

Key Strategic Documents Adopted

South Gippsland Shire Council adopted the Budget 2021/22, Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31 and the annual initiatives of 2021/22 of the Council Plan at its meeting today. These documents underpin the future direction of Council and are the foundation for the majority of projects and services provided by Council to the community.

The Budget and Financial Plan identifies costs associated with providing these essential assets and services and embodies aspirations for the year ahead and beyond.

As a result of community consultation on the Budget the following items were included in the final version:

- Additional funding of \$70,000 towards Councillor transition and onboarding.
- Additional funding of up to \$30,000 towards a drainage study for Fish Creek.
- A range of other initiatives and smaller projects raised in public submissions will be implemented through existing allocated funding.

The annual initiatives of the Council Plan outline the next actions required to achieve the four key strategic areas of focus for Council and the community. These set the context for Council to progress a number of significant projects across the municipality with the goal of ensuring South Gippsland remains a great place to live, and attract economic investment and visitation.

The Budget includes the following key figures for the 2020/21 financial year: operating budget of \$69.5 million and a capital works program of \$34.2 million – the largest program South Gippsland has had in recent years.

Quotes attributable to South Gippsland Shire Chair Administrator Julie Eisenbise:

“The Budget 2021/22 is a responsible financial plan to deliver Council’s services and an ambitious capital works program, whilst complying with the rate cap of 1.5 per cent.

“Many of Council’s costs increase annually beyond 1.5 per cent, such as the costs of construction and renewal of our assets, contracts to deliver key services and Council’s Enterprise Agreement. As a result of reviewing our services and ensuring efficiencies in our operations are maintained, I am pleased that we have been able to maintain service delivery without the need to apply for an exemption to the rate cap. This is the lowest rate increase South Gippsland has experienced in many years.

“Thank you to all our submitters for their personal contribution to the Budget. The time taken and efforts put in for these submissions were evident in the high quality of submissions and presentations and I would like to thank each of the submitters for contributing to the budget process,” said Ms Eisenbise.