



New Mayor for South Gippsland

Cr Robert (Bob) Newton, a lifelong resident of the region and independent Councillor for the Strzelecki Ward, is South Gippsland's new Mayor.

Cr Newton was elected in a 7-2 vote by his Council colleagues over Cr Mohya Davies, who was later elected as Deputy Mayor in a 5-4 vote ahead of Cr Lorraine Brunt.

In his acceptance speech, Cr Newton said he would fulfill the Mayoral role as a "team leader" who was not about to let the position alter his values.

"What you see is what you get with me and I don't propose to change," he proclaimed.

"I had no intentions of running until one week ago, I didn't think I'd have the numbers, but it's the confidence and support of my colleagues and the community that made me consider the role."

Cr Newton brings a wealth of experience and local knowledge to the table with over 20 years' service in Local Government. He is an active participant in this community where his work has extended further than his Ward boundary.

"People from all over the Shire come to me, they call me no matter where they live because they know I'll follow it up for them," he explained. "I am passionate about South Gippsland as a whole and will lead this team of councillors along the same lines."

Cr Newton has first-hand knowledge of the issues that are important to farmers, and like many residents, is keen to see roads improved in the Shire. He is also focused on keeping rates to a minimum whilst improving infrastructure and current services. Cr. Newton has recently leased his farm to spend more time at Council.

Cr Newton said one of his priorities was to reconnect Council with parts of the community that felt disengaged from local government decision making.

Cr Newton thanked outgoing Mayor, Cr Jeanette Harding, for her "commitment in tough times" and thanked his fellow Councillors for their support.

"Ultimately it is about good governance in the best interests of our community."

PR1743 4/11/15