

South Gippsland COVID-19 Community Support Package – Phase 2

At yesterday's Council meeting South Gippsland Shire Council endorsed the second phase of the \$2M COVID-19 Community Support Package. Phase two initiatives include mental health training, a creative and cultural arts program, regional promotion and a tourism grants program.

South Gippsland Shire Council's Chair Administrator, Julie Eisenbise is pleased with the progress of the COVID-19 Community Support Package.

"Phase one of the Support Package is progressing well. Over 816 subsidised flu vaccinations have been administered and Community Restarter packages, which include hand sanitiser and dispensers, are in the process of being delivered to community groups across the Shire.

"We are intently aware of the important role community groups have in South Gippsland. Whether the groups are sport, craft, hobby or health related they all have a significant role to play by enhancing people's wellbeing. We are pleased that so many groups have already taken advantage of the COVID-19 Community Grants and I would encourage anyone who is involved in a local community group to consider applying before the funding allocation is exhausted.

"From a business perspective 83 businesses have received financial assistance through the COVID-19 Business Grants program and other businesses have benefited through the refund or waiver of business registration fees. We hope that the Visitor Economy Grants for tourism businesses will provide a level of support for another sector of our community who are doing it particularly tough right now.

"The second phase of the \$2M Community Support Package is equally exciting. Feedback from our community 'COVID-19 Impact and Recovery Survey' indicated that mental health was an area of concern for a number of people in our community and we are pleased that we will be able to work with specialists in this area to provide some additional support in this space.

“We are also aware that artists and other working in cultural and creative industries have had their livelihoods significantly impacted. Naturally, with restrictions still in place it is a little hard to fully anticipate when activities in the creative space will be able to be rolled out, but by allocating funding in this area now, we can start working on what will undoubtedly be an impressive suite of arts-related activities to be released when the time is right,” said Ms. Eisenbise.

The total cost of phase two initiatives is estimated at \$393,110. Phase one and two initiatives will continue to be rolled out over the coming months. For more information on the COVID-19 Community Support Package, please visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/covidsupport

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