

# SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

# Running For Council?



**South Gippsland**  
**Shire Council**

## Thinking of running for Council?

## Here are a few things you should know...

### Local Government

With three tiers of government in Australia, local government is the tier closest to the people.







The role that councils play in the community has expanded over the years to reflect the changing needs of residents and as the interdependence with other levels of government continues to grow.

Victorian councils provide a wide variety of services to their communities, such as maintaining important community assets, delivering projects and advocating for the needs of the community to state and federal government.

### Role of a Councillor

As a Councillor you have the opportunity to make a significant impact on your community and can create great outcomes for our region.

To be a successful and effective Councillor it is important that you:

-  embody community spirit
-  understand the importance of teamwork
-  have a reasonably flexible weekly schedule
-  can communicate well
-  be open and responsive to local residents
-  can consider the needs of all townships, Shire-wide

Being a Councillor involves working with people. As a Councillor you are just one person, so you will be relying on the support of your colleagues – and they on you – to turn ideas into reality.

With that in mind it is important to note that as a Councillor you represent all the people of South Gippsland. While you may be elected by and within a particular Ward (and South Gippsland has three Wards with three Councillors coming from each), once you sit at the Council table you have the responsibility to govern for all of South Gippsland, from Nyora to Port Welshpool, from Mirboo North to Venus Bay.

The ability to work with others not only includes a good working relationship between Councillors and the Mayor (who is elected to be the head of the Council by the nine Councillors themselves), it extends to the CEO, Council staff and the community. These working relationships are fundamental to being part of an effective and successful Council.

Councillors need to understand how to manage external relationships, particularly with the community, the media and other organisations including State agencies and other politicians.

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* each Councillor has a responsibility to:



- Participate in the decision making of the Council.
- Represent the interests of the community in that decision making.
- Contribute to the strategic direction of the Council through the development and review of key strategic documents, including the Council Plan.

*The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) provides a bridge between Councillors and Council staff. The CEO reports to Council and is responsible for managing all Council staff.*



### Candidate Information Sessions in South Gippsland

*Municipal Association Of Victoria (MAV) Stand for Council*  
25 July 6.30pm to 8.30pm - Leongatha Memorial Hall

*Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA):*

Life as a Woman Councillor (Online Session): 15 August 6.00pm to 8.00pm  
Becoming a Councillor (Online Session): 29 August 6.00pm to 8.00pm

*Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) Candidate Information*

4 September - 5.30pm to 6.30pm - Leongatha, Memorial Hall

5 September - 5.30pm to 6.30pm - Korumburra, Community Hub

**More information at [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/runningforcouncil](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/runningforcouncil)**

*Please note: Other information sessions are available in Gippsland and across Victoria*



# SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

# Running For Council?

## Councillor Allowances

South Gippsland Shire Council falls within 'Category 2' of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal's 'Allowances payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria).

Paid in fortnightly payments, Councillor allowances amounts per annum are:

- Mayor – \$109,114
- Deputy Mayor – \$54,558
- Councillor – \$34,028

## Meeting and Briefings Days

Council holds briefing days which are an opportunity for Council staff to provide information to Councillors. Currently, these occur every Wednesday from 8.30am to 3.00pm. Council Meetings are scheduled on the third Wednesday of each month at 2.00pm.

## Next Steps

1. Determine your eligibility to run: Almost anyone who is entitled to vote at council elections in Victoria is also eligible to stand for election as a Councillor. Before setting off to become a Councillor, ensure you are on the voter roll for South Gippsland and be clear that you're not disqualified from standing for office. Check out Section 34 of the *Local Government Act 2020* for more details.
2. Determine what you are passionate about: As a potential Councillor it is important to have a clear understanding of what issues are important to you. Anyone who votes in the election will want to know what you stand for - so make it known!
3. Attend a candidate information session: In the lead up to Council elections candidate information sessions will be held for those who wish to run in the election. For more information, please visit [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/runningforcouncil](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/runningforcouncil)
4. The calling of the polls is currently scheduled to occur on 8 November (3.00pm) in Memorial Hall, Leongatha by the VEC. An afternoon tea will be held at this time and all successful candidates will be invited to an introduction meeting with Council staff, and a facilities tour.
5. All Councillors must undertake mandatory training within four months of being elected, as per the *Local Government Act 2020*. South Gippsland runs a seven week program of training to support Councillors to understand their role, build effective relationships and complete the mandatory training within the required timeframe. Generally, all days start at 8.30am and finish at 3.00pm. Once nominations close, all candidates will receive a draft training schedule.

## The Life of a Councillor

A week-in-the-life of a Councillor is bound to be quite varied. There's always a lot going on in the local community and it is an important part of a Councillor's role to be involved in local events and to be in regular contact with local community members.

Sometimes there are responsibilities outside 'normal' business hours, so Councillors need to be flexible enough to manage working some late nights and weekends too.

A 'typical' week might include:

- Reading the Council business papers.
- Meeting with the Mayor about Council's strategic planning.
- Having a cuppa with a local resident who has been in touch about something that they want Council to champion.
- Attending a community meeting about a new facility or an issue that's a cause for some concern.
- Going on a site visit to see progress on the new capital works project.
- Weekly meetings to be briefed by staff on key matters to come before Council for decision, hear from experts on various matters, and meet and receive updates from community members.

In addition to that sort of variety you'll also need to be able to get together with your colleagues most Wednesdays. These are the days that Councillors get together for briefings – from officers or the community – and Council Meetings.

## More information:

For more information on the upcoming Local Government elections, please go to:

[www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/election](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/election)