

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 19 November 2025



Council Chambers, Leongatha
Commenced at 2:00 PM



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

OUR COUNCIL PLAN VISION STATEMENT

Our South Gippsland community is connected, resilient and empowered. We value our unique townships, our rural and coastal landscapes, while balancing growth.

A prosperous region, we draw strength from: visitor experience, emerging and creative industries, our agricultural sector and natural environment. We lead with purpose, are forward thinking, and deliver consolidated and sustainable services for our community.

The Council Agenda relates to the following Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan 2025-2029.



Leading with Integrity



Developing a Sustainable Future



Empowering Communities

PRESENT**COUNCILLORS:***Coastal Promontory Ward*

Councillor Steve Finlay

Councillor Scott Rae

Councillor Sarah Gilligan, Deputy Mayor

*Strzelecki Ward*Councillor Bron Beach (*virtual online attendance*)

Councillor Nathan Hersey

Councillor John Kennedy

Tarwin Valley Ward

Councillor Brad Snell

Councillor Clare Williams

Councillor John Schelling, Mayor

NOT PRESENT:**OFFICERS:**

Allison Jones, Chief Executive Officer

Tony Peterson, Executive Director, Strategy and Integrity

Lucas Gardiner, Executive Director, Empowering Communities

David Fice, Executive Director, Infrastructure Sustainability

Michelle Jorgensen, Executive Manager, Culture and Capability

Rhys Matulis, Manager Governance and Integrity

Jodi Cumming, Governance Coordinator

Corinne Garton, Desktop Support Officer

Allison Jones, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) advised that in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the CEO is to preside over the Council Meeting as Temporary Chair until the election of the Mayor.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Wednesday 19 November 2025
Council Chambers, Leongatha, commenced at 2:00pm

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS	6
1.1. LIVE-STREAMING COUNCIL MEETING DISCLAIMER.....	6
1.2. WELCOME TO THE COUNCIL MEETING.....	6
1.3. OPENING PRAYER	6
1.4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS.....	6
1.5. APOLOGIES.....	7
1.6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.....	7
1.7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR COUNCILLORS.....	8
1.8. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR STAFF.....	9
1.9. REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE.....	10
1.10. END OF TERM REMARKS - MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR	10
2. COUNCIL REPORTS.....	11
2.1. TERM OF OFFICE FOR THE MAYOR	11
2.2. ELECTION OF MAYOR.....	12
2.3. DETERMINATION AND TERM OF OFFICE FOR THE DEPUTY MAYOR....	14
2.4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR	15
2.5. COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENTS 2025 - 2026.....	17
3. CLOSED SESSION	21
4. MEETING CLOSED.....	22



Allison Jones
Chief Executive Officer

Privacy Statement

Council is required to keep minutes of each Council meeting. The minutes contain details of proceedings which may include personal information about community members disclosed as part of presentations, submissions and questions. The minutes of Council meetings are a public record and can be inspected by members of the public.

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1. LIVE-STREAMING COUNCIL MEETING DISCLAIMER

This Council Meeting is being streamed live, recorded and published in accordance with Council's *Live Streaming in Council Meetings Policy*.

Access to the live stream through Council's Internet is an option to view the 'open' component of a Council Meeting. Link to the Live Stream on Council's website: [Live Streaming | Live Streaming | South Gippsland Shire Council](#)

The Chair and/or the CEO have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of live streaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances where deemed relevant. Circumstances may include instances where the content of debate is considered misleading, defamatory or potentially inappropriate to be published.

Today's Meeting is being streamed live as well as recorded and published on Council's website.

Thank you

1.2. WELCOME TO THE COUNCIL MEETING

Public Questions

As this meeting has been held for the Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Election, Public Question time has not been included in this agenda. Any public questions submitted will be considered at the next scheduled Council Meeting on 26 November 2025.

1.3. OPENING PRAYER

As we gather here from diverse backgrounds and beliefs, may we hold privilege with good care and trust. As we deliberate and discuss, may we be wise in our discernment, fair in our decisions and visionary in our planning. May we be guided by our common goal of a strong and united South Gippsland.

The Opening Prayer was read by Councillor Schelling

1.4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

We acknowledge the Bunurong and Gunaikurnai people as the Traditional Custodians of South Gippsland and pay respect to their Elders, past, present, and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

The Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians was read by Councillor Gilligan

1.5. APOLOGIES

Nil

1.6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the South Gippsland Shire Council Meeting held on 15 October 2025 in the Council Chambers, Leongatha be confirmed.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Gilligan

SECONDED: Councillor Snell

That the Minutes of the South Gippsland Shire Council Meeting held on 15 October 2025 in the Council Chambers, Leongatha be confirmed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1.7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR COUNCILLORS

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Division 2 sets out the requirements relating to Conflict of Interest. Disclosure of a conflict of interest in respect of a matter to be considered at a Council Meeting is required under section 130(1)(a) and specifically applies to a relevant person being a Councillor, member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor and a member of Council staff.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82)* (the Rules), clause 3.0 Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting sets out the prescribed manner required to disclose a conflict of interest at South Gippsland Shire Council.

The Rules require a Councillor and/ or staff member who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council Meeting to announce before the matter is considered and disclose this in a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer. The details included in the disclosure, explain the nature conflict of interest, whether it is classified as general or material (s.127 and s.128), the name of the relevant person(s) and their relationship to them.

Failure to comply with disclosures of conflict of interest (s.130) may be subject to penalty points and/ or other disciplinary measures depending on the nature of the conflict.

The *Local Government Act 2020* can be accessed from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82)* can be accessed from [Council's Policies](#) webpage.

Nil

1.8. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR STAFF

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Division 2 sets out the requirements relating to Conflict of Interest. Disclosure of a conflict of interest in respect of a matter to be considered at a Council Meeting is required under section 130(1)(a) and specifically applies to a relevant person being a Councillor, member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor and a member of Council staff.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82) (the Rules)*, Chapter 5, clause 7, 8 and 9 sets the prescribed manner required for staff to disclose a conflict of interest when:

- Preparing Reports for Meetings
- Exercise of Delegated Power
- Exercise of a Statutory Function

Council staff must immediately upon becoming aware of a conflict of interest provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer disclosing the conflict of interest, explain the nature of the conflict and how it will be managed. Upon becoming aware and declaring a conflict of interest, a staff member may not exercise a power or perform a function in the matter. All prepared reports will record that staff member(s) have considered a conflict of interest and include if any, the details of a disclosure.

Failure to comply with disclosures of conflict of interest (s.130) may be subject to penalty points and/ or other disciplinary measures depending on the nature of the conflict.

The *Local Government Act 2020* can be accessed from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82)* can be accessed from [Council's Policies](#) webpage.

Allison Jones, Chief Executive Officer has declared a material conflict of interest in Agenda Item 2.5. Councillor Appointments 2025 – 2026, as one of the Committees relates directly to the Chief Executive Officer role.

1.9. REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Councillor Williams requested leave of absence for 26 November 2025 Council Meeting.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Schelling

SECONDED: Councillor Snell

That Councillor Williams be granted requested leave of absence for 26 November 2025 Council Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Beach requested leave of absence for 26 November and 10 December 2025 Council Meetings.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Gilligan

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Councillor Beach be granted requested leave of absence for 26 November and 10 December 2025 Council Meetings.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1.10. END OF TERM REMARKS - MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillor Schelling provided end of term remarks in the role of Mayor of South Gippsland Shire Council for 2024-2025 term.

Councillor Gilligan provided end of term remarks in the role of Deputy Mayor of South Gippsland Shire Council for 2024-2025 term.

2. COUNCIL REPORTS

2.1. TERM OF OFFICE FOR THE MAYOR

Directorate:	Strategy and Integrity
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council is required to abide by the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Governance Rules when determining the term of office for the Mayor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report to Council is to determine the length of term for the office of the Mayor. The length of term may be for one or two years and must be in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and Council's *Governance Rules*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council determines the length of term for the Office of the Mayor to be a <one-year> or <two-year term> in accordance with ss.25 and 26 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Councillor Gilligan

Seconded: Councillor Schelling

That Council determines the length of term for the Office of the Mayor to be a one-year in accordance with ss.25 and 26 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2.2. ELECTION OF MAYOR

Directorate:	Strategy and Integrity
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council is required to abide by the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Governance Rules in the proceedings of appointing a Mayor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report to Council is to facilitate the election of the Mayor.

Under Section 25 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Councillors must elect a Mayor at a Council meeting that is open to the public. In accordance with Section 26(4) of the Act, the election must be held as close as reasonably practicable to the end of the current Mayoral term.

The election is to be chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in accordance with Section 25 of the Act and the Council's *Governance Rules*. Once elected, the Mayor will immediately assume the role of Chair.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Duly elects Councillor < Name > to be appointed as Mayor of South Gippsland Shire Council in accordance with ss. 25 and 26 of the *Local Government Act 2020* for the duration resolved in the 'Term of Office for the Mayor'; and
2. The term of the Mayor will conclude on a day determined by the Council that is as close to the end of the term as possible, unless the Office of the Mayor becomes vacant earlier as prescribed under sections 20, 22, 23, 26 or 35 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Allison Jones, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), addressed Councillors that three nominations for Mayor had been received for Councillor Nathan Hersey, Councillor Scott Rae and Councillor Sarah Gilligan prior to the commencement of the Council meeting. All three candidates accepted their nominations.

The candidates were offered the opportunity to address Council in the order in which they were nominated prior to a vote being taken.

Candidate 1 – Councillor Nathan Hersey

Candidate 2 - Councillor Scott Rae

Candidate 3 - Councillor Sarah Gilligan

Allison Jones, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), stated as there were three nominations, Councillors were entitled to one vote per candidate as per sub-Rule 7.10.2 of the *Governance Rules*. The vote was to be carried out by a show of hands by each Councillor. In the event of a candidate receiving an absolute majority of the votes, the CEO is to declare that candidate duly elected.

To formalise the result, the following Motion was moved as part of Agenda Item 2.2. Election of Mayor.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Rae

SECONDED: Councillor Kennedy

That Council:

- 1. Duly elects Councillor Nathan Hersey to be appointed as Mayor of South Gippsland Shire Council in accordance with ss. 25 and 26 of the *Local Government Act 2020* for the duration resolved in the 'Term of Office for the Mayor'; and**
- 2. The term of the Mayor will conclude on a day determined by the Council that is as close to the end of the term as possible, unless the Office of the Mayor becomes vacant earlier as prescribed under sections 20, 22, 23, 26 or 35 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.**

CARRIED

Allison Jones, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), congratulated Cr Hersey on their appointment as Mayor and welcomed them to take the Mayoral seat to Chair the remaining of the Council Meeting.

2.3. DETERMINATION AND TERM OF OFFICE FOR THE DEPUTY MAYOR

Directorate:	Strategy and Integrity
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council is required to abide by the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Governance Rules when determining the appointment of a Deputy Mayor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report to Council is to consider if the position of Deputy Mayor is to be established and if the length of term is for one or two years. This is in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and Council's *Governance Rules*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Determines in accordance with section 20A of the *Local Government Act 2020* that an Office of Deputy Mayor be established; and
2. Resolves to elect a Deputy Mayor for a term of <one year> or <two year> in accordance with ss.25, 26 and 27 of the Local Government Act 2020.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Schelling

SECONDED: Councillor Rae

That Council:

1. **Determines in accordance with section 20A of the *Local Government Act 2020* that an Office of Deputy Mayor be established; and**
2. **Resolves to elect a Deputy Mayor for a term of one year in accordance with ss.25, 26 and 27 of the Local Government Act 2020.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2.4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Directorate:	Strategy and Integrity
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council is required to abide by the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Governance Rules in the proceedings of appointing a Deputy Mayor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report to Council is to consider the election of the Deputy Mayor. The role of the Deputy Mayor is to assist the Mayor and represent Council on behalf of the Mayor when required.

Under Section 20A of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council may determine to establish an office of Deputy Mayor. The election is to be chaired by the newly elected Mayor in accordance with Section 25 of the Act and the Council's *Governance Rules*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Duly elects Councillor < Name > to be appointed as Deputy Mayor of South Gippsland Shire Council in accordance with ss. 25 and 26 of the *Local Government Act 2020* for the duration resolved in the 'Term of Office for the Deputy Mayor'; and
2. The term of the Deputy Mayor will conclude on a day determined by the Council that is as close to the end of the term as possible, unless the Office of the Deputy Mayor becomes vacant earlier as prescribed under sections 20, 22, 23, 26 or 35 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Mayor, Councillor Nathan Hersey, in calling for nominations asked the CEO if any nominations for the Deputy Mayor had been lodged prior to the commencement of the Meeting.

Allison Jones, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), addressed Councillors by stating that there were three nominations received for Deputy Mayor. Councillor Brad Snell, Councillor Scott Rae and Councillor John Kennedy prior to the commencement of the Council meeting.

Councillor Brad Snell formally accepted their nomination of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Scott Rae and Councillor John Kennedy withdrew their nominations at the Council meeting.

To formalise the result of one nomination being Councillor Brad Snell, the following Motion was moved as part of Agenda Item 2.4. Election of Deputy Mayor.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Kennedy

SECONDED: Councillor Rae

That Council:

1. Duly elects Councillor Brad Snell to be appointed as Deputy Mayor of South Gippsland Shire Council in accordance with ss. 25 and 26 of the *Local Government Act 2020* for the duration resolved in the 'Term of Office for the Deputy Mayor'; and
2. The term of the Deputy Mayor will conclude on a day determined by the Council that is as close to the end of the term as possible, unless the Office of the Deputy Mayor becomes vacant earlier as prescribed under sections 20, 22, 23, 26 or 35 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Mayor, Councillor Nathan Hersey, on behalf of Councillors, congratulated Cr Brad Snell on their appointment as Deputy Mayor.

Allison Jones, Chief Executive Officer, left the meeting at 2.43PM due to a declared conflict of interest.

2.5. COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENTS 2025 - 2026

Directorate:	Strategy and Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

This report ensures Councillors are represented on internal and external committees, boards and advisory committees to provide leadership, advocacy, support and active engagement with the community and to have access to relevant strategic advice and information that can inform Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider appointments for the Mayor and Councillors to internal Council Committees and to external organisations that require a Council representative.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Appoint the nominated Councillors for the terms determined for the External and Internal Committees shown below:

External Committees	Councillor Representative	Term	Councillor Substitute
Australian Coastal Council Association	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025/26	One substitute <Cr Name>
ONE Gippsland	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025/26	
South-East Australian Transport Strategy (SEATS)	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025/26	One Substitute <Cr Name>
Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025/26	

Internal Committees	Councillor Representative	Term of Appointment	Councillor Substitute
Access & Inclusion Advisory Committee	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025/26	One substitute <Cr Name>
Arts Advisory Committee	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025/26	One substitute <Cr Name>
Australia Day Awards Committee	Mayor Deputy Mayor	2025/26	
South Gippsland Youth Council	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025/26	One substitute <Cr Name>
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025/26	One Substitute <Cr Name>
Myli Board	One Councillor <Cr Name>	2025-2027	
Audit & Risk Committee	Two Councillor <Cr Name> <Cr Name>	Two-year term 2025-2027	Mayor is an ex officio member at meetings and has the right to speak.

2. Appoints Councillors to the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee as shown below; and

External Committees	Councillor Representative	Term of Appointment	Councillor Substitute
CEO Employment & Remuneration Committee	Three Councillors Mayor <Cr Name> <Cr Name> <Cr Name>	2025/26	

3. Disbands the Active Retirees Advisory Committee (ARAC) as its functions have been incorporated into the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Rae

SECONDED: Councillor Schelling

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

- Appoint the nominated Councillors for the terms determined for the External and Internal Committees shown below:**

External Committees	Councillor Representative	Term	Councillor Substitute
Australian Coastal Council Association	One Councillor Cr Gilligan	2025/26	One substitute Cr Finlay
ONE Gippsland	One Councillor Mayor	2025/26	One Substitute Deputy Mayor
South-East Australian Transport Strategy (SEATS)	One Councillor Cr Schelling	2025/26	One Substitute Cr Snell
Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)	One Councillor Mayor	2025/26	One Substitute Cr Gilligan

Internal Committees	Councillor Representative	Term of Appointment	Councillor Substitute
Access & Inclusion Advisory Committee	One Councillor Cr Gilligan	2025/26	One substitute Cr Williams
Arts Advisory Committee	One Councillor Cr Williams	2025/26	One substitute Cr Beach
Australia Day Awards Committee	Mayor Deputy Mayor	2025/26	
South Gippsland Youth Council	One Councillor Cr Williams	2025/26	One substitute Cr Kennedy
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee	One Councillor Cr Gilligan	2025/26	One Substitute Cr Rae
Myli Board	One Councillor Cr Schelling	2025-2027	
Audit & Risk Committee	Two Councillors Cr Beach Cr Gilligan	Two-year term 2025-2027	Mayor is an ex officio member at meetings and has the right to speak.

2. **Appoints Councillors to the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee as shown below; and**

External Committees	Councillor Representative	Term of Appointment	Councillor Substitute
CEO Employment & Remuneration Committee	Four Councillors Mayor <Cr Name> Cr Snell Cr Kennedy Cr Beach	2025/26	

3. **Disbands the Active Retirees Advisory Committee (ARAC) as its functions have been incorporated into the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. CLOSED SESSION

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), section 66 provides that if a council or delegated committee determines that a meeting is to be closed to the public to consider confidential information, the Council or delegated committee must record in the minutes of the meeting that are available for public inspection –

- a) the ground or grounds for determining to close the meeting to the public by reference to the grounds specified in the definition of ***confidential information*** in section 3(1); and
- b) an explanation of why the specified ground or grounds applied.

The Act defines ***confidential information*** in s.3(1)(a)-(l), and includes information that may prejudice or impact; commercial negotiations, the security of Council, land use planning, law enforcement, legal privilege, personal information, private commercial information, confidential meeting information, internal arbitration, Councillor conduct panel information and information specified under s.77 of the previous *Local Government Act 1989*.

Once confidential information has been considered and decided in a closed session of a Council Meeting, a further resolution to resume open Council is required.

Nil

4. MEETING CLOSED

NEXT MEETING

The next Council Meeting open to the public will be held on Wednesday, 26 November 2025 commencing at 2:00pm in the Council Chambers, Leongatha.

The Council Meeting closed at 2:46pm.

Confirmed on this 26th Day of November 2025

Mayor, Nathan Hersey