

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Four Gippsland Councils commit to explore shared services**

Four councils across Gippsland are investing in an innovative operating model that aims to maintain service levels while reducing duplication, improving efficiency and increasing savings.

Bass Coast, East Gippsland, South Gippsland and Wellington Shire Councils have all committed to explore the potential establishment of a 'shared services' entity that may eventually deliver their combined back-office/corporate services and IT functions into the future. It is expected that a three-year transition period would be required to set-up the shared services entity. Over the next 12 months the four councils will explore how the new entity could operate.

To date, the councils have worked collaboratively on a high-level business case and proposed model that identifies savings to their operations and ultimately, to the community. Another benefit once established, is that the shared services entity may attract future income-generating opportunities by offering its services to other organisations.

The Municipal Association of Victoria and Local Government Victoria are supportive of councils pursuing genuine shared services, not just council collaboration, as the way forward for local government.

The four Councils will seek to take advantage of funding available through the Victorian Government's \$20 million Rural and Regional Council Transformation Program, which aims to support projects that will help make Victoria's regional and rural councils and the services they deliver more sustainable.

It is likely that the new entity will employ fewer staff to deliver each shared service function than the four councils combined do now. The next 12 months will determine which services may be potentially included in a shared service and each council can decide the services they wish to identify by then.

For the communities across the four shires it will be 'business as usual' when it comes to their day-to-day dealings with their council. The changes that may take place will be in the back-office functions rather than direct service delivery roles.

**END**

For more information on each council's involvement in this shared services initiative, please contact the following Chief Executive Officers through their respective Communications Teams:

- Bass Coast Shire Council - Acting Chief Executive Officer, Mark Brady on 5671 2765
- East Gippsland Shire Council – Chief Executive Officer, Gary Gaffney on 5153 9500
- South Gippsland Shire Council – Chief Executive Officer, Tim Tamlin on 5662 9200
- Wellington Shire Council – Chief Executive Officer, David Morcom on 5142 3501