

# Mayor's Message



*South Gippsland  
Shire Council*

The South Gippsland Shire Council 2026/27 Budget was adopted at last week's Council Meeting. I am proud that our whole Council group participated in shaping the Budget, in a constructive and in-dept way. Council's focus is on making responsible financial decisions to provide for us all.

Putting together a balanced Council budget is never easy. We must prioritise the necessary maintenance of roads and infrastructure, deliver the services people rely on every day and plan for the future whilst managing the ever-increasing costs. Every dollar matters, and every decision comes with trade-offs and the need to prioritise needs and future goals.

This is a balanced budget. That means we're living within our means. There is no deficit, no surplus, no new borrowings and every dollar has been carefully accounted for.

This budget wasn't created by simply adding a percentage increase to last year's figures. At the direction of Council, Councillors and officers worked through the budget line by line, looking for savings, challenging assumptions and making sure resources are being directed where they are needed most.

It's easy to say councils should spend less, cut staff or freeze rates. The reality is that every service has a cost and every cut has a consequence. Responsible decision-making means looking beyond simple solutions and making choices that balance our needs today, with tomorrow's challenges in mind.

Local government delivers a huge range of services that people rely on every day, yet receives only a small share of overall taxation revenue. That means Council must constantly find ways to do more with less while continuing to support our communities. With costs increasing and income slowing, South Gippsland Shire has chosen to find efficiencies, alter some services and continue to deliver on our Council Plan.



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I'm proud of the work this Council has done to achieve that balance. This budget continues to deliver the services our community expects, invests in important infrastructure and strategic planning, and helps ensure South Gippsland remains financially sustainable into the future.

The numbers tell the story: a \$90 million budget, delivery of 85 services, 26 Council Plan initiatives and a capital works program of more than \$24 million.

Most importantly, this budget gives our community confidence that Council is planning responsibly, investing wisely and making decisions with the long-term interests of South Gippsland in mind.

We look forward to the year ahead as we continue services and improve local infrastructure, knowing that the decisions Council has made have been done so with our community at the centre of our thinking.