

# Alcohol Harm Minimisation Policy

<b>Date adopted</b>	25 September 2023
<b>Adopted by</b>	Council
<b>Review due</b>	September 2027
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Manager Healthy Connected Communities
<b>Records reference</b>	9552815

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Alcohol Harm Minimisation Policy (the Policy) is to guide Council's decision-making in relation to the supply and consumption of alcohol in the City of Melton. It supports Council's commitment to improving community health and wellbeing outcomes related to harm caused by alcohol use.

## 2. Application And Scope

The Policy applies to:

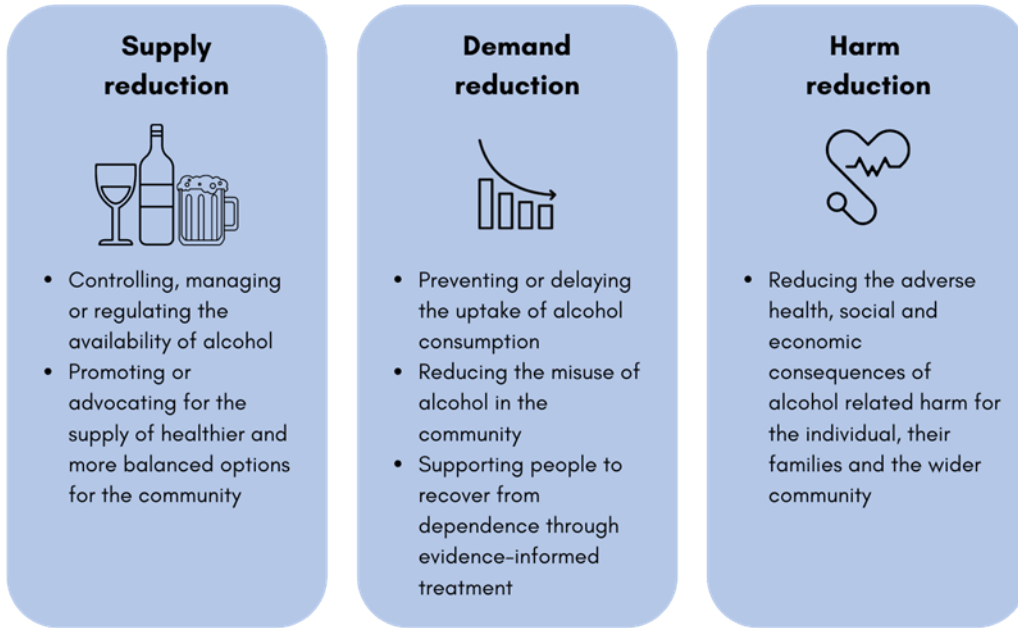
- the review of planning permit applications or enforcement of planning permit conditions involving the use of land to supply or consume alcohol
- invitations from the Victorian Liquor Commission or relevant government body for Council to provide comment on an application for a liquor licence or permit
- matters pertaining to local laws prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in public spaces
- the promotion, supply and consumption of alcohol at Council facilities
- the promotion, supply and consumption of alcohol at Council managed events and programs
- initiatives and advocacy which aim to improve the health and wellbeing of the City of Melton community by reducing or preventing alcohol-related harms.

While Council may be invited to make a submission or choose to advocate in relation to a decision made outside of its jurisdiction (by the Victorian Liquor Commission, for example), these decisions are not within the scope of the Policy.

## 3. General Provisions

Improving the health and wellbeing of City of Melton community is a key priority area for Council as defined in the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025.

Council is committed to acting within its delegated authority to embed alcohol harm minimisation principles through its decision-making around the supply and consumption of alcohol in the municipality. These principles, adapted from the National Alcohol Strategy 2019-2028, are:



Further context for this position or the statements in this policy, can be found in the associated Alcohol Harm Minimisation Policy Review Report.

### 3.1. Planning and Liquor Licenses

Council will:

- support a balanced mix of licensed premises located across the municipality (particularly in existing or future activity centres) that contribute to local character, enhance safety and vitality, promote socio-economic benefits and increase consumer choice
- encourage the incorporation of good design principles which create safer environments for patrons and the community (for example, sufficient lighting, sightlines, venue capacity and inclusive access)
- consider a broad range of factors in decision-making through planning and liquor licences, including:

**Location**

- suitability of the area
- whether it compliments or competes with nearby venues
- proximity to residential areas
- proximity to ‘sensitive’ land uses such as schools, childcare centres, sport and recreation facilities or health services
- having suitable access to deliveries and space for storage.

- Operating hours**
  - appropriateness for the local area
  - noise levels and disruption after hours
  - impact on local residents in relation to traffic and pedestrian movement.
  
- Capacity**
  - number of patrons and their anticipated experience in the venue
  - adequate levels of staff with appropriate training
  - size of the premises and surrounding area
  - suitable bathrooms
  - parking availability or public transport options
  - pedestrian access
  - management of patrons entering and exiting the premises
  - crowd control where needed.
  
- Safety**
  - potential for anti-social or criminal behaviour
  - having appropriate safety measures in place, including adequate lighting, crowd management and crime prevention strategies
  - impact on local perceptions of safety.
  
- Compliance**
  - compliance history of the proposed licensee
  - adherence to relevant permit conditions, legislation or policy
  - compliance with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) noise guidelines
  - evidence of responsible service of alcohol (RSA) practices.
  
- Community**
  - level of public interest
  - views or concerns from the local community
  - appropriateness of the venue design and layout for the licence type (for example, seating layout or pedestrian access or grocery stores that sell alcohol)
  - evidence that the premises will be designed and managed to remove or minimise unreasonable impacts on the amenity of the local area
  - potential impact on and measures implemented to protect vulnerable communities
  - having measures in place to reduce the normalisation of alcohol (for example, promoting balanced choices).

Proposals will not be supported if in review against the above considerations are deemed to contradict the harm minimisation principles, have a negative impact on the community or are at risk of non-compliance (for example, RSA practices).

### 3.2. Regulation and Enforcement

Council will:

- investigate and enforce breaches of planning permit conditions, or the Melton Planning Scheme and the Planning and Environment Act 1987
- where appropriate, develop and implement local laws which help to minimise and prevent alcohol-related harm
- support other law enforcement (for example, Victoria Police) and statutory authorities in the regulation of operating hours, venue capacity and community safety.

### 3.3. Public Spaces, Events, and Programs

Council will:

- plan, develop and maintain public spaces that are inclusive and promote harm-minimisation principles
- model and promote alcohol harm minimisation practices by managing the supply and consumption of alcohol at:
  - Council-delivered programs and events
  - Council-funded programs and events
  - Council-owned or managed facilities and open space (for example, community centres and parks)
- manage the promotion of alcohol (particularly deals or specials involving alcohol) at any of the above settings, or in any Council media and publications
- conduct a thorough risk assessment and develop mitigation strategies to minimise harm when alcohol will be supplied and consider registering any event where alcohol will be served with the Victoria Police 'Party Safe' program where applicable
- ensure hirers and users of Council facilities are aware of their responsibilities regarding the supply and consumption of alcohol
- discourage sponsorship arrangements where the supply, consumption and promotion of alcohol is an element of the sponsorship package or arrangements that are contrary to harm minimisation principles generally. Examples of this include sponsorship arrangements for events, sporting clubs, educational initiatives or infrastructure projects.

### 3.4. Education and Advocacy

Council will:

- investigate and stay up to date with research on alcohol-related harms
- encourage local businesses or groups supplying or serving alcohol to incorporate harm minimisation practices (for example, signage, promotions and visibility of alcohol) beyond the minimum required through liquor licensing requirements
- deliver evidence-based initiatives which help to build awareness in the community about the recognition of alcohol-related harms, promote healthier alcohol consumption and empower those seeking to reduce or abstain from alcohol intake through the use of the VicHealth Alcohol Cultures Framework
- build capacity in the community around safe alcohol practices including preventing the normalisation of alcohol and reducing alcohol-related harms through the delivery of health promotion initiatives and fostering relationships with local schools, sporting clubs and community groups
- collaborate with neighbouring Council's and organisations to develop a consistent approach to harm minimisation practices in regard to alcohol supply and consumption
- advocate for improved regulation of alcohol through legislation, policy and processes outside Council's jurisdiction
- advocate for and attract community services that provide support and counselling to people who are experiencing alcohol-related harm
- support the work of health organisations and statutory bodies investigating alcohol-related harms (for example, VicHealth).

## 4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Alcohol	See the definition of 'liquor', used interchangeably.
Alcohol-related harm	Physical and emotional health issues that are caused or contributed to by the excessive and/or frequent consumption of alcohol.
Consumption	The act of ingesting an alcoholic substance (typically orally).
Council	Melton City Council, including the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive and staff. As defined by the Local Government Act 2020.
Council facility	Any building provided by Council for the purpose of community activities or programs including aquatic centres, community centres, neighbourhood houses, libraries, and leisure centres.
Council events	Any community event directly managed by Council.

Term	Definition
Council program	Any program directly managed by Council for the community and/or employees, contractors, and volunteers.
Harm minimisation	Practices or strategies designed to lessen the negative social and/or physical consequences associated with various human behaviours, both legal and illegal.
Licensed premises	The premises in respect of which a licence (other than a pre-retail licence) or BYO permit is granted or otherwise as defined by the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998.
Liquor	A beverage, or other prescribed substance, intended for human consumption with an alcoholic content greater than 0.5% by volume at a temperature of 20° Celsius, or otherwise as defined by the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998. Used interchangeably with 'alcohol'.
Promotion	Any information, term, expression, symbol or other things that give publicity to, or otherwise advertises or encourages the supply and consumption of liquor.
RSA	Responsible service of alcohol.
Sensitive land use	Land uses which are more sensitive to emissions from other industries through impact on amenities, health and safety.
Supply	Includes selling, offering or exposing for sale, exchanging, disposing of and giving away of alcohol products.
VLC	Victorian Liquor Commission.
Vulnerable communities	People and groups who are more susceptible to alcohol-related harms due to specific characteristics (for example, age).

## 5. Related Documents

Name	Location
The <i>Liquor Control Reform Act 1998</i> (Vic)	<a href="http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au">www.legislation.vic.gov.au</a>
The <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> (Vic)	<a href="http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au">www.legislation.vic.gov.au</a>
Melton Planning Scheme, Victorian Planning Provisions	Council's website <a href="http://www.melton.vic.gov.au">www.melton.vic.gov.au</a>
The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (Vic)	<a href="http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au">www.legislation.vic.gov.au</a>
The <i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008</i> (Vic)	<a href="http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au">www.legislation.vic.gov.au</a>
Melton City Council Local Law No. 32	Council's website <a href="http://www.melton.vic.gov.au">www.melton.vic.gov.au</a>

Name	Location
Melton City Council and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025	Council's website <a href="http://www.melton.vic.gov.au">www.melton.vic.gov.au</a>
VicHealth Alcohol Cultures Framework	<a href="https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/news-publications/research-publications/alcohol-cultures-framework">https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/news-publications/research-publications/alcohol-cultures-framework</a>
Victorian Government Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023	<a href="https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-public-health-and-wellbeing-plan-2019-2023">https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-public-health-and-wellbeing-plan-2019-2023</a>
National Alcohol Strategy 2019-2028	<a href="https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/11/national-alcohol-strategy-2019-2028.pdf">https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/11/national-alcohol-strategy-2019-2028.pdf</a>
Alcohol Harm Minimisation Policy Review Report	<LINK TBC>

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