

Administrators' Message



Despite recent lockdowns and restrictions, the Community Leadership Program has been running very smoothly. The first session – Getting to Know South Gippsland – was delivered online with Council's CEO Kerryn Ellis and other key Council staff to provide an overview of the South Gippsland region and insights into the breadth of work undertaken by Council.

As the program rolls on, sessions are planned to rotate around the region. The second session was held in person in Tarwin Lower where the group explored values and teamwork. There was a lot of reflection on how participants factor these into leading their various work and community activities. It was a sunny day that provided the opportunity to do some activities outside, something that was very well received by participants.

This week's session – Local Government 101 – which aims to support participants to understand the different roles within Council, will be delivered online. However, there is hope that the next session on Board and Committee Governance can go ahead in person.

Over the past few weeks, we have released four podcasts that tell the story of some of our inspiring community members. The Our People Podcasts series was developed by Council staff with the help of Jet Streamer who recorded the podcasts and a number of local photographers to help you see the faces behind the microphone. These podcasts have been created with potential new residents in mind, giving them the opportunity to hear directly from residents what they love about living, working and thriving in South Gippsland. However, we believe there is also a benefit for existing residents, who can get to know others in their community and feel proud of the community they are part of. So far in the series we have heard from local farmers, an artist, a chef and a small business owner – and there is still two more to come. If you would like to have a listen to the podcasts, you can find them on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Council's website: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/ourpeoplepodcasts

We have also become aware that some community members are concerned about Council staff remuneration amounts in the 2021/22 Budget. In the 2021/22 Budget, there is an increase of 8.2 full time equivalent staff compared to the forecast for 2020/21. This increase is predominantly due to the addition of seven positions, all of which are contracted fixed-term roles. These positions are for the delivery of capital works or other projects that are mainly grant funded. If an employee has been hired specifically for the fulfillment of a specific project, their

salary is included in the project cost and since they are grant funded projects, the salary is also grant funded.

This week, we heard the story of Megan, a kindergarten teacher who moved from St Kilda to Fish Creek to enrich our young people's lives. She has been a great addition to the team and has shared her story about her relocation to South Gippsland to teach kindergarten. If you would like to watch her story, please visit youtu.be/ERAhWHMME0g

It was delightful news to hear that we could exit tighter restrictions once again. While some restrictions have eased, it can be difficult not being able to pop over to your loved one's home for a cuppa, and it is tough for businesses to decide whether they can open their doors with the restrictions currently in place. As we have said throughout the pandemic, please support local businesses where possible. If you want to catch up with your loved one, go to a local café and enjoy something to eat. Shop locally by supporting local businesses from clothing to produce. We all have a part to play in keeping our local economy rolling.

If you would like more details on the current restrictions or where to get a COVID-19 vaccine, please visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Stay safe and well everyone.

Julie Eisenbise, Christian Zahra AM and Rick Brown – Administrators