

Administrators' Message



This week, Council had its second meeting for the month. One item we endorsed was the final phase of Council's \$2M COVID-19 Community Support Package.

This \$505,000 phase of the package consists of community and economic elements as well as an allocation to evaluate the effectiveness of the overall package. If someone told us at the start of our term that we would navigate our region through a pandemic, we would have looked at you in disbelief, but thanks to our community and the employees here at Council we were able to get through it together. It is not everyday that Council will be able to come up with \$2M in response to an issue, but due to our shire being in a strong financial position, we were able to release this funding to those who needed it most at the time. Supporting exactly those who needed it was the intention at the beginning of the package, and remains true as we announce this final stage.

The most significant part of the package was an allocation of \$235,000 to implement the Economic Development and Visitor Economy strategies, which we have been seeking your feedback to develop. These strategies will help drive our economic and business recovery post-COVID and help us respond to the challenges and opportunities that South Gippsland is expected to face over the next 10 years, to position South Gippsland as a prosperous and thriving economy and a key destination for visitors and new residents. This funding will help move these strategies forward faster and thus having a quicker impact on our community.

There is also funding allocated to the evaluation of the package. As with other programs and projects, it is important for Council to review the effectiveness of the packages it delivers. We also feel that it will be important to assist those who follow us by giving them a starting point to formulate packages like this if they are needed in the future, rather than them having to start from a blank sheet of paper.

We strongly encourage all community members to look at the itemised list of funding provided by the package. For all the details, please visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/covidsupport

We also endorsed the first Procurement Report for the period of July to December 2020 (Q1 and Q2 of 20/21 Financial Year). While procurement isn't always a greatly exciting topic, there are some high-level figures that everyone in the community should know about and feel really excited about. South Gippsland Shire Council's expenditure with South Gippsland based

businesses was sitting at 29 percent in 2020 – this is compared to 24 percent in 2018 and 26 percent in 2019. This has been a focus of Council to increase local expenditure where appropriate, so it will be interesting to see how that has been tracking when the next report is released.

Council is also making a concerted effort to pay invoices within 14 days. We are proud to say that this is consistently sitting over 85 and 90 percent. Payments within seven days have also lifted to the range of 70 to 80 percent. This has a direct benefit to the businesses that deal with Council, to ensure their cashflow is supported as they do business with Council.

We would like to thank our team who has worked with us on this and provided this report. If you are interested in finding out more, you can find the report in the agenda and minutes for the 21 April Council Meeting at www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/councilmeetings

It is also great to see the calendar filling up with events again after a bit of a hiatus last year. The Great Southern Bale Trail launch was one of the exciting events this week that will be a great attraction for visitors and locals alike. The amount of effort involved in creating the installations is best enjoyed right in front of them. For all the details, please visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/gsbtr

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