

Administrators' Message



This week we have spoken to a number of our business association leaders across the region to stay in touch during the COVID-19 crisis. We have heard of great actions being taken where the business community is supporting each other in whatever way they can and it has been wonderful seeing this collaboration in difficult times.

This is a time for us all to show our support; our local businesses are finding innovative ways to trade and to make shopping easier. You can find out what some of them are doing at www.shopsouthgippsland.com.au. By shopping locally where you can you are helping our local economy and businesses that rely on our support.

All regions across Victoria and the nation are facing difficulties with the current crisis but these challenges will differ from region to region depending on what industries each location relies on most. It is important to note that each Council will be preparing packages to support their community accordingly and South Gippsland is no different.

In March, Council deferred our deliberation on the proposed Annual Budget in order to consider the impacts COVID-19 would have on the community and determine the best course of action in order to provide local support. This week at our Council Meeting the updated proposed Annual Budget will be considered with the inclusion of a proposed \$2 million support package for COVID-19. Developing the proposed Annual budget is always a major decision for Council and we have not been taking it lightly. We will no doubt have further details to provide once a decision is reached on Wednesday about releasing the proposed budget, and we look forward to community feedback.

For those experiencing hardship at this current time please do not hesitate to contact Council on 5662 9200 as we are here to help. Whether this is by providing support with our services and payment arrangements or referring you to other service providers when it is needed. We are all in this together after all and our biggest concern is to support our community.

A very big thank you to our health workers, transport operators, businesses and all essential workers who are keeping our community operating. We also extend a round of applause to those volunteering to help their neighbours by picking up essential items and simply checking in where they can. We all have a role to play at the moment and this dedication and kindness is only ever met with gratitude.

Finally, although we are all required to stay at home we can still show our respects to the services and sacrifice of others this ANZAC Day. Our local RSLs are calling on us all to 'stand to' at our front gates at dawn on ANZAC Day this Saturday as an alternative way to commemorate. While we all take a moment to acknowledge the hardships these servicemen and women faced, we must also remember the testament they are to the Australian spirit and how we too will overcome our own hardships together.

Julie Eisenbise, Christian Zahra AM and Rick Brown - Administrators