

Deputy Mayor Message



Hello South Gippsland.

Mayor Councillor Schelling is off representing our community at the South East Australian Transport Strategy group meeting, and asked me to do this week's Message.

This Message is a great opportunity to get quick updates on some of the things happening at Council and in the community, and I'm excited to be doing that today. However, if you ever want more information, check out Council's website or Facebook page.

February Council Meeting

The February Council Meeting was held last Wednesday and there was a great turnout in the Chamber of interested locals.

This month, Councillor Hersey put forward a Notice of Motion regarding the new Victorian Government Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund. This is a new tax that councils are expected to collect on their behalf through rates notices, none of this money will come back to the councils who collect it. The Notice of Motion asks Council to write to the Premier of Victoria, Treasurer of Victoria, Minister for Local Government and our local members to formally object to Council collecting the increased tax. It also asks for Council staff to provide a report to Council on the impact and challenges of administering the tax and how we can more clearly express what is a Victorian Government tax, and what is a Council charge.

There is a lot of cost shifting that happens between the Victorian Government and councils across the state, but this is different. This is a deliberate move to get Council to take the flack for this extra tax when community members are already struggling with cost of living pressures.

I would like to thank Councillor Hersey for bringing this to Council, and to all my fellow Councillors for taking a stand. I hope other councils across the State follow suit to show the Victorian Government that this won't fly.

To view the meeting recording or read through the Agenda, please visit:

www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/meetings

Shaping South Gippsland Engagement

There are just a few days left to provide your feedback in the Shaping South Gippsland engagement.

This is an opportunity not to be missed, giving you the chance to tell Council what you would like to see happen over the next four years.

So far, there have been some terrific conversations at pop-ups around our region – so thank you to those who have turned up – but we know we could hear more. I'd particularly like to encourage those of you living in our smaller communities to jump online and have your say. Our small towns contribute so much to our shire.

Please complete the survey or come along to the Port Welshpool Old Ferry Terminal on Friday 28 February between 10.00am and 12.00pm to let us know your thoughts. The survey can be completed online at: www.shapingsouthgippsland.com.au

Based on this feedback, the Council Plan, Budget and other key Council documents will be released for review in April for further engagement.

Wildlife Deaths

I was shaken to my core to hear about the deliberate and cruel deaths of a dozen or so wombats in Venus Bay and Walkerville. To be clear, this act is a serious criminal offence and there will be consequences, my heart breaks for the coastal communities who work so hard to protect our incredible wildlife.

Unfortunately however, deliberate or not, there are far too many animals killed on our roads. Even if you think “there is no way there will be any animals on this road”, think again. Please slow down and stay alert when driving, particularly during the night and at dawn and dusk. Together we can all reduce the number of animal deaths on our roads.

If you know anything about the deliberate deaths of wombats in Venus Bay or Walkerville, please get in touch with Inverloch Police on 5674 1202. We need to ensure the culprits are held to account and send a strong message that this is not okay in South Gippsland – this is not who we are.

Events in South Gippsland

South Gippsland is blessed to have so many amazing events happening all times of the year. From markets that celebrate local producers and makers, to world-class acts like the upcoming gig at the Tarwin Hall ‘Jones, Steel & Jackson’, we are privileged to call South Gippsland home.

If you are looking for something to do, make sure you check out the Visit South Gippsland website: <https://visitsouthgippsland.com.au> Event organisers, accommodation providers and business owners can also list their event or business for free on the site, so take advantage of that extra promotion.

Have a lovely week,

Cr Sarah Gilligan – Deputy Mayor