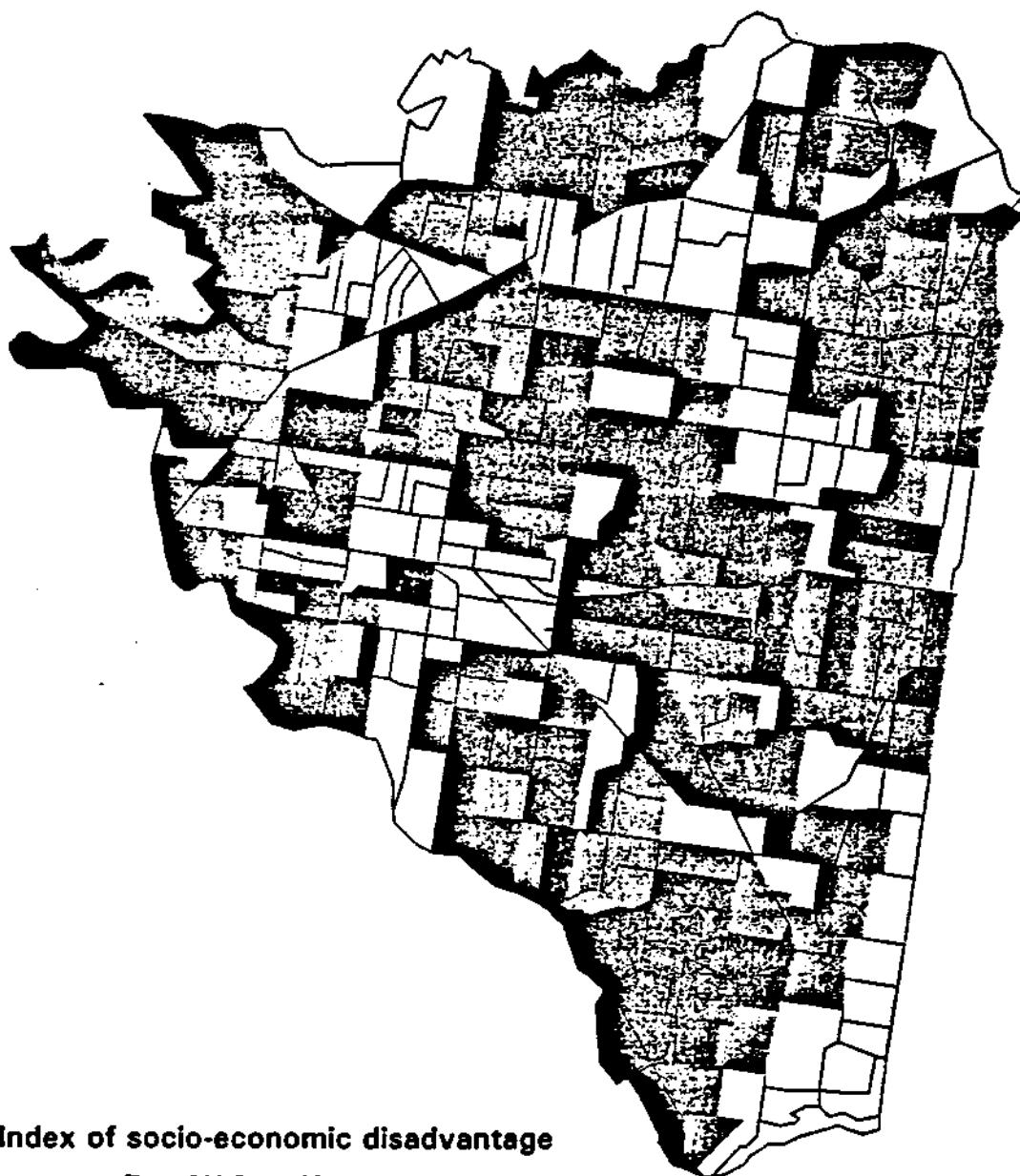


p2:comm\gamble.wot 17/7/98 vr

ATTACHMENT 4

INDEX OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

City of Boroondara



Index of socio-economic disadvantage

□	820.5 to 1,077.6	(27)
□	1,077.6 to 1,125.3	(73)
■	1,125.3 to 1,158.8	(105)
■	1,158.8 to 1,217.3	(72)

Based on 1996 Collection District Boundaries

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Produced by: Council Strategy - Maribyrnong City Council, November 1998

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