

Mayor Message



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

Shop and Support Local

It's great to see South Gippsland buzzing throughout the school holidays. Despite the high fuel prices, people have been out and about making the most of our wonderful townships and beautiful landscapes.

Between those who chose to visit our region and locals staying a little closer to home, it has been heartening to see our local businesses being supported at a time when they really appreciate the patronage. Please remember to shop local where possible and to keep investing in our local area.

Active Budget focus

It has been a busy time for Council as we not only manage our usual day-to-day business but also look ahead to the next financial year. As we are all acutely aware, external impacts are having very real impacts half a world away, including here in the Gippsland region.

Councillors have been discussing how best to manage what's ahead so that we continue to provide the best service we can to the community despite challenging circumstance – we are actively managing our financial situation to ensure that core services and maintenance can be delivered.

The 2026/27 Draft Budget will be considered at the April Council Meeting.

School Holiday Activities

There are still a few days of the holidays left and there is lots happening! Myli – your community library – has a school holiday program and Parks Victoria's Junior Ranger initiative is a wonderful way to encourage your kids to get out into nature, to learn and explore. There are Junior Ranger sessions close to home, but it is also worth keeping in mind wherever you are travelling across the state.

Find out more about these activities and others at:

<https://visitsouthgippsland.com.au/events/>



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Citizenship Ceremony

I was honoured to preside over last week's Citizenship Ceremony at Leongatha Memorial Hall. It is always such an honour to welcome new Australian citizens. On this occasion fifteen residents committed to their future as Australians. The pride with which they adopt their new status is a timely reminder of just how lucky we are to live in this peaceful, welcoming and abundant part of the world.

Early Years Education

Early Learning Victoria has advised that a waitlist is now open for the Meeniyan Early Learning Centre. The new early learning and childcare centre, which will be located at Meeniyan Primary School, is opening in early 2027. The link to register your waitlist application is available via: <https://www.earlylearning.vic.gov.au/meeniyan>

It is important to note that Early Years Infrastructure has been an advocacy priority of Council for a number of years. We are very pleased to have been quite successful in attracting funding for early years education infrastructure.

Food Organics & Garden Organics – FOGO

I have been speaking with community members right across the South Gippsland regarding the roll-out of the FOGO waste collection service, which is being done to meet our legislative obligations. There has been a lot of interest in the new service. Residents with a kerbside service should have received a letter by now advising of how their waste collection will change after 1 July. More information is available on Council's website:

www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/FOGO