

Mayor's Message



This week saw another first for the new Council, our first ordinary Council Meeting and the first time in a long time that a public gallery has been able to attend. It was great to hear the updates from all Councillors on what they have been up to since they became representatives of our community. We were all elected to serve our community, so hearing what we have all been doing and some of the conversations that are happening with the community already are really encouraging. I would like to thank all those community members for their time and ideas that they have shared with not just myself, but the entire Council. If you haven't reached out to any of us yet but would like to, you can find our contact information on Council's website www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/councillors

We also formally noted that all nine Councillors signed up to our Councillor Code of Conduct as part of our swearing in ceremony. This document is something we all take very seriously and spells out in black and white what is expected of us while we are serving our term. The community have put their faith in us, and we owe it to them to do everything in our power to do them proud and behave as they expect – professionally.

A couple of awards ceremonies were also held this week that saw fantastic South Gippsland representation. I would firstly like to congratulate Marty Thomas, owner of Moos at Meeniyan, for winning the Mainstreet Australia Champion Award for 2021. This is well-deserved recognition for the contributions he has made to the Meeniyan township and as a result, our entire region. Congratulations also to Mirboo Country Development Inc for being a finalist in the Mainstreet Australia awards for their Revitalising Ridgway project.

We also had the Food and Fibre Gippsland Awards this week where every South Gippsland finalist took home an award. I would like to extend my congratulations to:

- Gurneys Cider – Gippsland Agribusiness of the Year and Building Capability Award.
- Shelley Walker from South Gippsland Dairy – Female Agribusiness Leader of the Year.
- Prom Coast Food Collective – Sustainability Award.
- Burra Brewing Co. – Food and Drink Manufacturing (fewer than 10 employees).
- Burra Foods – Food and Drink Manufacturing (more than 10 employees).

I would also like to congratulate Tamsin Carvan for winning a Shine Award. The Shine Awards

are run annually by The Weekly Times, supported by Harvey Norman, and celebrate the passion, dedication, spirit, belief, grace and courage of women across rural and regional Australia. From a field of 180 women, Tamsin was honoured for her innovative South Gippsland business, The Borough Dept. Store in Korumburra, and determination during times of personal tragedy and the impacts of COVID-19.

All award recipients and finalists have done our region proud and should be immensely proud of their performance.

It was great to see Councillors Darakai, Williams and Keerie attend a walk-through at the Mirboo North Outdoor Pool over the weekend. The pool is looking fantastic, and I trust Councillor Darakai and Councillor Williams word that it is a lovely temperature as well. The pool is now open to the public, with a more formal opening event to be confirmed at a later date.

During the week, I attended an event in Leongatha called Inspiring Young People. Thank you to Beau Vernon for speaking so eloquently to a room full of secondary school students about the opportunities and pathways into TAFE. It was great to hear about these students' aspirations for the future and how they might achieve that. A truly inspirational event.

Over the past few weeks, you may have received an invitation in the mail to participate in a community panel as part of the engagement process to develop the South Gippsland Community Vision. This Vision will capture our community's hopes for the future of South Gippsland, and will provide a foundation that links the most valued ideas to Council and the community's decision making. This is a really exciting project for our new Council to take a lead on in partnership with the community. The Community Panel is just one of a range of engagement processes Councillors will be leading, and we encourage all community members to be involved as the program develops. Community engagement is important to all Councillors, and this will provide a great opportunity for everyone to get involved and have their say in the direction of our region.

Cr Mohya Davies – Mayor