

Administrators' Message



The effects of last week's storm are still being felt across our region. Over 140 roads have been impacted by trees, flooding or both. While many have had their power restored and the clean up is making headway, it will likely take many more weeks or months for the clean up to be complete. We ask that all residents be patient as Council and emergency services work through the massive task ahead.

It has been heart-warming to see the amount of people lending a helping hand to their community during this tough time. From food to a hot shower, there was a range of support available throughout our region. For those who manned these community centres, we extend our thanks.

Our emergency services personnel deserve our thanks for the long hours they have worked during this weather event. From the paid staff to the volunteers who take time out of their day to help those in need, we are very lucky to have these special people in our community.

We would also like to thank the Council staff who have taken the lead on the clean-up. They have worked around the clock to clear what they could and called in emergency services if needed to ensure AusNet workers could get on with their important work of returning power to our region and so residents could access the services they needed.

It really has been a team effort, and we could not be more thankful to all those who have done their bit. It is through events like this that the resilience of our residents shines through. We are all part of a fantastic region and it is brilliant to see mutual support during these times.

There has been some discussion in local media about transparency at Council and at Council meetings. Council meetings are conducted in accordance with the Local Government Act, the relevant COVID-19 restrictions applicable at the time of the meeting, and our Public Transparency Policy that outlines the importance of good governance and open and accountable conduct. Even with COVID-19 restrictions in place, we have kept Council meetings open to the public via live streaming technology. An example of this was earlier this month when we were able to move a meeting to hear budget submissions online, giving our community an opportunity to listen to the ideas being presented, even though face-to-face meetings were

restricted.

At Wednesday's Council meeting the draft annual budget will be discussed and the outcomes for every submission heard earlier this month will be included in the Council agenda. We would once again like to thank everyone in our community who reviewed the budget documents and particularly those who took the time to make a formal submission both in writing and at the 2 June Council meeting. The meeting will be held virtually and we strongly encourage you to watch the meeting by visiting www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/live

To end this week's message, we would like to congratulate Samara Cunningham on receiving a National Regional Arts Fellowship from Regional Arts Australia. Samara is the Artistic Director of (it's no) Drama and is one of only six fellowships that were awarded across the country. Those who are awarded a Fellowship are given an opportunity to expand their creativity, build strategic partnerships, and increase arts access in regional and remote communities across Australia. What a brilliant opportunity and great honour for one of our local artists!

Julie Eisenbise, Christian Zahra AM and Rick Brown – Administrators