

Mayor's Message



Happy New Year. I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and were able to spend some time with family and friends. This year is already shaping up to be an exciting one here at Council with lots of projects already planned.

Before I get to some of the projects Council is working on, I would like to commend the CFA volunteers for their prompt response and admirable actions to bring a grass fire under control in Venus Bay last week. This was one of the first fires we've seen this season, and is a timely reminder to us all that, even though we've had a lot of rain in recent months, fire is never far away. This was a potential disaster averted and highlights the threat we face from fire and the work of our fabulous volunteers.

Please ensure you have your fire plan ready to enact if you find yourself under threat. All the details on how to create a plan and what you should do if you find your home under threat by fire, visit the CFA website at www.cfa.vic.gov.au or talk to your local brigade.

Hopefully you are aware by now that the Community Vision 2040 project is underway. Community pop-ups have been held across the Shire in the hopes of reaching as many community members as possible. I would like to commend the staff who have attended these sessions and our Councillors who have actively promoted, attended and even helped in the coordination of pop-up events. It is great seeing Councillors and staff work together for the betterment of our community.

While on the topic of the Community Vision, the survey closes on 11 January. If you miss the chance to complete the survey, please don't worry as that won't be your last opportunity to participate in this important process. Keep an eye out for those opportunities as they come through to ensure you have had your say.

The second round of applications for the Community Grants Program is now open. Grants are available in the following four categories:

Minor Projects and Equipment Grant (up to \$5,000), Major Projects and Equipment Grant (up to \$10,000), Festival and Events Grant (up to \$10,000) and Planning and Development Reports (up to \$10,000).

This program provides essential funding opportunities for local groups and organisations and help them deliver programs, events and services that benefit our entire community. It is

imperative that Council is able to support our community with opportunities such as these and I look forward to considering the applications once this round is completed on 31 March. To apply, please visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants

There will also be an information session held on 20 January at 6.30pm to brief prospective applicants on what can and can't be funded and provide a demonstration of the Smarty Grants platform. To register for this session, please visit <https://bit.ly/3sZ0wUb>

As part of our Australia Day commemorations this year, we are doing something different. Council is running a photography and videography competition. To be part of this competition you just need to capture the theme of *Reflect, Respect, Celebrate: We're All Part of the Story*. Submissions must be received by 11.59pm Sunday 16 January 2022 to be considered. There are prizes that will be awarded as well, but I encourage you to submit an entry because you genuinely enjoy being creative. To submit your entry and for more information, please visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/AustraliaDayCompetition

Unfortunately, it looks like this year will be another year impacted by COVID-19. While this isn't the news we were all hoping for after what we have been through the past few years, it appears to be something we will have to get used to. I encourage you to go out and get your vaccination, whether that be your first, second or booster and get your children booked in for their vaccination as well. There are some great resources coming out to assist parents in preparing their child. For all these resources and to book your relevant vaccination appointments, please visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Cr Mohya Davies – Mayor