

# Mayor's Message



Another week done and dusted. As always, there has been plenty going on, some of which I would love to update you all on.

Last Monday night, I had the pleasure of speaking at Leongatha Rotary Club's meeting. It is the time of year where clubs have their change over, and a great time to join if you are new to the area or looking for a way to give back to your community. Rotary Clubs do a fantastic job and contribute greatly to our community. They are also extremely welcoming and are always looking for new members. If you are interested at all, get in touch with your local club.

I would like to thank Councillor Schelling for attending the Gippsland Sports Academy's Annual Awards Night on my behalf. South Gippsland Shire Council, alongside other Gippsland Council's provide funding to the Academy to ensure talented athletes from our region can reach their full potential. It was a winning night for South Gippsland, with Mackenna Whiteside being awarded the Darrell White Award.

Congratulations to you Mackenna on your award!

For the past few weeks, myself, other Councillors and Council staff have been working hard to go through all of the community feedback received during the April 21 to May 15 engagement period and make changes to the draft suite of strategic Plans. We made a commitment to you all that if you showed up, we would listen, and that is exactly what this process is doing. We are actively listening and making changes based on your feedback. The updated suite of plans will be considered by Council at our meeting on 29 June 2022.

In some exciting news for Leongatha, work is about to begin on the Leongatha Railway Precinct development. Stage One works include a clean-up of the site and a new car park.

Approximately 50 new parks will be created as part of the project, with works expected to be finished in early 2023. This is no doubt welcome news not just for the Leongatha community, but those who visit the town for shopping or appointments. The next stage of this project will include bridge and ramp construction to connect the precinct with the centre of town.

Without the work of Council staff and contractors, works such as the Leongatha Railway Precinct development and even the engagement period that we undertook in April and May would not be possible. These staff are the backbone of South Gippsland Shire Council and as such, deserve respect.

None of our staff have an easy job. From planning and outdoor crews to our Local Laws team, our employees do great work, regardless of the task they are handed. While I understand that sometimes Council decisions and activities can frustrate members of our community, it is important that feedback is given constructively and respectfully. And I expect Councillors and Council staff to do the same.

Finally, I would like to reiterate something I mentioned in last week's Message around road safety during Winter. The conditions we've had this week have been horrible to drive in – lines on the road are hard to see due to the sheer amount of water, and paddock lakes are returning, even at my farm in Foster. We have already seen a road closed due to a landslip as well.

Please take care on the roads and on your farms as the winter wet rolls in. Drive to the conditions, not the speed limit, and ensure that you are paying attention when you are out and about. Knowing the road well is not an excuse. Mother Nature changes every day as we are all well aware, and as a result, we all need to be careful so we make it home to our loved ones.

**Cr Mohya Davies – Mayor**